



Internationalization of Arts Universities Towards Social Sustainability



OUTI NIEMENSIVU

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**INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ARTS UNIVERSITIES
Towards Social Sustainability**

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Towards Social Sustainability

Studia Musica 97

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Internationalization of Arts Universities
Towards Social Sustainability
Doctoral dissertation
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ABSTRACT

Niemensivu, Outi (2024) *Internationalization of arts universities – Towards social sustainability*. Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki. *Studia Musica* 97.

This doctoral dissertation on the internationalization of arts universities draws on the idea that arts and culture can be used as a mediator in advancing social sustainability. The aim is to understand how and to what extent the internationalization of arts universities contributes to social sustainability in the domestic context as perceived by stakeholders within the university: senior managers, faculty, and students. The focus is on how higher music education institutions within arts universities advance social sustainability in forms such as diversity, inclusion, equity, social well-being, and social cohesion by engaging with difference. As a part of its third mission, an arts university can contribute to the cohesion and interaction between culturally diverse members of society.

This interdisciplinary arts management research draws on three theoretical discussions: the internationalization of higher education, sustainability, and community engagement. Within sustainability the focus is on social sustainability. The research is a qualitative case study of two European arts universities and their higher music education institutions: University of the Arts Helsinki and University of Music and Performing Arts Graz.

This study proposes that to be socially sustainable in the domestic intercultural context, traditional music education should be reimagined in cooperation with all levels of music education. Lowering the barriers raised by the elitism of music education, the dominance of Western classical music, and a narrowly defined view of quality requires a change in the strategy, governance, and policies of the institutions. Proactive engagement with local communities, the participation of the whole university community as well as collaboration with local communities and external partners are requisites for a shift towards social sustainability.

This research contributes to the scholarly discourse on the social and societal impact of arts universities. It extends the research of the internationalization of higher education into arts universities and their higher music education institutions with an interdisciplinary approach. The research offers fresh perspectives and emerging visions for stakeholders related to international activities within and outside arts and scientific universities as well as for internationalization scholars.

Keywords: internationalization, social sustainability, community engagement, cultural sustainability, arts university, higher music education, arts management

TIIVISTELMÄ

Niemensivu, Outi (2024) *Internationalization of arts universities – Towards social sustainability*. Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia. *Studia Musica* 97.

Tämän taideyliopistojen kansainvälistymistä käsittelevän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on ymmärtää, miten ja missä määrin taideyliopistojen kansainvälistyminen ja sosiaalinen kestävyys kohtaavat toisensa paikallisessa kulttuurien välisessä kontekstissa. Tutkimus keskittyy siihen, miten taideyliopistojen musiikkikorkeakoulut edistävät taiteen ja kulttuurin avulla sosiaalista kestävyttä, kuten esimerkiksi moninaisuutta, inklusiota, oikeudenmukaisuutta sekä sosiaalista hyvinvointia ja yhteenkuuluvuutta erilaisuuden kohtaamisen kautta. Taideyliopisto voi osana kolmatta, yhteiskunnallista tehtäväänsä vaikuttaa positiivisesti erilaisista kulttuureista tulevien ihmisten vuorovaikutukseen ja yhteenkuuluvuuteen.

Taideohjohtamisen alaan liittyvä poikkitieteellinen tutkimus asemoituu kolmeen tieteelliseen keskusteluun: yliopistojen kansainvälistyminen, kestävyys ja yhteisöjen osallistaminen (community engagement). Kestävyydessä tutkimus keskittyy sosiaaliseen kestävyteen. Laadullisessa tapaustutkimuksessa tutkitaan kahta eurooppalaista taideyliopistoa ja niiden musiikkikorkeakoulua: Helsingin Taideyliopistoa sekä Grazin Musiikin ja esittävän taiteen yliopistoa.

Jotta perinteinen musiikin koulutus olisi sosiaalisesti kestävä, sitä on tarkasteltava uudesta näkökulmasta yhteistyössä alan kaikkien toimijoiden kanssa. Musiikkikoulutuksen elitismin, läntisen klassisen musiikin valta-aseman ja kapeasti määritellyn laatukäsityksen luomien esteiden madaltaminen edellyttää muutoksia instituutioiden strategiassa, johtamisessa ja toimintatavoissa. Proaktiivinen ja vastavuoroinen toiminta paikallisten yhteisöjen kanssa, koko yliopistoyhteisön osallistuminen sekä yhteistyö paikallisten yhteisöjen ja yhteistyökumppanien kanssa ovat edellytyksiä muutoksessa kohti sosiaalista kestävyttä.

Tutkimus kontribuoi yliopistojen sosiaalisen ja yhteiskunnallisen vaikuttavuuden tieteelliseen keskusteluun. Se myös laajentaa yliopistojen kansainvälistymisen tutkimusalan taideyliopistoihin ja niiden musiikkikorkeakouluihin poikkitieteellisellä lähestymistavalla. Tutkimus tarjoaa uusia näkökulmia ja orastavia visioita taide- ja tiedeyliopistojen kansainvälistymisen parissa työskenteleville tahoille.

Avainsanat: kansainvälistyminen, sosiaalinen kestävyys, yhteisöjen osallistaminen, kulttuurinen kestävyys, taideyliopisto, musiikkikorkeakoulu, musiikin korkeakoulutus, taideohjohtaminen, yliopistojen johtaminen

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I want to dedicate this work to intergenerational love for the intercultural. I inherited it from my mother, and I have passed it on to my daughter Elsa.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEC–Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen

AI–Artificial intelligence

CERADA–Center for Educational Research and Academic Development in the Arts

COIL–Collaborative online international learning

CSR–Corporate social responsibility

EDI–Equity, diversity, and inclusivity

ELIA–European league of institutes of the arts

ERASMUS–European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students

EU–European Union

HEI–Higher education institution

HMEI–Higher music education institution

IaH–Internationalization at home

IHES–Internationalization in higher education for society

IOM–International Organization for Migration

IRC–International relations coordinators

IoC–Internationalization of the curriculum

IoCaH–Internationalization of the curriculum at home

KUG–Kunstuniversität Graz (University of Music and Performing Arts Graz)

NGO–Non-governmental organization

NPO–Non-profit organization

SDG–Sustainable Development Goal

SIHEI–Sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions

UN–United Nations

UNESCO–United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Uniarts Helsinki–University of the Arts Helsinki

USR–University social responsibility

WIM–World in Motion

1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates how the internationalization of arts universities contributes to social sustainability in the domestic context and discusses the importance of socially sustainable internationalization. In the introduction, the background of the research is described. This is followed by a formulation of the problem and the research gap as well as the aim of the study and the research questions. The chapter ends with an overview of the dissertation and its structure.

1.1 Background

The world has experienced dramatic changes in recent years, and these have impacted the topic of this research, which was conducted from 2019 to 2024. Major incidents cannot merely be followed in the media, they also touch people's everyday lives around the world. Increasing anxiety and worry has been caused by crises such as climate change, the Corona pandemic, ongoing wars, or the threat of war, as well as political instability. These developments are also reflected in the operations of universities, including arts universities.

In the European context, one of the causes of instability is the polarization of attitudes towards increased population caused by migration. The natural change in the population of the European Union (EU) has been negative since 2012, whereas net migration¹ has been the main cause of population growth since the 1990s. Overall population development in the future is expected to depend on the contribution of net migration. (*Population and Population Change Statistics* n.d.) Migration is influenced by economic, environmental, political, and social factors. Historically, the relative economic prosperity and political stability of the EU have been considered attractive for immigrants (*Migration and Migrant Population Statistics* n.d.). Some of the incoming migrants² (immigrants) are refugees³ or asylum seekers. In addition to enriching societies, increasing diversity also potentially produces fundamentalism, radicalization, and polarization (Castells 2010; Westerlund & Karlsen 2020). Numerous supranational organizations, such as the European Union and the United Nations, encourage host countries and other

¹ Net migration is the “number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants over a period, divided by the person-years lived by the population of the receiving country over that period” (*Glossary* n.d.).

² *Migrant* is used as an umbrella term for a person who moves away from their usual place of residence, either within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, for a variety of reasons (*Glossary on Migration* 2019).

³ A refugee is a person who has had to leave their home because of persecution, war, or violence (*What Is the Difference between a Refugee and a Migrant?* n.d.).

communities to address the problem by actively including diverse migrants into society. The European Commission considers the successful integration of migrants a key to the future well-being, prosperity, and cohesion of European societies (*Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees in Cities* n.d.). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) wants to protect the cultural rights of refugees and other displaced people to enable intercultural dialogue and foster social cohesion (*Event | Culture Beyond Borders* 2023). The International Organization for Migration (IOM) considers integration a vital part of migration management contributing to diverse and inclusive societies (*Migrant Integration and Social Cohesion* n.d.). The well-being of migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, benefits both these individuals and the hosting societies.

The influx of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers has called forth a discussion on whose responsibility it is to act. A Google search of *who is responsible for taking care of the refugees* in April 2024 produced over 3.5 billion hits. One European Union study suggests that public institutions and cultural operators should use their potential as enablers of dialogue and exchange through “encouraging the access of all citizens, examining their... engagement with communities and the interaction between governance, culture, and the city around them” (European Economic and Social Committee 2016 p. 63). As publicly funded institutions, universities could answer this call through internationalization. Following the influx of refugees to Europe caused by the war in Syria in 2015 and in Ukraine in 2022, universities have faced a situation that Hakan Ergin, Hans de Wit, and Betty Leask (2019) call “forced internationalization”. Consequently, higher education institutions (HEIs) have arrived at a situation where they should consider their stand to the support for society, a dimension that universities have largely ignored in their internationalization activities (Brandenburg 2020).

Social responsibility and developing global citizenship⁴ are topics that have entered the discourse on HEI internationalization. However, universities in developing countries may be more engaged in the third mission⁵, whereas universities in developed countries tend to have a more market-oriented attitude, which is realized in their focus on the future working life (E. Jones & de Wit 2021). Being international is no longer a competitive factor for universities but is taken for granted. According to internationalization researcher David Hoffman, trying to

⁴ Global citizenship is described by the United Nations (*Global Citizenship* n.d.) as an “umbrella term for social, political, environmental, and economic actions of globally minded individuals and communities on a worldwide scale... Promoting global citizenship in sustainable development will allow individuals to embrace their social responsibility to act for the benefit of all societies, not just their own.”

⁵ There is no consensus on the definition of the third mission or what it includes. In this research the third mission is understood as “the sum of all activities concerned with the generation, use, application and exploitation of university knowledge, capabilities and resources, outside of the academic environment” (Compagnucci & Spigarelli 2020 p. 5).

increase the appeal of a university by claiming it is international would resemble a bank advertising that they are burglarproof (Hintikka 2006).

Arts universities are among the public institutions that are increasingly expected to participate in solving societal issues. Questions such as exclusion, inequality, and social injustice have been acknowledged by the discipline of music education as well as other arts-related fields (Westerlund et al. 2021). Arts universities increasingly engage with topics related to social and cultural sustainability⁶ with an international angle. CERADA (Center for Educational Research and Academic Development in the Arts) within the University of the Arts Helsinki is an example of an international platform for research projects related to social themes, such as democracy, equality, interculturalism, social responsibility, and well-being. Arts university networks, such as the European league of institutes of the arts (ELIA)⁷ and Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)⁸, have organized initiatives addressing social and societal issues, such as ELIA's EDI [equity, diversity, and inclusivity] in Internationalization and AEC's *Strengthening Music in Society and Diversity, Identity, and Inclusiveness*. Despite considerable animation towards the topics in the congresses of both organizations, the arts field as a whole has not unanimously accepted the thought of expanding professional obligations beyond artistic quality (Westerlund et al. 2021).

The reasons why higher music education institutions engage in societal issues have been founded on their moral responsibility towards society and the assumed future working life requirements (Gande & Kruse-Weber 2017; Renshaw 2020; K. Thomson 2021; Westerlund 2019). Heidi Westerlund and Sidsel Karlsen (2020) propose that music educators are central to the transformation in society towards communities in which diversity is taken for granted. Overcoming challenges can be painful in a professional community of experts and may require a transformation of the institutional culture. Music educators cannot expect mere joint music making or certain repertoires to develop communities and lead to shared values. Instead, an enhanced understanding is needed, which requires dialogue between the parties involved.

Arts and culture have the distinctive feature that the individuals' viewpoints can be quite diverse without turning into conflicts, which enables dialogue even on challenging topics. The refugee situation in 2015, as well as in 2022, brought to light the social and political dimensions related to such situations (Karttunen et al. 2017; Kenny 2018; K. Thomson 2021), touching the responsibility of arts

⁶ The concepts of social and cultural sustainability will be clarified in more detail in sub-chapter 2.2.

⁷ ELIA is a globally connected European network in higher arts education.

⁸ AEC is a European network of institutions for professional music training.

institutions and the role of individual musicians and music educators. Developing a culture that truly embraces cultural diversity needs a proactive stance from university leaders. Transformation cannot rely on individual faculty members alone, but change is needed at the strategic university level.

1.2 Problem formulation and research gap

Arts universities and their higher music education institutions typically consider it a priority to be international. Music is typically considered to be international per se. The European association of conservatoires (AEC) features an active working group for coordinators of internationalization relations (IRC), and they also have many active working groups related to societal issues as well as diversity and inclusion. Senior managers are frequent visitors to the congresses arranged by the association. Nevertheless, when conducting a desktop study to find suitable case universities for this research, it proved to be difficult to find European arts universities that would have chosen both internationalization and social sustainability as their priorities. Elspeth Jones et al. (2021) confirm that in the Global North⁹, higher education institutions may potentially not have institution-wide third mission plans due to their diversion to entrepreneurial activities and capitalization of knowledge, which limits the universities' involvement in community engagement. They argue that social responsibility is rarely the most important driver for internationalization or at least it is framed quite narrowly, which means that the institutions' potential contribution to local communities receives little attention. Accordingly, it appears that there is a need to research where arts universities stand on internationalization and social sustainability.

In 2020, Uwe Brandenburg et al. published a framework for internationalization in higher education for society (IHES), which included a brief literature review on how internationalization is used for social and societal purposes outside the university campus. According to Brandenburg et al. (2020), literature on the internationalization of higher education and its impact has not made a link to society and the topic has not been approached systematically by higher education institutions. Some political documents related to IHES exist, but there is not yet substantial literature available (Brandenburg et al. 2020). Since the publication of the framework, there has been some IHES-related research, such as the special issue of the *Journal of Studies in International Education 2021*, volume 25, issue 4 (*Journal of Studies in International Education 2021*). Some of the articles relate to sustainability and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but none directly deal with social sustainability. There is some internationalization

⁹ The Global North does not refer to a geographic region but to the relative power and wealth of countries in distinct parts of the world (Braff & Nelson 2022).

research connected to sustainability, but overall, no research on the internationalization of HEIs can be located that focuses on social sustainability. Elspeth Jones et al. (2021) confirm that there is hardly any literature at the intersection of internationalization and university social responsibility.

There is limited internationalization research to be found that focuses on arts universities and their higher music education institutions. Within music education research, there is literature on topics such as curriculum development (e.g. Gaunt et al. 2021; Karlsen & Nielsen 2021; Westerlund et al. 2015), social responsibility and engagement with communities (e.g. Bartleet & Carfoot 2016; Elliott et al. 2016; Gande & Kruse-Weber 2017; Grant 2019; Schiavio et al. 2019; K. Thomson 2021), the societal role of musicians (e.g. Gaunt et al. 2021; Grant 2019; Westerlund et al. 2019; Westerlund & Karttunen 2024), and diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g. Campbell 2020; Karlsen & Westerlund 2010; Väkevä et al. 2022). However, there is none that focuses on internationalization or social sustainability, nor is there a strategic organizational or leadership perspective.

There appears to be a research gap at the intersection of the internationalization of higher music education, social sustainability, and community engagement. I address this gap with a case study of two European arts universities and their higher music education institutions. My research is not comparative but explores two rather different arts universities by interviewing their senior management, faculty, and students. It gives a multifaceted view on this unexplored topic with an emphasis on the strategic organization and leadership in the arts management domain.

1.3 Aim of the study and research questions

The aim of this study is to understand how and to what extent the internationalization of arts universities contributes to social sustainability in the domestic context as perceived by stakeholders within the university: senior managers, faculty, and students. The focus is on the perceptions of links between internationalization and social sustainability within and outside the campus, and the roles the arts university stakeholders take in fostering these links.

The research question is

How does internationalization in the domestic context contribute to social sustainability within an arts university?

The research question is divided into two sub-questions

How do arts universities engage with people who have diverse cultural backgrounds?

What kinds of roles do senior management, faculty, and students take in fostering intercultural dialogue?

By answering the research questions, my study aims to contribute to the theoretical discourse on internationalization in higher education and social sustainability and theorize on these topics. My research contributes to the academic literature on arts management, internationalization of higher education, and sustainability by introducing arts universities and their music higher education institutions to these disciplines with an interdisciplinary viewpoint. The study provides insights and practical knowledge for stakeholders of internationalization and social sustainability within arts universities. The issue of social sustainability in the internationalization of higher music education is highly topical, and I find it vital to continue and extend the discussions around the theme.

1.4 Overview of the dissertation

My interdisciplinary study in the domain of arts management draws on three theoretical discourses: internationalization in higher education, sustainability, and community engagement. Within internationalization, the central approaches I have used are *internationalization of the curriculum at home (IoCaH)* (see E. Jones et al. 2021) and *internationalization in higher education for society (IHES)* (see Brandenburg et al. 2020). Within sustainability, my focus is on *social sustainability* as well as *cultural sustainability*. Due to the context of higher music education institutions within arts universities, the literature on *community engagement* focuses on higher music education. Drawing on IHES, I have created a conceptual framework – *sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions* – for the purposes of the dissertation, which positions the research at the intersection of internationalization, sustainability, and community engagement. Adopting Katriina Soini and Joost Dessein’s (2016) model – *culture for sustainability* – culture is given a mediating role in the pursuit of social sustainability within the universities’ internationalization activities.

My dissertation is a qualitative case study of two European arts universities and their higher music education institutions: the Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland (Uniarts Helsinki), and the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Austria (KUG). The primary research data consists of 16 semi-structured interviews with senior managers and faculty members, as well as focus group discussions with students. The purpose is to gain an understanding of the informants’ perceptions and theorize on the topic. The reflexive interpretive method (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 2018) I have used is grounded in social constructionism (Charmaz 2006, 2014a; Charmaz & Thornberg 2021). An

interpretive approach towards the data is assumed during the analysis to theorize on the topic and to find possible naturalistic generalizations, although generalization is not a primary objective of my study.

Based on the analysis inspired by grounded theory (Charmaz 2008) and connecting strategies (see Maxwell & Miller 2008), my research supports the idea that the field of higher music education is elitist for reasons such as socio-economic exclusion and the dominance of Western music traditions (e.g. Small 1996). The study also suggests that the case universities' socially sustainable internationalization is mainly fostered by individual contributors without any strategic approach by the universities. The connection between the university and society emerges from projects run by individuals and unilaterally aims towards audience development and reciprocal co-creation with local communities and partners. To be truly socially sustainable in the intercultural context, the universities should make internationalization and social sustainability their strategic goals.

My motivation to research this topic has developed over several years. First, my arts management master's thesis, *Music competitions within the internationalization of an arts university: Case study of International Maj Lind Piano Competition* (Niemensivu 2018) provided the spark to explore the internationalization of higher music education institutions in more depth. Second, my background as an entrepreneur, managing director, and senior manager within the international language industry combined with my love for arts and culture proved to be useful in the research process. Third, the global political turmoil, the diminishing appreciation of arts and culture in national politics, and the underused potential of arts by arts universities encouraged me to venture into an unexplored interdisciplinary angle for research.

I have never been employed by a university, so my observations are not made by a practitioner, but rather as a student and researcher. Music and other cultural activities play an important role in my life, but I am not a professional musician, nor have I played an instrument more than as a hobby when I was a child. Therefore, I do not try to make any judgments on issues related to music as a form of art. Western classical music has been my preferred music genre since my early adulthood. I have listened to swing and pop music especially in my youth, but I was not familiar with global or world music before this research. However, in this study I have aimed to adopt a neutral position towards all genres.

The primary focus of my research is domestic. Mobility is not in the scope of this research, even though it is an important part of the internationalization of higher education. However, in internationalization, local and international levels overlap. Therefore, activities taking place internationally are included to some extent. The focus is on stakeholders within the university community. The primary informants

include the senior management, faculty, and students. As valuable as the rest of the staff is for the operations of an arts university, they are not within the scope of my study, as I consider their primary role to be executive. The voice of the partners and local communities is left to be heard in future studies.

Diverse sustainability dimensions overlap. Universities give ample practical guidance and financial support to international students. This priceless aid is out of the scope of this dissertation, the focus being on strategic and organizational issues that affect engagement in the intercultural context.

1.5 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation consists of six chapters. The first chapter presents the background information to the research topic, the research design, and an overview as well as an outline of the content of the dissertation. Chapter 2 presents relevant literature that forms the theoretical framework and serves as a basis for the conceptual framework outlined at the end of the chapter. Chapter 3 describes the methodological approach to a qualitative case study used in this research. Chapter 4 presents the analysis and results of the primary research data. Chapter 5 provides a discussion on the results of the dissertation. Finally, Chapter 6 presents the contributions, managerial implications as well as limitations and suggestions for further research, and some final words conclude the chapter and the dissertation.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study. First, the concept of internationalization in higher education is introduced. Then, the chapter continues with the introduction of sustainability and community engagement. The chapter ends with the conceptual framework of the study.

2.1 Internationalization of higher education

Internationalization of higher education is the first key dimension of this research. This sub-chapter provides an overview of this dimension. First, key definitions are provided. Then, internationalization of the curriculum at home (IoCaH) is introduced as an approach towards internationalizing the campus. The sub-chapter ends by introducing internationalization in higher education for society (IHES) as a means to reach out to local communities.

2.1.1 *Defining internationalization of higher education*

The following – “[t]he process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” – by Knight (2004) was commonly used to define the internationalization of higher education for many years. In 2015, de Wit et al. proposed a revised version of the definition:

the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society
(de Wit et al. 2015 p. 29)

This definition can be used to guide a planned internationalization process targeting all stakeholders in the university, not just those participating in mobility programs. In addition, internationalization should make a societal contribution instead of being a mere goal and aim of continuous quality improvement.

Internationalization in higher education can be implemented in two ways: through comprehensive internationalization or mainstreaming internationalization. Comprehensive internationalization is defined as

a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and

touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility. Comprehensive internationalization not only impacts all of campus life but the institution's external frames of reference, partnerships, and relations... (Hudzik 2012 p. 6)

Mainstreaming internationalization, on the other hand, suggests that internationalization is considered a central factor that is integrated throughout the university, instead of being a separate function (de Wit et al. 2015; Weimer et al. 2019). The two approaches usually result in a different organizational structure so that mainstreaming internationalization is decentralized and comprehensive internationalization centralized (Weimer et al. 2019).

In this research, the term *international* refers to anybody who is born outside the specific country or has a migrant background (Weimer et al. 2019). Furthermore, the term *international* is understood to comprise both the international as well as the intercultural dimension (see E. Jones & Killick 2007). Interculturality refers to “the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect” (UNESCO 2005). Accordingly, the concepts *intercultural background* and *international background* are used interchangeably.

2.1.2 IoCaH: Intercultural engagement on campus

Internationalization at home (IaH) emerged at the turn of the millennium as a counter-reaction to the prevalent focus on mobility to bring the non-mobile majority of students to the forefront. A similar movement, *internationalization of the curriculum* (IoC), emerged in the United Kingdom and Australia as a response to the growing recruitment of paying international students. The main difference between the two approaches is that IaH does not cover student mobility (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b). Nevertheless, IaH and IoC are nowadays often referred to together as *internationalization of the curriculum at home* (IoCaH) (e.g. E. Jones et al. 2021). In this research, the two approaches and their titles are addressed interchangeably or together as internationalization of the curriculum at home, in line with some other researchers, such as Elspeth Jones (2020).

The idea of IaH is to expose all university students and personnel to intercultural experiences and knowledge as well as to develop their international and intercultural skillset. Jos Beelen and Elspeth Jones (2015a p. 69) propose IaH to be defined as

the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.

The definition of IaH emphasizes the intentional inclusion of both international and intercultural features in the curriculum, which suggests that random actions are not enough to internationalize a university or a program. The definition also brings forth the need to reach all students within the university. “Domestic learning environments” indicates that the learning may take place within or outside the campus so that intercultural and international engagement can take place between students as well as with local communities (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b).

Internationalization of the curriculum (IoC) is defined by Leask (2015b p. 9) as

the incorporation of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods, and support services of a program of study.

The curriculum is a central concept in IoCaH. The curriculum comprises both the formal and the informal curriculum; a third, hidden curriculum¹⁰, has also been acknowledged (E. Jones 2017a; Leask 2009, 2015a). The formal curriculum refers to the planned and assessed study program of teaching and learning activities, whereas the informal curriculum comprises various activities that are optional and not part of the formally required studies but play an important role in the culture of the HEIs, thus providing the context in which the formal curriculum is enacted (Leask 2015a). The informal curriculum includes extracurricular activities, such as formal mentoring programs, peer assisted study sessions, and organized social activities, clubs, and societies (E. Jones 2017a), as well as international and intercultural campus events, and liaison with community-based cultural and ethnic groups (Knight 2008). In intercultural learning, the informal and the formal curriculum are equally important (Leask & Carroll 2011).

The curriculum plays an important role in developing the students’ mindset. International and intercultural features should be integrated systematically into the compulsory part of the curriculum not only in elective studies, because all students cannot be reached if internationalization is deployed only in optional studies (Beelen & E. Jones 2015a). The informal curriculum, which should preferably support the objectives of the formal curriculum (Leask 2015a), is the primary tool for creating a campus culture that develops, values, and fosters

¹⁰ The hidden curriculum is not addressed in this research. It refers to “various unintended, implicit and hidden messages sent to students – messages we may not even be aware we are sending” (E. Jones 2017a p. 23).

intercultural engagement (Leask & Carroll 2011) and influences student inclusion on campus (Sedaghatnia et al. 2015).

The curriculum can be understood quite broadly to include all the experiences that affect the students' development during their studies (E. Jones & Killick 2007; Leask 2015a). Additional features that affect the experience are the symbols and messages that manifest the institutional ethos and express commitment to international perspectives and diversity, such as visible celebrations of diversity and sustainable practices (E. Jones & Killick 2007). IaH should, according to Laurent Daloz (E. Jones 2020 p. 135), provide transformative learning through "constructive engagement with otherness". Elspeth Jones proposes that IoCaH can challenge cultural assumptions, extend knowledge, and adjust mindsets through fostering cultural diversity (E. Jones 2020). However, merely being close to diversity is not enough to provide transformative experiences (Harrison 2015; Weimer et al. 2019).

Even though fostering diversity is a central feature of IoCaH, diversity is often not used as an asset in the classroom. One of the reasons why international students do not advance IaH is due to the limited integration between international and domestic students. (E. Jones 2020) Instead of reciprocal integration, international students may be expected to adapt to the local environment. In this "deficit model" (Leask 2015b p. 92) students from cultural and linguistic minorities are being excluded so that they become outsiders, even if students and faculty perceived intercultural interaction as an essential part of internationalization. To avoid this situation, the faculty should facilitate interaction between domestic and international students and adapt their teaching to embrace cultural diversity rather than expect the students to adapt (Leask 2009). "[I]nclusivity requires an active approach not a passive one" (E. Jones & Killick 2013 p. 174).

Diversity and the terms *domestic*, *international*, and *intercultural* can be understood in many ways. According to Elizabeth Buckner and Sharon Stein (2020), the distinction between *domestic* and *international* is defined too narrowly without considering potential other forms of diversity. Elspeth Jones (2017b) argues that diversity today is a broader concept than before: people from domestic ethnic communities, working-class backgrounds or students moving from the countryside into a large city to study may face major cultural challenges similar to international students. Elspeth Jones proposes that using the term *interculturalization* might be more appropriate, because the international dimension is not required for intercultural engagement within the classroom and with local communities (E. Jones 2020). Nevertheless, international students may be considered a source for diversity (Stein 2015), especially in the English-speaking Global North, where the normative domestic student is often thought to be a white, Christian, middle-class, monolingual person with limited experience abroad

(Buckner et al. 2021; E. Jones 2013). However, international students are not a must for IaH to be successful (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b; E. Jones 2020).

Universities operate at the interface between the global and local and they may be perceived as global, national, and local at the same time. Accordingly, students should learn to understand and foster the closely interconnected levels and develop skills and attitudes to engage with diversity. It is not necessary to travel abroad: the local level provides opportunities for engaging with diversity on campus as well as with the local community (Leask 2015a). It is important that different education levels align their operations and have common goals. For example, Hans de Wit (2015) emphasizes the need for universities to collaborate with other levels of education and according to Fazal Rizvi (2017), higher education internationalization will only succeed fully if it is aligned with other educational levels. The necessity of cooperation between school levels is confirmed by Elspeth Jones and Hans de Wit (2021).

Language is another central aspect of the internationalization of higher education institutions. International students and the English language are often considered as a proxy for IaH (Weimer et al. 2019). However, teaching in English or another lingua franca is not a prerequisite for IaH (E. Jones 2020). According to Elspeth Jones, the existing curriculum should not only be translated. Instead, there should be a reorientation with new global perspectives. Even though the curriculum can be delivered in the local language, English or another lingua franca is needed for other international purposes such as communication and networking.

It is important to engage the whole university community in the internationalization process. The faculty has a central role in delivering IaH, but they should be supported by the whole university staff (E. Jones & Reiffenrath 2018; E. Jones 2020). Involving students in the curriculum process is also important (Laufer 2021). The mere presence of international students does not internationalize a curriculum (Leask 2009). Curriculum research confirms that co-creation of curricula promotes the engagement of both students and faculty (e.g. Lubicz-Nawrocka 2018, 2023; Lubicz-Nawrocka & Owen 2022). The internationalized curriculum will be implemented at department and program level (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b), which is why it varies according to the context, discipline and study program.

Internationalization of the curriculum at home (IoCaH) has had its share of criticism. African scholars as well as Asian universities have considered it a Western concept (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b; Leask 2016). IaH has also been criticized for being an “activist network”, a “movement” focusing on means instead of aims, measuring quality by activity instead of results, and pretending to be led by high moral standards but not pursuing these actively (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b). Some opponents claim that universities deceive themselves in thinking that

international students contribute to the internationalization of HEIs (Leask & Carroll 2011; S. Wright & Lander 2003). Neil Harrison claims that domestic and international students stay in separate groups, intercultural group work is resisted, and there is not enough intermingling in social life on campus. They also argue that universities take intercultural encounters for granted instead of facilitating them. (Harrison 2015) Despite the criticism, internationalization of the curriculum at home is perceived positively. (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b)

In addition, there is evidence showing that positive things do not always materialize (Leask & Carroll 2011). Glauco De Vita (2007), for example, argues that the thought of creating international connectivity, social connectivity, and intercultural learning through culturally diverse students is idealistic. According to some researchers, students representing cultural and linguistic minorities may become *outsiders* on campus (Leask & Carroll 2011), even to the extent that perceived prejudice and racist behavior overshadow the benefits of diversity (Hanassab 2006). Situations like this are likely to end up with the minority adapting to the majority, which in turn nullifies the potential of diversity (Leask & Carroll 2011).

Jos Beelen and Elspeth Jones suggested already in 2015 (2015a) that internationalization of higher education was moving away from marginal, fragmented, and ad hoc activities. Hans de Wit claims that internationalization is now a more central and comprehensive part of higher education policy, but still more rhetoric than concrete action. They also claim that mobility and competition continue to overrule IaH and cooperation (de Wit 2020), even though the European target for higher education students having had a mobility experience by 2020 was only 20 percent (*Mobility and Cooperation | European Education Area* n.d.), which means that 80 percent would have stayed at home without an international experience (E. Jones 2020). Leasa Weimer et al. (2019) point out that although IaH is implemented at some institutions in Finland, the implementation is fragmented and lacks strategic and systematic insights. They describe how some individuals responsible for internationalization efforts in their university understand IaH, whereas beyond that IaH seems to be unfamiliar. They also expect that IaH will gain importance with the diversification of Finnish society as well as an increase in international contacts within working life.

According to Elspeth Jones et al. (2021), IoCaH provides a framework for universities to integrate concepts such as justice, equity and equality, inclusion, and decolonization (see also Rizvi et al. 2006). It is important that the concepts are not only available to all students but are also relevant for local and international communities (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b; Leask 2013, 2015b).

2.1.3 IHES: Reaching out to communities

2.1.3.1 Defining internationalization in higher education for society

Since the 1990s, universities in Europe have shifted their focus from teaching and research towards taking a societal role in matters, such as regional development, which is often described as the *third mission* (Secundo et al. 2017). The third mission was previously considered peripheral, but in the twenty-first century it has become increasingly central within European universities (Brandenburg et al. 2020). Social responsibility and engagement are considered self-evident ingredients of universities' third mission (E. Jones et al. 2021; Zomer & Benneworth 2011).

Internationalization has the potential to represent the third mission of universities by extending the boundaries of the university beyond the campus. Brandenburg et al. (2019) pointed out the importance of universities addressing social responsibility in their internationalization agendas in a University World News article as early as 2019. This led to the framework of *internationalization in higher education for society* (IHES) with the aim of benefiting the wider community both domestically and abroad (Brandenburg et al. 2019, 2020). According to Brandenburg et al. (2020), however, universities rarely address global social responsibility systematically in their internationalization strategies, nor do they include an international dimension within the local context in their social responsibility strategies. Instead, the responsibility lies mostly with individuals rather than the university, which makes both its application and impact patchy. In addition, there are consequences caused by changes in personnel and shifts in funding priorities.

To ensure benefit for both the institutions and society, IHES should be integrated strategically within the third mission of the university. According to researchers, the internationalization and social responsibility agendas could even be aligned to facilitate the universities in fulfilling their public role. The alignment should at least be partial and take place at project and activity level. Elspeth Jones et al. (2021) encourage universities to increasingly look outwards instead of focusing merely on the benefits for the institution and students. In the same way, third mission strategies could have a strong international focus (E. Jones et al. 2021). Unfortunately, the two may potentially compete for the same resources and priorities in the universities instead of complementing each other, which has been recognized by internationalization, sustainability, and community engagement researchers (Benneworth et al. 2018; Brandenburg 2020; Brandenburg et al. 2020; Jones et al. 2021; Leal Filho et al. 2023).

Engagement is an important topic in all internationalization activities within and outside the campus. Betty Leask describes the activity as “engagement with

culturally different others – whether those others have traveled from other places specifically to be in that classroom for a period of time or whether they represent the cultural diversity present within the national culture” (Leask 2009 p. 219). Paul Benneworth et al. take a step further towards society in defining university-community engagement as a “process whereby universities engage with community stakeholders to undertake joint activities that can be mutually beneficial even if each side benefits in a different way” (Benneworth et al. 2018 p. 17). According to Ellen Hazelkorn (2016), community engagement can be approached from a social justice angle with a focus on disadvantage, student activities, service-learning, and community empowerment. Service-learning combines university-level studies with service in the community irrespective of the discipline (Deeley 2015).

IHES combines the concepts of community engagement and internationalization. Based on the definition of internationalization by Hans de Wit et al. (2015) and of social engagement by Paul Benneworth et al. (2018), IHES “explicitly aims to benefit the wider community, at home or abroad, through international or intercultural education, research, service and engagement” (originally published in Brandenburg et al. 2019, 2020 p. 28).

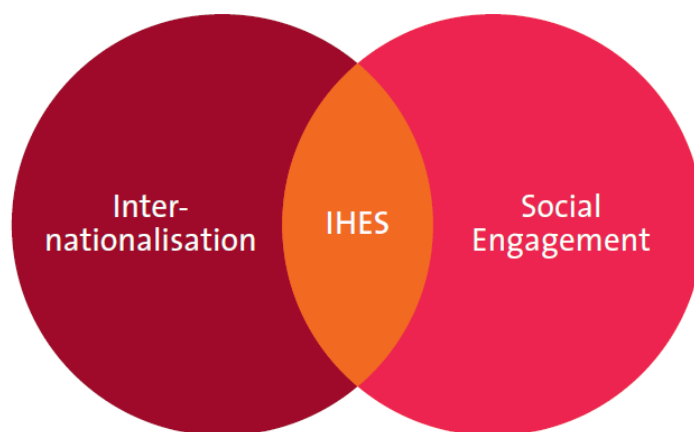


Figure 1. Position of IHES

Source: Brandenburg et al. (2020 p.19); See also Brandenburg (2020 p.14).

Brandenburg (2020) argues that there are at least three reasons why universities should use internationalization for engaging with society. First, internationalization can support all three cornerstones of universities: education, research, and community engagement as the third mission. Second, universities engage increasingly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Third, internationalization has a major environmental impact through activities such as student mobility and conference attendance.

2.1.3.2 *Implementing IHES*

There are various ways to implement international dimensions at a university, but not just any internationalization activity can be labeled IHES. What distinguishes IHES from other internationalization approaches is that the primary target group should be the communities outside the university. Furthermore, IHES activities should have a clear mission; unintended side effects do not count (Brandenburg 2020). IHES can be related to activities within education, research, service, and community engagement (Brandenburg 2020; Brandenburg et al. 2020). It can be practiced domestically as internationalization at home, abroad, or online (Brandenburg 2020).

Uwe Brandenburg et al. (Brandenburg 2020; Brandenburg et al. 2020) have identified seven factors that are relevant in IHES-related activities: (1) target group, (2) goals, (3) actors, (4) internationalization dimension, (5) involvement of HEI, (6) movement between the HEI and society, and (7) primal beneficiary (Brandenburg 2020; Brandenburg et al. 2020). The dimensions are described below.

First, the target group¹¹ must be outside the university (Brandenburg 2020; Brandenburg et al. 2020). Students have commonly been perceived as the recipients of a service, but according to Brandenburg (2020), the most important targets of IHES include groups such as youth, the general public, and migrants in the country of the HEI; activities abroad have less priority.

The second factor is the goal of the IHES activities. It may be the public good, economic development, or social justice. The public good dimension contains goals strengthening social interaction and communication in an international and intercultural context as well as sustainability (Brandenburg 2020; Brandenburg et al. 2020). According to Elspeth Jones et al. (2021), strategic approaches to IHES conform to values for the global common good, some of which include resilience, sustainability and equal opportunities, as well as social justice, equity, development, conservation, social integration, and/or community relations with societies.

¹¹ According to Brandenburg et al. (2020), the IHES target groups comprise the following: general public, youth in the country of the HEI, municipalities, local and regional institutions, refugees in the country of the HEI, school pupils in the country of the HEI, representatives of civil society and NGOs in the country of the HEI, migrants in the country of the HEI, representatives of civil society and NGOs abroad, enterprises/companies, youth abroad, refugees abroad, peers and friends of students, communities abroad, public service providers (e.g. hospitals) in the country of the HEI, public service providers (e.g. hospitals) abroad, parents of HEI students and school pupils abroad (see also Brandenburg 2020).

The goals for public good and social justice proposed by Brandenburg et al. (2020) are listed in Table 1 below.

Public Good	Support social integration
	Support/preserve democracy
	Support/preserve peace
	Fight xenophobia/populism
	Fight radicalization
	Support European identity
	Support the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN
	Develop global citizens
	Support the environment & sustainability
	Support the acceptance of scientific results (instead of alternative facts) and critical thinking
	Support science and knowledge diplomacy/soft power
	Provide practice-oriented research
Social Justice	General education of the public / capacity building
	Support active citizenship

Table 1. IHES goals

Source: Brandenburg et al. (2020 p. 43)

The third factor covers the actors within the higher education institution. They can represent groups such as senior management, faculty, administrative staff, students, and alumni, who can all be either domestic or international (Brandenburg et al. 2020), which means that the projects can bring the global to the local, and/or the local to the global (E. Jones et al. 2021).

The fourth factor is the dimension of internationalization. Brandenburg et al. (2020) propose that internationalization can be implemented with dimensions such as internationalization at home (IaH) and internationalization of the curriculum (IoC), strategic international cooperation between higher education institutions (HEIs), research, welcome centers for international scholars or other work force, and international research networks. According to Brandenburg (2020), the dominating dimension within IHES is internationalization at home (IaH). IHES has the potential to reach the vast majority of both domestic and international students by engaging them in activities targeted at the wider public, which is why Brandenburg (2020) considers IHES to be an ideal approach for IaH.

The last three factors (5, 6, and 7) are interesting from the perspective of arts universities' engagement with society. The fifth dimension comprises involvement

at the HEIs, which can be characterized as holistic, partial, or involving individual actors only. The sixth dimension is the movement between the HEI and society, which can be the HEI moving to society or society coming to campus. The last and the seventh dimension indicates whether the primary beneficiary is society or both society and the HEI – HEIs cannot be expected to operate on a completely altruistic basis. (Brandenburg 2020)

Table 2 below indicates what kinds of IHES initiatives diverse stakeholders can take, as suggested by Elspeth Jones et al. (2021).

Actors	Initiatives
Academics	<p>Raise awareness of critical global and multicultural issues and perspectives across the local community, challenging the dominant discourse through, for example, public lectures, research, and other engagements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wider publicity on outcomes of research through media and other public channels • addressing public misconceptions on international and multicultural topics, such as migration, climate change, and social justice
Administrative / support staff / librarians	<p>Stage exhibitions, programs, or activities with an international or intercultural dimension aimed at, or available to, the public, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibitions on conflict, sustainability, environment, and colonial history • arts events with global themes, for example, world cinema and music performances
Students	<p>Support and promote international and intercultural perspectives, through activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students from other countries, from a range of ethnic or indigenous communities, or domestic students returning from study abroad make visits to local schools or organizations to talk about personal experience • language students use work experience to help local businesses engage with international markets
University – community partnerships	<p>University-wide initiatives involving stakeholders across the institution in collaboration with community organizations designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support integration of refugees and their families into the community • enable student placements or service-learning in local international or intercultural organizations and enterprises

Table 2 IHES initiatives in local communities

Source: Adapted from Elspeth Jones et al. (2021 p. 8).

Elspeth Jones et al. (2021) argue that the key features of IHES are the values behind the approach, the stakeholders involved, and the nature of the activities. These activities should be carefully planned and evaluated regularly, and the practices should be improved accordingly, if necessary. The metrics for measures of the benefits for all parties should be mutually agreed.

Higher education leaders should make sure that all stakeholders – faculty, staff, and students – understand the key characteristics of IHES and are supported in engaging accordingly. IHES should be made visible in the strategies and related documentation as well as in both internal and external conversations. Including communities in the conversations develops shared ownership and commitment to IHES. Individual contributors who already engage in IHES should be located, so that they can be supported and rewarded and made into role models to encourage proactive engagement in new initiatives. Both top-down and bottom-up initiatives should also be supported. (E. Jones et al. 2021)

The faculty could, according to Elspeth Jones et al. (2021), contribute to integrating IHES both in teaching and the curriculum. The teaching materials could include learning outcomes that are associated with global agendas, such as the SDGs of the United Nations. The faculty could also encourage students and members of communities to team up in developing courses and transformative learning experiences, provide opportunities for students to engage in local community organizations and businesses, emphasize the importance of reciprocal engagement with local communities as well as explore the potential of collaborative online international learning (COIL)¹² in international service-learning.

There is abundant research on the internationalization of higher education as well as community outreach. Internationalization research often concentrates on the impact within the university or on individual people and lacks connection to society. There has been little research on IHES, and the existing literature focuses on initiatives by individuals rather than on institutional strategy. (Brandenburg et al. 2020) Research on the concept of IHES seems to be increasing (Brandenburg 2020; E. Jones et al. 2021; E. Jones & de Wit 2021). It appears, however, that the societal impact of internationalization has not been covered systematically by HEIs. Individual initiatives exist, but an organized approach looking into structural and methodological perspectives cannot be found. Conceptual research can be found in a related field of higher education community outreach and social engagement (Brandenburg et al. 2020).

Uwe Brandenburg (2020) considers IHES as a form of internationalization at home that is still at the beginning of its trajectory, unlike traditional HEI

¹² COIL is “a pedagogy that helps to create an environment to foster the development of intercultural competence skills with the use of technology to connect classrooms in distinct geographic locations” (Appiah-Kubi & Annan 2020 pp. 109–110).

internationalization. However, they consider IHES to have great potential in contributing to solving social problems. More theory and research are needed within IHES as well as the field of university social responsibility (USR) (Brandenburg et al. 2020; Shek & Hollister 2017).

This sub-chapter has introduced the first key dimension of my theoretical framework, internationalization of higher education. First, some basic concepts of internationalization in higher education were presented. Then, internationalization of the curriculum at home (IoCaH) and internationalization in higher education for society (IHES) were described, the focus being on the features that apply to this research. The following sub-chapter continues with a discussion on sustainability, which is the second dimension of the conceptual framework in this research.

2.2 Sustainability

This sub-chapter addresses the second dimension of the conceptual framework of this research, sustainability. First, an overview of sustainability is discussed. Then, the concepts of social and cultural sustainability are described. Finally, the sub-chapter explores how sustainability is handled by higher education institutions.

2.2.1 Sustainability dimensions

2.2.1.1 Four sustainability dimensions

Sustainability and sustainable development have a variety of definitions. Julia Moore et al. (2017) identify 24 definitions for sustainability in a sample of over 200 studies. The definition adopted depends on the person and the context; sustainability is intrinsically normative, ambiguous, and subjective (Brereton 2016; Salzer et al. 2016). According to Carlos Ruggerio (2021), the definition of sustainability should comprise economic, ecological, social, and political dimensions, consider both intergenerational and intragenerational equity, and acknowledge the feedback between socio-ecological systems and their surroundings. Despite the variety of definitions, the definition by the Brundtland Commission “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations 1987 p. 1) may be the most commonly one used today (Golicic et al. 2020). This definition emphasizes development, whereas some other definitions take a more qualitative approach. Veronica Dujon (2009) proposes that sustainability could be defined as the “human quest that seeks to promote human well-being now and in the future, within the context of environmental and economic constraints” (Dujon 2009 p. 122). Sustainability is also used as a more limited concept. It is

often used to denote the durability of structures and processes as well as the ability of organizations or projects to overcome challenges and become resilient (Baltà Portolés & Dragičević Šešić 2017).

According to Steve Connelly (2007), researchers tend to approach the ambiguity in one of the following three ways: (1) they ignore the complexity although they acknowledge the challenges in achieving sustainability, (2) they acknowledge the vagueness but end up choosing their preferred definition, or (3) they openly acknowledge and characterize the ambiguity of the term and adopt a single analytical axis. Those adopting the third approach are usually committed to sustainable development and are engaged in analyzing the various understandings of the concept (Connelly 2007). The ambiguity of the concept may also be viewed in a positive light. According to Jeremy Spoon (2013), it allows all dimensions of sustainability to be relevant so that they can be applied to almost any context.

Sustainability is usually viewed from economic, environmental, and social angles (Arpaci et al. 2022; Boyer et al. 2016; Salzer et al. 2016; Štreimikienė & Kačerauskas 2020), which are often called pillars¹³. Some researchers consider the three pillars insufficient and they have accordingly proposed additional dimensions to represent hybrid concepts or intangible and ethical values (Burford et al. 2013; Hawkes 2001; Peterson 2016). These propositions include dimensions such as cultural (Hawkes 2001; Salzer et al. 2016), cultural-aesthetic, religious-spiritual, political-institutional (Asikainen et al. 2017; Burford et al. 2013), socio-cultural (Qtaishat et al. 2020), and peace and partnership (Taghvaei et al. 2023).

There have also been attempts to provide an alternative view for sustainability dimensions: Lucas Seghezze (2009) proposes a five-dimensional conceptual framework that addresses the shortcomings of the conventional idea. They propose that sustainability could be understood in terms of the three spatial dimensions, time, and the human dimension. In Taghvaei et al.'s (2023) integrated model each region should develop a relationship with the most beneficial region that has a greater effect on a particular sustainability dimension. As a result, there would be a map with regional connections and recommendations that are based on benefits and optimal growth.

Even though the traditional division into sustainability pillars or dimensions has been criticized, it has remained in common use within sustainability discourse. However, recent research calls for the prioritization of environmental sustainability due reasons such as the sixth mass extinction crisis (e.g. Shivanna 2020) and the triple planetary crisis (e.g. Seck 2022). New alternatives have also emerged, including degrowth and *buen vivir*, as Carlos Ruggerio (2021) points out.

¹³ The three-pillar concept is also called *the three-legged stool*, *the triple bottom line*, *the three E's* (economy, ecology/ environment, equity) and *the three P's* (people, planet, prosperity/profit).

2.2.1.2 Positioning social sustainability

Many researchers consider social sustainability to be closely linked to the other sustainability dimensions. In recent literature, social sustainability is often evaluated together with other sustainability dimensions in areas such as the circular economy (Boyer et al. 2021; Kristensen & Mosgaard 2020; Padilla-Rivera et al. 2020), corporate social responsibility in connection with supply chains (Arslan 2020; Chiesa & Przychodzen 2020; Najjar et al. 2020), and smart cities (Ahvenniemi et al. 2017; Freestone & Favaro 2022). This reflects the observation by Robert Freestone and Paola Favario (2022) that social sustainability is typically driven by individual disciplines.

Robert Boyer et al. (2016) identify five ways in which social sustainability is presented in existing research and practice across various disciplines as: (1) a stand-alone objective, (2), a constraint on economic and environmental imperatives, (3) a foundation for economic and environmental systems or social capital, (4) a causal mechanism for economic and environment change, and (5) integrated in a process-oriented and place-based view of sustainability. The rough topology shows increasing interest in integrating diverse dimensions of sustainability as well as considering social sustainability as an inclusive and non-hierarchical process (Boyer et al. 2016).

Social sustainability as a stand-alone matter is the simplest approach based on the idea of three separate sustainability pillars, which are often described as overlapping circles instead of pillars. In the second approach, social equity, economic development, and environmental protection are viewed as competing forces. Social sustainability is perceived as a constraint on the other sustainability dimensions and it is considered only in relation to the other dimensions (see also Amekudzi et al. 2015). Drawing from the notion that the sustainability dimensions interact, the third approach perceives social sustainability as a foundation for environmental and economic sustainability. Social sustainability is perceived as social capital (see Putnam 2001) that is a pre-requisite for both economic and environmental well-being. In the fourth approach, social sustainability is viewed as a stimulus or causal mechanism with an active role in both economic and environmental change (e.g. Shove & Walker 2014). Environmental changes, such as alternative thinking and interaction, are considered as emerging from social changes. The structures of social and technical systems reinforce each other and accordingly, major changes are likely to emerge from niches or margins. (Boyer et al. 2016)

In the fifth approach, sustainability is perceived as a place-centered and process-oriented concept, in which social, environmental, and economic imperatives overlap in local experience so that plurality is being reconciled and fostered. Phenomena can have multiple interpretations depending on the viewpoint: for

example, economic issues can be considered either social or environmental. This approach denies the existence of separate social sustainability and aspires to integrate economic, environmental and social concerns as sustainability that overlaps in both the minds and practices of people. This view reflects the ideas of Escobar (Escobar 2015, 2020), who proposes that the perception of environment, globalization, and conflict should be extended beyond the present Eurocentric paradigms (Boyer et al. 2016) (see Figure 2 below).

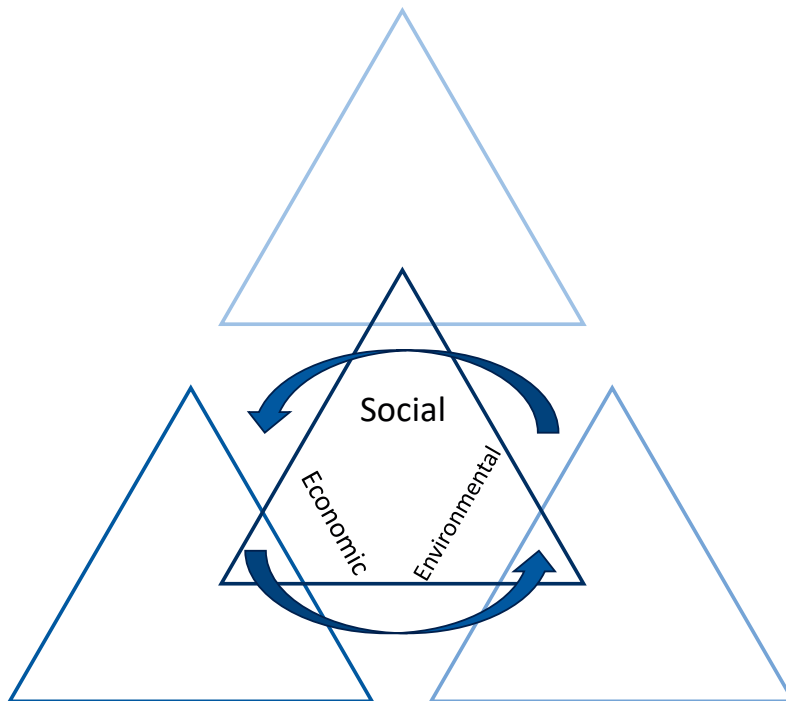


Figure 2. Fully integrated sustainability

Source: Adapted from Boyer et al. (2016, p13).

Boyer et al. (2016) argue that the integrated sustainability model adopts a local and holistic perspective without excluding experiences or domains that overlap and complement each other in a context-dependent manner. The change stretches from individual ideas to bigger groups, reaching national and global levels. According to Susan Golicic (2020), research is shifting in a direction where all three sustainability dimensions are studied using an integrated approach instead of researching the dimensions individually.

2.2.1.3 Positioning cultural sustainability

The role of culture (see Section 2.2.3) within sustainability can be viewed in various ways. One of the ways of perceiving the diverse roles for culture within sustainability was identified by Soini and Birkeland (2014) and elaborated later within Cost Action IS1007 *Investigating Cultural Sustainability* by Dessein et al. (2015). The approaches describing the role of culture within sustainability are called culture *in* sustainability, culture *for* sustainability, and culture *as* sustainability (Duxbury et al. 2017; Soini & Dessein 2016) as in Figure 3.

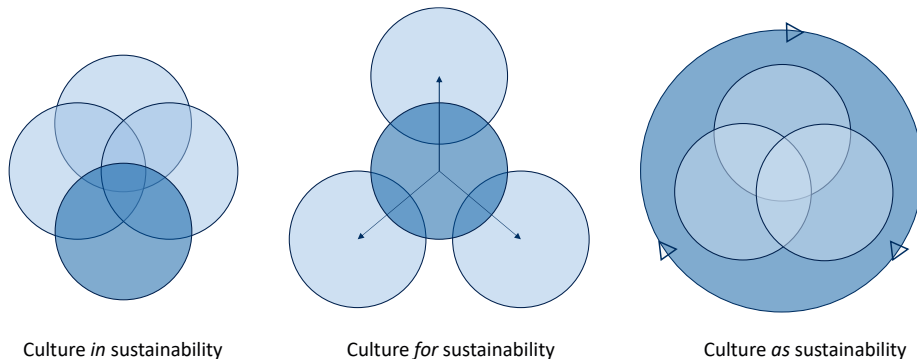


Figure 3. Relationships between culture and sustainability

Source: Adapted from Soini and Dessein (2016 p. 4).

In culture *in* sustainability, culture has an autonomous role, making culture an equal dimension of sustainability that overlaps with the other dimensions (Duxbury et al. 2017; Soini & Dessein 2016). The approach correlates Jon Hawke's proposed culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability as early as 2001 (Hawkes 2001; Soini & Birkeland 2014). In culture *for* sustainability, culture is perceived as a mediator between economic, social, and environmental sustainability (Soini & Dessein 2016). In this approach, individual and collective participation in visioning the future is essential (Baltà Portolés & Dragičević Šešić 2017). Lastly, culture *as* sustainability perceives culture as the foundation for the other sustainability dimensions, so that it is a driver for development that has potential for societal transformation.

Nancy Duxbury et al. (2017) propose that the three models provide not only a tool for assessing different discourses but also a framework for scrutinizing individual approaches in detail. They do not, however, provide an integrated model that would unite the competing explanations. Nevertheless, Anita Kangas et al. (2017) point out that the work of cultural institutions and local cultural administrations in sustaining culture should be evaluated through their instrumental role in social,

economic, and environmental sustainability, not through intrinsic cultural value (Kangas et al. 2017). The same principle could be applied to arts universities.

Dobrosława Wiktor-Mach (2020) elaborates on another set of three approaches to culture's role within sustainability by UNESCO: culture as a unique dimension of sustainable development, culture as a driver of sustainability, and culture as an enabler of sustainability. In the first approach, culture is seen as an independent pillar of sustainable development. The idea is that the variety in culture is valuable in itself, and future generations should not be deprived of it. This approach is mostly based on an anthropological understanding of culture. The second approach centers around the idea of considering culture as a driver and enabler of sustainability. Culture is considered as a means to fight against poverty, create jobs, social inclusion, sustainable urban development as well as revitalization. The third approach regards culture as an enabler; that is, a prerequisite for sustainable development. In this approach culture is perceived as a way of life and is used as an innovative means to address complex challenges.

Including culture in development thinking is not simple (De Beukelaer 2015). The challenges stem from the ambiguity of the concepts of culture, development, and sustainability themselves as well as how they can be interconnected (Wiktor-Mach 2020).

2.2.2 Social sustainability

Social sustainability, one of the key concepts in this research, has been increasingly accepted as a crucial part of sustainable development (Talan et al. 2020). The social dimension may be perceived more subjectively than the environmental and economic dimensions due to the nature of social matters that materialize through the interaction of people (Bebbington & Dillard 2009). It has been a challenge to agree upon a common definition for social sustainability because the concept has been driven by concerns and benchmarks related to individual disciplines (Freestone & Favaro 2022). Social sustainability has been described as something that takes place when both formal and informal processes, systems, structures, and relationships support current and future generations in developing healthy and livable communities (Barron & Gauntlett 2002), and as a positive condition within society that supports well-being and the process that enables reaching that condition (Dujon 2009; Messer & Kecskes 2008). Along these lines, Dujon (2009) defines social sustainability as

processes that generate social health and well-being now and, in the future, and those social institutions that facilitate environmental and economic sustainability now and for the future. (Dujon 2009 p. 122)

Theoretical and empirical research on social sustainability is scarce (Eizenberg & Jabareen 2017), and this is for various reasons. Social sustainability does not have a single coherent, clear, and utilizable definition nor is it unanimously understood (Boyer et al. 2016; De Fine Licht & Folland 2019; Desiderio et al. 2022; Nancy Stevenson 2021). The confusion stems from various factors, such as the dependency of the context and source of information (Desiderio et al. 2022), the multitude of legitimate meanings (Boyer et al. 2016), the shortage of theoretical and inter-disciplinary discourse and literature (Boyer et al. 2016), and the dominance of environmental and economic issues (Desiderio et al. 2022; Woodcraft 2016). Furthermore, social sustainability has been criticized for being vague, fuzzy, chaotic, or empty as well as lacking any theoretical foundation (Suchowerska 2021).

Social sustainability is formed out of various factors or elements that vary to some extent according to the researcher in question. Nicola Dempsey et al. (2011) divide the factors into physical and non-physical factors. They identify the following non-physical factors in research: education, inter- and intra-generational social justice, participation, local democracy, health, quality of life, well-being, social inclusion, social capital, community, safety, mixed tenure, fair distribution of income, social order, social and community cohesion, social networks, social interaction, sense of community and belonging, employment, residential stability, active community organizations, and cultural traditions (see also Nancy Stevenson 2021). According to Robert Freestone and Paola Favaro (2022), the themes concerning social sustainability in the literature include social capital, social infrastructure, social equity, social inclusion, and collaborative planning. Anita Talan et al. (2020) propose that traditional themes, such as employment and poverty, are being replaced by softer themes, such as joy and happiness, social interaction, and maturity. According to them, social equity, diversity, and social quality of life are some of the newer elements connected to social sustainability. Ibrahim Arpacı et al. (2022) identify social sustainability with qualities such as social capital, social equity, social support, social justice, social responsibility, community development, cultural competence, community resilience, health equity, human rights, livability, and labor rights.

Many researchers, such as Nicola Dempsey et al. (2011), connect social sustainability with communities and participation, which are also at the center of this research. Nancy Stevenson (2021) argues that community events develop interaction, participation, sense of place, and well-being but also reminds us that there is little research that provides answers to what the links are and what kind of participation could develop sustainability within communities. However, according to Stevenson (2021), it is being increasingly acknowledged that participation may have positive effects for privileged people at the expense of marginalized people, which has led to targeting initiatives towards deprived

communities. They propose that social sustainability might be best achieved, if power were delegated to community members within community events but acknowledge that more research is needed to make sure that participation in the production of events, such as community festivals, reflects and includes the diversity of the community. Diversity is a central ingredient of the definition of social sustainability, and according to Mario Polèse and Richard Stren (2000)

development... fostering an environment conducive to the compatible cohabitation of culturally and socially diverse groups, while at the same time encouraging social integration, with improvements in the quality of life for all segments of the population. (Polèse & Stren 2000 pp. 15–16)

Social sustainability is mostly connected to positive ideas. However, initiatives related to it sometimes suffer from the absence of inclusive and informed participation, marginalization, and a disregard for alternative views (Dillard et al. 2013), or lack of equity due to differences in social status and power (Hanchett 2016). Robert Putnam (2000) points out that social capital and communities may not only be assets because diverse groups, such as power elites and various movements, may use social capital for purposes that are not for the common good.

Social sustainability has been argued to be the least developed sustainability dimension (Magis & Shinn 2009; McKenzie 2004). However, in post-growth economies (Malmaeus et al. 2020), the necessary shift from growth to alternative goals requires attention to the social aspects of sustainability (Magis & Shinn 2009). Accordingly, there is growing interest in social sustainability (Desiderio et al. 2022; Dillard et al. 2013).

2.2.3 Cultural sustainability

Before talking about cultural sustainability, a central concept in this research, it is important to understand what the term *culture* refers to. The cultural policy field typically uses culture for arts, creative or artistic expression, and heritage (Duxbury et al. 2017; Hawkes 2001; Isar 2017). The mainstream sustainability field (Duxbury et al. 2017) usually understands culture in an anthropological way as a shared way of thinking and behaving (Carter & Bolden 2012; Kangas et al. 2017). Nowadays, the two definitions of culture tend to be increasingly used together (Isar 2017), as in this research.

Culture may refer to “the inherent values and the means and the results of social expression” (Hawkes 2001 p. 3) or the knowledge that is used to activate collective behavior and communicate social meaning (Carter & Bolden 2012). Culture can be perceived as an imprint of social groups on an individual expressed in language, symbols, beliefs, values, norms, rituals, and material objects (Carter & Bolden 2012). Anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) describes culture as webs of

significance that human beings themselves spin. They perceive culture as interworked systems of symbols – a context, within which social events, behavior, institutions and processes can be thickly described and analyzed by interpretive search for meaning. Characteristics of this kind are more often used in the anthropological sense, but they may also be used in the context of the artistic interpretation of culture.

Drawing on Jack Goody's ideas, Katriina Siivonen (2008) considers the anthropological perception of culture dichotomic. On the one hand, culture is viewed as a static frame or structure. The culture you belong to defines who you are: individuals and identities are perceived as concrete and unchanging instead of fluid and negotiated. This essentialist stand is founded on the idea of a unique culture with an objective reality (Carter & Bolden 2012; Siivonen 2008). On the other hand, the constructionist view acknowledges that numerous factors affect a person's cultural identity, all contributing to a fluid cultural identity or multiple identities that may change over the person's lifetime (Harrison 2015). Adopting this constructionist view, culture can be perceived as a global and continuously changing flow of traditions (Hannerz 1992; Siivonen 2008), "an active process that is continuously constructed and negotiated through social interaction" (Carter & Bolden 2012 p. 5). This research follows the present tendency to perceive culture as a process rather than something static (UNESCO 2009; Westerlund et al. 2020; Wiktor-Mach 2020).

Cultural sustainability is commonly understood as either the sustainability of cultural and artistic practices and patterns, which include identity, cultural heritage, and cultural continuity, or as the role of cultural characteristics and actions on the way towards sustainable societies (Kangas et al. 2017). In an operational context related to culture, sustainability may refer to the durability of cultural organizations and projects (Baltà Portolés & Dragičević Šešić 2017). Another, relatively narrow interpretation of cultural sustainability refers to the potential of cultural processes in contributing to each other's durability through interaction in a cultural ecosystem or cultural ecology (Baltà Portolés & Dragičević Šešić 2017).

Cultural sustainability is frequently given a societal association. Culture is an essential element in a sustainable society, as pointed out by Jon Hawkes as early as 2001: the sustainable development of societies needs sustainable culture, which comprises a rich and evolving cultural life with vital cultural action and ingredients, such as well-being, engagement, diversity and vitality of artistic and cultural expressions, and the avoidance of the homogenization of culture (Hawkes 2001). Hawkes considers active community participation and practice in the arts central, whereas he resents a strong emphasis on heritage. Combining the active and preservative angles, cultural sustainability could be thought of as "the value for

human organizations, communities, and societies of preserving and advancing cultural life, including cultural heritage, cultural vitality, creative human practices, and cultural diversity” (Kagan & Kirchberg 2016 p. 1490).

Cultural capital can be considered the basis of culturally sustainable development, as suggested by David Throsby (2017). He proposes that besides economic value, past and present tangible and intangible assets have cultural value that represents cultural capital. According to Throsby, cultural capital follows five principles: intergenerational equity, intragenerational equity, precautionary principle, interconnectedness of sustainability dimensions, and diversity. Cultural diversity is an essential ingredient of cultural sustainability. It has intrinsic value, and it stimulates creativity, for example, through intercultural dialogue. In line with some researchers of social sustainability, Throsby questions continuous economic growth in the context of culturally sustainable development. Several researchers (e.g. Brocchi 2010; Kagan 2010; Worts 2006) agree with this view arguing that achieving sustainability requires a shift away from a consumption-oriented, industrialized and hyper-modern culture. Instead, people should turn to a culture that empowers them to transform their lives to become more inclusive and sustainable (Kagan & Kirchberg 2016).

Engagement plays an important role in some of the perceptions of cultural sustainability. While culture is understood as a continuously changing flow of traditions (Hannerz 1992; Siivonen 2008), cultural sustainability refers to the fostering of changing and transforming traditions as well as respecting the diversity of people. The primary form of cultural sustainability can be thought to include an equal right to define one’s cultural existence and to participate in the definition of cultural change both locally and globally (Siivonen 2008). According to the above scholars, culture is being sustained when traditions interact and transform through the interactions of people through participation and collaboration, and the actions promote mutual respect and secure human rights. Siivonen et al. (Siivonen 2008; Siivonen et al. 2022) argue that even though change is inherent in culture, mere voluntary influencing may not be enough, and that traditions need to be directed actively in a more sustainable direction.

Research related to cultural sustainability has had its share of criticism. It has been criticized for methodological weaknesses, a focus on the outputs rather than the outcomes, and lacking proof of a causal relationship between participation and positive social outcomes (Jeannotte 2017). Policymakers and the cultural field often argue that there is not much evidence on the social effects of culture (Jeannotte 2017). Nancy Duxbury et al. (2017) argue that cultural and creative industries do not contribute to sustainable development intrinsically, although they admit that they could under favorable circumstances. Cultural sustainability has gained importance and is increasingly considered as important as social,

economic, and environmental concerns (Loach et al. 2017). Much has been done, although some researchers, such as Yudhishtir Isar (2017), are not satisfied with how several academic sustainability researchers deal with culture. They claim that research tends to be guilty of repeating established discussions on culture and sustainable development instead of developing the concepts further (Isar 2017).

Marja Järvelä (2023) argues that the importance of cultural sustainability is still undervalued as a vital element in social transformation towards sustainability. According to them, the original idea of sustainable development concentrated on environmental, economic, and social targets without specifying culture as one of the targets in social change, and within that framework cultural sustainability becomes a vaguely defined part of social sustainability. Contrary to that idea, cultural sustainability in this research is considered an independent dimension of sustainable development.

2.2.4 Sustainability within HEIs

Higher education institutions (HEIs), such as the arts universities researched in this doctoral dissertation, have an important role in the transition towards a sustainable future. They have changed from passive transmitters of knowledge to proactive agents within their region (Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019; Peer & Penker 2016). In addition to their traditional commitment to social responsibility, HEIs are expected to engage actively with sustainability (Leal Filho, Doni et al. 2019). However, the relationship between social responsibility and sustainability is complex. Social responsibility refers to the social contract organizations have with their societal stakeholders, whereas sustainability can be considered a principle of intra- and intergenerational justice (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019; Sarkar & Searcy 2016). Nevertheless, social responsibility is often considered the key driver of global sustainable development (Leal Filho, Doni, et al. 2019; Sarkar & Searcy 2016; Vargas 2016).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR)¹⁴ commonly refers to enterprises but it involves higher education institutions as well. Wayne Visser (2012) argues that sustainability and responsibility are complementary elements within CSR. They describe sustainability as the desired destination manifested in the vision, strategy, and goals, whereas responsibility is the journey that leads to the destination through solutions, responses, management, and actions. Even though CSR and sustainability are interrelated and CSR contains the idea of sustainability, the academic world tends to prefer the term sustainability (Carroll 2021).

¹⁴ The European Commission defines CSR as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society” (*Corporate Social Responsibility / Responsible Business Conduct* n.d.).

Sustainability should be viewed holistically (Adams et al. 2018; Sammalisto et al. 2015) so that it is integrated in all processes, in the structure and in the culture of the organization of the HEI (Adams et al. 2018; Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019). Walter Leal Filho, Constantina Skanavis et al. consider planning crucial for a successful implementation. Instead of just adding a little something here and there, HEIs should aim at a proper paradigm change, which requires an understanding of conceptual shifts and engagement (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019). Values, behavior, and systems (Adams et al. 2018; Ramos et al. 2015) as well as culture need to change if universities want to transform into organizations with a sustainability-oriented culture (Adams et al. 2018; Linnenluecke et al. 2009). This gradual transformation process is often described as a journey (Adams et al. 2018; Mohrman & Worley 2010).

Considering sustainable development as an opportunity rather than a burden offers significant potential (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019). As sustainability gains importance, the structures, functions, and societal roles of universities are likely to change. Universities can differentiate themselves according to their interests. Ali Beynaghi et al. (2016) propose that in the future, universities may choose an economic, environmental, or social orientation, or a combination of these. A socially engaged university is committed to promoting just and sustainable development. The aim is to advance societal transformations by promoting sustainability through social well-being and human development. According to Beynaghi et al. (2016), socially engaged universities will have an important role in society in tackling social issues. This would happen through education, research, outreach, and community development, focusing on local communities or chosen areas in developing countries. Potential impacts include, for example, quality of life, well-being, and gender equality.

Even though HEIs consider sustainability important, there are some challenges. Sustainability and social responsibility are often driven by individuals or the actions are fragmented (Adams et al. 2018; Kohl et al. 2021; McMillin & Dyball 2009; G. Scott et al. 2012) without a holistic and integrated approach (Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019; Sammalisto et al. 2015; Shiel et al. 2016). Activities at the local level may also be hindered by a lack of interest from colleagues, social partners, and municipalities (Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019).

If HEIs want their sustainability initiatives to succeed, it is important to engage people within and outside the university. Several researchers stress the importance of co-creation and reciprocity (e.g. Bogedain & Hamm 2020; Wolff & Ehrström 2020). It is crucial to involve students, staff, faculty, the campus community as well as local and global partners (Teslenko 2019). The importance of the students' role in the engagement varies. Rachael Budowle et al. (2021) argue that students can play a significant role as a bridge to the community and as change agents alongside

community stakeholders, if there is no formal relationship between the community and the university. According to Gisele Mazon (2020), some studies show a distancing between students and the application of sustainability initiatives that is not in accordance with the Talloires declaration¹⁵, which gives the students a significant role within sustainability development. Accordingly, the students are given the role of receptors rather than sources of development. Community engagement could be a way to involve students in sustainability-related activities (Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019). Beynaghi et al. (2016) indicate that a socially engaged university promotes sustainability with the local community and the region. In the same vein, Walter Leal Filho, Valeria Ruiz Vargas et al. (2019) propose that if HEIs want to have a role as change agents, they should co-create their curricula in cooperation with the local community and include both faculty and students in the process (see also Lubicz-Nawrocka 2018, 2023; Lubicz-Nawrocka & Owen 2022). However, questions related to power, privilege, and how marginalized people can be included have started to emerge (Faludi et al. 2023).

The governance related to sustainability initiatives within HEIs can vary. Discourse in higher education sustainability literature exists on whether the leadership should be top-down or distributed (Akins et al. 2019). Some researchers prefer a top-down-approach when integrating sustainability (e.g. Ramos et al. 2015). Gisele Mazon et al. (2020) argue that sustainability-related promotion is usually a top-down activity but stress the importance of the bottom-up approach. Many researchers highlight the combination of a top-down and bottom-up approach (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019; Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019; Verhulst & Lambrechts 2015). Marena Brinkhurst et al. (2011) argue that the classification bottom-up versus top-down ignores the role of the “middle”; that is, faculty and staff, who might not be well-versed in sustainability (Mulder et al. 2012; Sammalisto et al. 2015) and consider sustainability as secondary in their work. However, they are the ones to engage in sustainability at universities in the future (Sammalisto et al. 2015). Kaisu Sammalisto et al. (2015) consider the faculty to be critical change agents in the transformation towards sustainability and stress the central role of management in supporting the faculty in their role. According to Edwin Akins et al. (2019), the concept of change agents implies that change depends on collaboration, institutional know-how, political awareness, and patience, but is not high profile. It is important that all institutional levels engage with sustainability (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019). Nevertheless, the approach depends on the context, culture, and the personal styles of those in charge of the planning (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019). The approach may also vary according to the sustainability dimension pursued.

¹⁵ Talloires declaration is the first official statement made by senior managers in universities of a commitment to environmental sustainability in higher education (University leaders for a sustainable future n.d.).

Organizational culture is essential in the transformation towards sustainability (Adams et al. 2018; Bertels et al. 2010). It not only gives a sense of identity and enables consistent and systematic action within the organization, but also reflects the idea that groups of people share ideas, norms, values, beliefs, customs, and understandings that govern the actions of group members in pursuing the goals of the organization (Adams et al. 2018; Jacobs et al. 2013). The manifestations can be witnessed at various tiers of the organization (Adams et al. 2018) and, accordingly, an organization may comprise several sub-cultures (Adams et al. 2018; Linnenluecke et al. 2009; Silver 2003). It is not fully agreed upon whether sub-cultures within an organization form one coherent culture. Harold Silver (2003) acknowledges that there are sub-cultures within a university, but they deny the existence of a single culture. According to them, the idea of a single culture would ignore the issues of conflict and lack of coherence. Cultural influence happens at various levels, such as within departments as well as between employees and students, and is important within activities such as internationalization (Adams et al. 2018).

In a university culture that promotes sustainability the members and stakeholders share certain values and an understanding of the principles of economic, social, and environmental sustainability (Adams et al. 2018; Bertels et al. 2010). The mission, values, goals, and the strategy form the core of a sustainability-focused culture (Adams et al. 2018; Galpin et al. 2015). According to Adams et al. (2018), universities should express sustainability clearly, and promote openness and transparency. The efforts towards sustainability could be facilitated by making the university culture visible. Bringing the publicly presumed values and organizational behavior closer would give them social legitimacy. However, since being sustainable is considered politically correct, the openness can include a risk of sustainability washing (Isaksson et al. 2013). It is important that the culture and the actions are in line. Forcing the members of an organization to implement practices that do not match the culture may cause resistance and eventually lead to either a rejection or mutual adaptation of both the practices and the culture (Adams et al. 2018; Canato et al. 2013). Individuals are the promoters of and affected by cultural change; therefore, universities should deploy proper incentives and reward systems (Adams et al. 2018).

Sustainability-related activities in HEIs can be viewed from the angle of collective competences. Terhi Nokkala et al. (2023 p. 2) conceptualize collective competences as “a multilayered set of rules, norms and cultural-cognitive elements that enable and constrain organizational action”. Within their framework, Nokkala et al. (2023) draw from the institutional theory (e.g. W. R. Scott 2008) as well as nestedness in organizations (Hüther & Krücken 2016). Whereas the institutional theory considers an institution to be a combination of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that provide stability and meaning to social life

together with related activities and resources (W. R. Scott 2008), the organizational nestedness functions in a multifaceted and multidimensional space in which diverse actors and HEIs interact around their shared goal, i.e. sustainability. Nokkala et al.'s (2023) framework conceptualizes space in relational terms as a nested institutional space, which is simultaneously an organizational structure, a social relationship, and a community. The researchers describe sustainability work as continuous powerplay and redefinition of boundaries, also pointing out the symbolic dimensions of space, manifested in sustainability strategies, declarations, vision statements, and action plans that contribute to the collective identities within the organization. HEIs both shape and are being shaped by the ideas, interests, and identities of their stakeholders and other involved actors covering various nested spaces. Implementing a complex agenda, such as sustainability, demands multiple competences on different levels within and outside the organization as well as diverse interacting individual and collective competences. Nokkala et al. point out that definitions of individual and collective competences stress the ability of an individual or an organization to act, but they reject the idea that the competences of individual members, such as its senior managers, or the sum of the individual competences and actions would determine the capacity an organization. Nokkala et al. also stress the importance of the operational context.

There is little empirical research on how universities contribute to sustainability efforts within local communities. Walter Leal Filho, Valeria Ruiz Vargas et al. (2019) argue that more research is needed on the potential leading role of universities in regional sustainable development, knowledge transfer between HEIs and local communities, and the impacts of their contribution outside the campus. Barriers include topics such as (1) limited awareness and understanding and low prioritization of sustainability, (2) lack of an organization responsible for the implementation of sustainability, (3) insufficient command of strategic planning and the absence of a planning framework for the implementation of sustainability, (4) insufficient resources, including the faculties having full schedules (Sammalisto et al. 2015) (5) insufficient communication, (6) lack of interest or conflicting beliefs of the senior management (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019), (7) organizational structures such as siloed disciplines (Cortese 2003; Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019), and (8) lack of a commonly agreed vision (Cortese 2003; Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019; Nejati et al. 2011). The nature of the barriers to cooperation appears to be human rather than technical (Adams et al. 2018; Trencher et al. 2014).

This section on sustainability within higher education institutions concludes the sub-chapter on sustainability, which is the second dimension of the conceptual framework of this research. The focus has been on social and cultural sustainability. The following sub-chapter continues with a discussion on

community engagement in higher music education institutions as the third dimension of the conceptual framework of this research.

2.3 Community engagement within HMEIs

This sub-chapter describes the role of community engagement in higher music education institutions (HMEIs) and explores diverse forms of participatory music as well as the concept of artistic citizenship. Community engagement is a process in which universities engage with community stakeholders to undertake mutually beneficial activities (Benneworth et al. 2018). Community engagement is the third key dimension of the conceptual framework of this research.

2.3.1 HMEIs on the way towards engaged universities

Publicly funded arts education institutions are increasingly expected to participate in dealing with societal concerns. Issues such as exclusion, inequality, and social injustice have been acknowledged by music education as well as other arts-related fields. However, the arts field has not unanimously accepted the idea of widening its professional obligations beyond artistic quality, as stated earlier in sub-chapter 1.1. (Westerlund et al. 2021).

In higher music education institutions (HMEIs), one of the central causes for exclusion, inequality, and social injustice is the tendency to prioritize Western classical music. The topic is addressed by numerous scholars. According to Christopher Small (1998), privileging Western classical music above all other musics is strange and contradictory – it appeals only to a very small minority, even in Western industrialized societies. The dominance of Western classical music is continuously being questioned and there is increasing demand for decolonizing music education (Bartleet et al. 2020; Dolloff 2020; Hess 2018; Madrid 2017; N. R. Thomson 2021). According to Helena Gaunt (2021), HMEIs during the past 30 years have increasingly engaged in initiatives for decolonizing the curriculum, including greater diversity in composers, performers and teachers as well as musics and musical practices. Diverse musical practices in music teacher education would enable teachers to engage with diverse musics rather than tokenize and underrepresent the ones that do not represent Western art music (McArton 2020). There are some genres that do not fit into the Western classical music category, such as world music and global music, as well as popular music. Despite increasing demand, popular music programs meet challenges in finding their place, especially within HMEIs that have strong classical music departments, whereas jazz music is considered “an integral part of highbrow Western art music” (Coppes & Berkers

2023 p. 474). Some researchers, however, question the recognition of difference in music (Born & Hesmondhalgh 2000).

Another topic in the discourse on inclusion or exclusion is the perceived elitism and exclusivity of music education. Recent research confirms the inequality related to the middle-class culture of classical music practice (Bull 2019, 2019; Scharff 2018; Väkevä et al. 2022; R. Wright 2019). According to Lauri Väkevä et al. (2022), the tendency in (Western) music education to exclude is increasingly acknowledged.

In Finland, anybody can in principle participate in a basic education in the arts. However, some social mechanisms maintain unequal access to music education (Räisänen & Sairanen 2016), so that at least socio-economic status and cultural legitimacy affect the student's potential to be admitted to the program (e.g. R. Wright 2019). According to studies made in the United Kingdom, students from ethnic minorities, especially black students, are under-represented in higher music education institutions (e.g. Price 2020), which can stem from a lack of role models (Derbyshire 2015). According to Heidi Westerlund et al. (2021), several corrective policy instruments have been introduced in recent years to facilitate the access of children who might not otherwise apply to these programs, including those with an immigrant background. It is important for the social justice and cultural diversity of music education institutions that marginalized people have access to them (Clements 2009; Fitzpatrick et al. 2014; Koza 2010). If children do not start engaging in music early on, they will hardly be eligible for higher music education at a later stage. However, it should be noted that migrant children are not a homogeneous group (Rinde & Kenny 2021).

The curriculum is one of the means universities can use to address societal concerns and to reach out to diverse communities. In the past, music education emphasized a one-to-one instruction model (Carruthers 2020; K. Thomson 2021), whereas curricula now favor more student-led and collaborative approaches (Gaunt & Westerlund 2016b; K. Thomson 2021). The need to transform the curriculum in a more socially engaged direction has been discussed by researchers such as Heidi Westerlund et al. (2015), Katja Thomson (2021), and Helena Gaunt et al. (2021). In addition to the curriculum, Gaunt et al. (2021) propose that inequalities and their structural embedding as well as restructuring admission processes and staff recruitment have become topical. According to Westerlund et al. (2021), expanding the responsibility of the teacher to include collaboration does not need to impact the micro-level interaction between the teacher and the student, but is rather a structural change affecting recruitment and professional expectations. Katja Thomson (2021) emphasizes the need for bridging higher music education institutions with diverse communities (see also Gande & Kruse-

Weber 2017) and the ethical dimensions of the work (Bröske 2017; Karlsen et al. 2016).

The crucial question concerning community engagement within HMEIs is whether it is considered an *add-on extension* or a core part of higher education studies (K. Thomson 2021 p. 11). The transformation into an engaged university entails that changes are fully integrated in the organization so that the institution can start promoting its new core mission (Grau et al. 2017). According to an interview with piano professor John Mortensen published in a newspaper (Mortensen 2020), students are looking for a more flexible form of musicianship, but schools are generally not prepared to offer that (as cited in N. R. Thomson 2021).

When arts education is perceived as a cultural and educational as well as a socially embedded praxis¹⁶, arts educators can be responsible professionals without the need to compromise the intrinsic value of art. Professional arts education institutions should encourage this kind of transformation (Westerlund et al. 2021) where teachers can become change agents (Juntunen et al. 2014). However, the state-funded music education system, for example in Finland, is still career-oriented and mentally focused on talent-picking. The teacher's role is to sustain the purpose of the system without any real societal connection (Väkevä et al. 2017, 2022; Westerlund et al. 2021). Heidi Westerlund et al. (2021) argue that this expert-oriented culture may lead to alienation from societal responsibilities that otherwise increasingly affect the art world. According to them, arts education is one of the professional fields in which the "institutionalized professional practices and path-dependent educational systems easily create self-protecting professional silos, which in turn tie the hands of individual professionals through various institutional norms and organizational boundaries" (Westerlund et al. 2021 p. 6).

In reaching out, the field of higher music education is taking a new position that is beyond the polarized view of the intrinsic or instrumental value of music. (Barnett & Bengtson 2019; K. Thomson 2021). Helena Gaunt et al. (2021) propose that HMEIs should embrace the dichotomy between the intrinsic and instrumental purpose of arts instead of considering the two as competing priorities. Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Lee Higgins (2018) believe that the community music field is not only maturing but also becoming a driver for social change. According to them, the dichotomy of intrinsic versus instrumental is outdated. Drawing on Crossick and Kaszynska (2016), they propose that the concepts should be scrutinized instead of being considered as formal oppositions. There is also empirical evidence that suggests that the dichotomy between instrumental and intrinsic does not even exist (Bartleet & Higgins 2018).

¹⁶ Elliot et al. (2016 p. 6) understand praxis to be "a multidimensional concept that includes active reflection and critically reflective action... with continuous concern for protecting and advancing the well-being of others".

2.3.2 Participatory music in community engagement

Music can be used to foster interaction between people. Making music together for social purposes is represented by concepts such as participatory music, musicking, collaborative music, and community music. *Participatory music making* creates a connection between the participants because of the shared interactive engagement; it creates social cohesion even among the most diverse individuals (Turino 2008). This term is reflected in Small's (1998) *musicking*, which describes the participatory nature of musical action. *Collaborative music making* has been influenced by an earlier participatory phase that some researchers, such as Higgins (2006), call *community music*, which includes features such as inclusion from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, recognition and mobilization of local and indigenous knowledge, and empowerment (K. Thomson 2021).

Many researchers elaborate on the process and benefits of participatory music. Community music captures the potential of collaborative and participatory musical practices to empower individuals and groups in diverse ways (Westvall 2021). It aims at the well-being of people through mutual understanding and shared experiences, which makes it an instrument for developing communities and social cohesion (Kagan & Kirchberg 2016; Koopman 2007). Music is considered to have the potential to create various layers of positive societal impact beyond the music itself: "music may have a greater function to play in terms of its power to respect differences, and to create dialogue, equity, connections, and cross boundaries between people" (N. R. Thomson 2021 p. 7). Well-being is related to sustainability to some extent, but research tends to connect it more to social cohesion (Jeannotte 2017), which, on the other hand, is connected to sustainable communities and societies (Duxbury & Jeannotte 2011).

The literature review by Saras Henderson et al. (2017) confirms that many researchers consider participatory music practices as potential tools in creating health and well-being as well as social benefits for people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds who are vulnerable or at risk. In the same vein, the literature review by Soo Yon Yi and Aimee Jeehae Kim (2023) suggests that the act of socially engaged music making is the core factor that promotes well-being. The diversity in community music enriches and reflects the cultural life of the participants as well as the community around them (Bartleet 2009). Community music represents a practice against homogeneity (Higgins 2006). According to Bartleet and Higgins (2018), the internationalization of community music has expanded and challenged the concept, but at the same time, community music has also gained increasing interest in academia, and the number of people engaging in it has increased significantly all over the world.

Participatory music in the context of refugees has been researched by numerous scholars (e.g. Boeskov 2017; Brøske 2017; Brøske-Danielsen 2013; Crawford 2017;

Gande & Kruse-Weber 2017; Sunderland et al. 2016; K. Thomson 2021). Music is regarded as an instrument that helps refugees create relationships, and build self-esteem and resilience during a challenging transition (e.g. Marsh 2017; Sunderland et al. 2015). Music is also considered a good means for tying social bonds (Schiavio et al. 2019; Sunderland et al. 2015) and creating a sense of belonging (Crawford 2017; Marsh 2017; Raanaas et al. 2019), without the need for a shared spoken language (Marsh 2012; K. Thomson 2021). However, there are also critical voices. According to Katja Thomson (2021), research tends to focus on the well-being of refugees, which overshadows other important but complicated topics, such as politics concerning diversity, multiculturalism, human rights, and institutional and individual responsibility. According to them, the use of music in helping immigrants integrate into society has not been realized to its full potential. If collaboration through music is perceived only as a positive matter, the power relations at play may potentially be ignored (Bergh & Sloboda 2010; K. Thomson 2021). In the same vein, Boeskov (2017) considers community music practices with refugees ambiguous and conflictual.

Through artistic interaction people have a chance to develop meaningful relationships with diverse others, which can bring new awareness of their own cultural identity. This community-led learning praxis is a way to intercultural and artistic development in which the participants not only learn to understand diverse others and their experiences better but also experience how it feels to be a minority “other” in an unfamiliar culture (Bartleet & Carfoot 2016). Katja Thomson (2021) argues that intercultural, collaborative spaces for musicking allow the integration of immigrants and refugees to develop as a reciprocal, two-way process (Castles et al. 2002 p. 113; Fisher et al. 2023) in which the participants are challenged to engage with the unfamiliar. Drawing from Nick Stevenson (2011), Katja Thomson (2021) argues that music education practices dealing with equity and participation should actively try to include the *other* and not just tolerate difference.

The idea of a common cultural national identity has been questioned in the context of immigration and globalization and diverse alternatives have been proposed for getting a sense of belonging (Loobuyck 2012). Katja Thomson (2021) proposes that accepting the interdependence of individuals and following Bauman’s idea of being able to live with difference could be an alternative to social cohesion based on a shared national identity. According to Crooke et al. (2023), intercultural music engagement can provide benefits such as social cohesion and intercultural understanding. In their research, Nathan Riki Thomson (2021) uses *intercultural* and *transcultural* to articulate collaboration in which artists actively engage with difference and argues that the mere presence of diversity is not enough to make music intercultural or transcultural. Respect for and engagement with difference, openness to extend one’s thinking, intercultural humility, collaboration, and co-creation are some of the ingredients needed (N. R. Thomson 2021). Several

researchers, such as Jennifer Laing and Judith Mair (2015), Insun Lee et al. (2012) and Najmeh Hassanli et al. (2021), discuss the benefits of engagement in the context of music festivals. Being confronted with different cultures widens perspectives and provides an opportunity for negotiation between cultures as well potential for positive transformation with mutual benefits (Kruse-Weber et al. 2023).

The relationship between participation and the quality of the sound is one of the discourses related to participatory music. According to Thomas Turino (2016), participatory music making can be a powerful resource for social change. The reason behind this idea is that the values of participatory music making are opposed to a capitalist ethos, anybody can participate equally, participants keep returning because the activity is pleasant, and it forms a basis for special social cohorts. Turino argues that in deeply participatory events everybody can and should participate in the performance and that the events are interactive social occasions. To keep the participation in a performance motivating, there should be people with a wide range of abilities. In highly participatory traditions, success is judged by the degree of participation, not the quality of the sound produced, which means that participatory music is about attention to the other participants and social relations (Turino 2016 p. 303). According to Turino (2008), in a fully participatory event there are only participants and potential participants. Therefore, they consider the quality of the sound essential because it is the sound that inspires people to participate. Geoffrey Baker (2016 p. 330) raises the question of whether the students involved in participatory music are being empowered at the cost of musical excellence, but according to them, this “view depends on a particular conception of excellence that takes professional European classical music performance as its benchmark” (see also Ewell 2021; Thornton & Hess 2023). Baker also suggests an alternative way of defining excellence: the involvement of musical practices that simulate democratic, egalitarian, and non-competitive values and interaction, which are not typical in orchestras.

Participatory music has a close connection to sustainability. Rohan Nethsinghe (2013) proposes that community music making is not only beneficial for students in constructing their self-identity in a multicultural context, but also an important resource for cultural and social sustainability. According to Sacha Kagan and Volker Kirchberg (2016), participatory music is the most sustainable type of music. However, they point out that although the potential of arts and culture within the transformation towards sustainability has been recognized, a focus on music has been lacking.

2.3.3 Artistic citizenship

David Elliot et al. (2016) propose the concept of *artistic citizenship* to reflect the obligation of artists to engage in art making that fosters social good. They want to emphasize that they do not use the terms *artist*, *artistry* and *artistic* in an exclusive or elitist sense. Instead, the term *artist* refers to people of all ages and skill levels who make or participate in making music in any context with the primary intention of making a positive difference in people's lives, whereas the terms *citizen* and *citizenship* refer to the idea of living and acting in a pro-social and responsible way. The researchers do not want to define how artistry and citizenship should be combined. Drawing on Wayne Bowman (2012), Elliot et al. argue that arts instruction too often concentrates on polishing techniques, which they consider more suitable for training than education. Even though the concentration on techniques can produce spectacular products and presentations, it does not connect to students' everyday lives, which is why Elliot et al. consider the agendas of many arts educators narrow and disconnected. Accordingly, the researchers argue that conventional approaches in arts teaching and learning neglect the ethical dimension that differentiates human practice from technical skill. Instead, educators should facilitate their students in approaching arts in a socially responsible, responsive, and constructive way (see also Silverman & Elliott 2016). Kruse-Weber et al. (2023) also discuss the traditional career-oriented understanding of excellence related to Western musical contexts that leans on practice and skills, and propose thinking of excellence in terms of key competencies that cover both artistic and social skills (see also Bucura 2020).

Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Gavin Carfoot (2016) propose that artistic citizenship overlaps with intercultural work in music education (e.g. Thapa 2020). Their experiences in indigenous communities in Australia bring forth politics, power issues, and the sociopolitical history of colonization, which requires critical thinking and provides both threats and opportunities. On that basis, Bartleet and Carfoot have developed an approach to practicing artistic citizenship through art-based service-learning in indigenous contexts. Students who have participated in these projects have felt a need to reconceptualize their role as artists, being used to working in a competitive and individualistic way. The arts practice is reciprocal, and it should bring mutual benefit both for the community and the students involved, and it should be active reciprocity instead of passive offering or receiving. Reciprocity applies to processes and outcomes at both individual and collective levels. (Bartleet & Carfoot 2016)

Active practical engagement is the key factor for the social benefits associated with artistic citizenship (Bartleet & Carfoot 2016; Bowman 2016). According to Bowman (2016 p. 76), Western art has a long history of a hierarchical relationship between the "doers" and the "done to" or "done for", which is neither universal nor

necessary, especially in artistic citizenship. Bowman considers direct personal engagement and participatory practices with co-operative action crucial and more inclusive than traditional presentational practices (see also Turino 2008). However, there is a limit to the inclusivity of artistic citizenship. Bowman proposes that the concept of artistic citizenship excludes people who do not wish to “protect the internal goods of the artistic practice... those who do not embrace the fundamentally ethical nature of artistic practices... and those whose art-related endeavors are complacently confined to disciplinary or technical concerns” (Bowman 2016 p. 77).

This sub-chapter has given an overview of community engagement in the context of higher music education institutions (HMEIs), which is the third key dimension of this research. The terms *community music*, *participatory music making*, *collaborative music making*, *community engagement* and *artistic citizenship* have been discussed. Although these approaches use different terminology, they share common underlying values, and this research draws from all approaches. My preferred term in this study is *community engagement*. The reason behind the choice is not only because the term is adopted from the research on internationalization in higher education for society but also because during the abductive research process engagement with communities emerged as a key element of socially sustainable internationalization. The next sub-chapter establishes the conceptual framework of the dissertation.

2.4 Conceptual framework

This sub-chapter establishes a conceptual framework for socially sustainable internationalization by integrating the concepts of internationalization, social sustainability, and community engagement introduced in the previous sub-chapters. The conceptual framework serves as the foundation for the empirical part of this research.

Within the first dimension of my framework, internationalization, I draw from internationalization of the curriculum at home (IoCaH) (e.g. E. Jones et al. 2021) and internationalization in higher education for society (IHES) (Brandenburg et al. 2020). Internationalization that relates to social sustainability is scrutinized within campus as well as in relation to local communities with a strategic leadership and organizational focus.

In this research, internationalization is understood as

the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all

students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society.
(de Wit et al. 2015 p. 29)

It is to be noted that internationality and the mere presence of international students and staff does not internationalize a university (e.g. Leask 2009).

The second dimension of my framework is sustainability, the focus being on social sustainability. Sustainability is understood through a wide definition that can be interpreted flexibly allowing multiple views and interpretations to co-exist (Sammalisto et al. 2015). This view corresponds to the fully integrated sustainability described by Robert Boyer et al. (2016), which is place-based and process-oriented (see Section 2.2.1.2). In this view, sustainability rises from the dialogue between individuals with their own interests and beliefs, which matches the social constructionist foundation of this research. The change starts from individuals and stretches into larger groups, even to the global level. The model is suited for case study research using observation and semi-structured interviews to catch the peculiarities of place and to internalize details (Boyer et al. 2016). Even though the idea of how social sustainability works among the other sustainability dimensions according to Boyer et al. is the primary view used for this study, I recognize that the interpretation of sustainability is flexible and other views of social sustainability can be justified. Social sustainability in this research is understood as

development... fostering an environment conducive to the compatible cohabitation of culturally and socially diverse groups, while at the same time encouraging social integration, with improvements in the quality of life for all segments of the population. (Polèse & Stren 2000 pp. 15–16)

The context of the research is higher music education institutions within arts universities, where arts and culture can be used to advance inclusion, social well-being as well as social cohesion (see Støvring 2012) through individual and collective participation (see Baltà Portolés & Dragičević Šešić 2017). Following the culture *for* sustainability model (Soini & Dessein 2016), culture is given a mediating role in pursuing social sustainability (Duxbury et al. 2017; Soini & Dessein 2016) within internationalization activities in arts universities (see Figure 4).

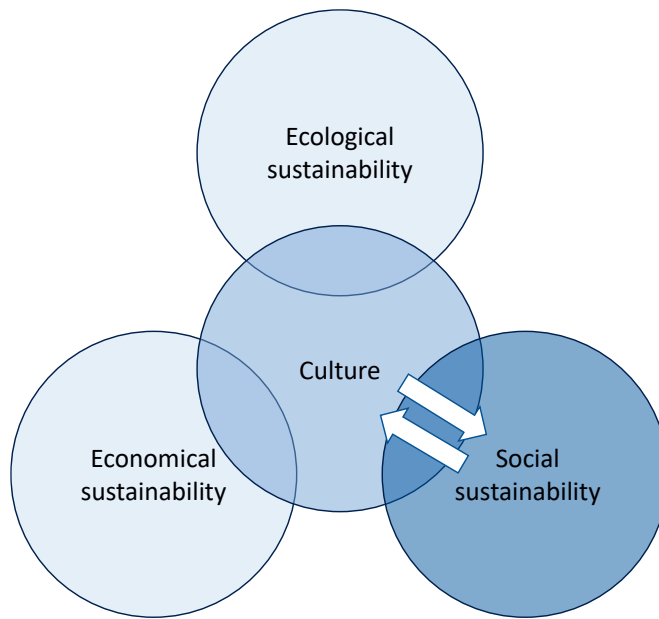


Figure 4. Culture for social sustainability

Source: Adapted from Duxbury et al. (2017 p. 221).

In this study, culture is understood to have multiple meanings. First, it is used for arts as well as creative and artistic expression (Duxbury et al. 2017; Hawkes 2001; Isar 2017). Second, culture is used in the anthropological sense (Carter & Bolden 2012) as a shared way of life (Carter & Bolden 2012; Kangas et al. 2017), which in this research acknowledges that a person’s cultural identity or identities are fluid and may change (Harrison 2015). This constructionist view perceives culture as a global and continuously changing flow of traditions (Hannerz 1992; Siivonen 2008) “an active process that is continuously constructed and negotiated through social interaction” (Carter & Bolden 2012 p. 5). The use of the term *culture* in my study encompasses all these meanings, but it is possible that at times they overlap, or a subdivision is needed. I consider social sustainability and cultural sustainability to be two distinct dimensions of sustainability, although I acknowledge that they overlap. Cultural sustainability is used as an auxiliary theoretical lens for my framework.

The third dimension of my framework, community engagement, links arts and culture to social sustainability. Community engagement is scrutinized as a means to strengthen social interaction and communication in an intercultural context, which is in line with a fully integrated sustainability fostering plurality (Boyer et al. 2016). This dimension draws on the literature on higher music education institutions. Community engagement in this research is understood as

joint activities that can be mutually beneficial even if each side benefits in a different way. (Benneworth et al. 2018 p. 17)

Arts and culture in this research refer primarily to music practiced through community engagement in higher music education institutions in arts universities. Through cooperation and collaboration, artists engage with difference. However, diversity alone does not make music intercultural. In addition, ingredients such as respect for and engagement with difference, openness, and willingness to extend one's thinking, intercultural humility, collaboration, and co-creation are needed (see N. R. Thomson 2021). According to Rohan Nethsinghe (2013), community music making is an important resource for cultural and social sustainability. Sacha Kagan and Volker Kirchberg (2016) consider participatory music as the most sustainable type of music.

My research may be considered interdisciplinary, drawing on three theoretical discussions: internationalization of higher education, sustainability, and community engagement. The foundation of my study is the internationalization of higher education. Adopting the idea of IHES with the basic ingredients of internationalization and community engagement¹⁷, I use a third dimension, sustainability, thus drawing on the distinct perspectives and traditions of different disciplines (see Buchanan & Bryman 2007). The new framework I have created for the purpose of this study called SIHEI (sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions) lies at the intersection of internationalization, community engagement, and sustainability. The theoretical positioning of the concept is visualized below in Figure 5.

¹⁷ IHES uses the term *social engagement* - in this research the term *community engagement* is used.

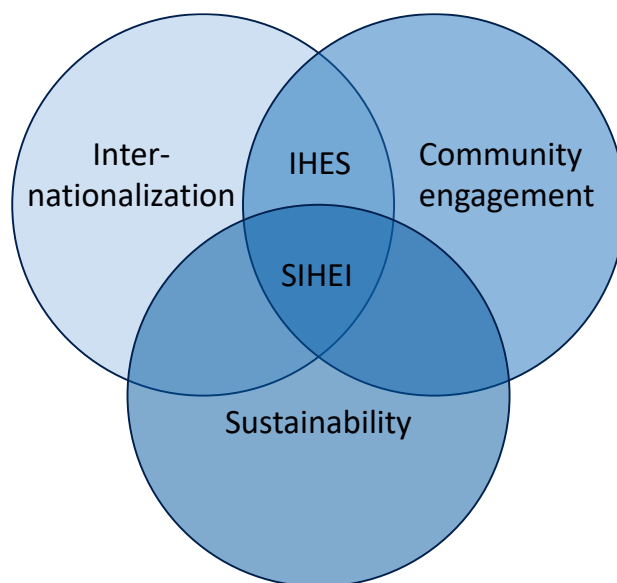


Figure 5. Sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions (SIHEI)

Source: Adapted from Brandenburg et al. (2020 p. 19).

The SIHEI framework could in principle be used for all dimensions of sustainability. In this research, the focus is on social sustainability.

It is important to note that the intercultural dimension is central in my research, not just global and international. Interculturality is an overlapping theme in all dimensions of my theoretical framework – the internationalization of higher education (Brandenburg et al. 2020; E. Jones 2020; E. Jones et al. 2021), social sustainability (Arpaci et al. 2022; K. Jones et al. 2013), cultural sustainability (Throsby 2017), and community engagement within higher music education (Bartleet et al. 2020; Bartleet & Carfoot 2016; Gaunt & Westerlund 2016a).

This sub-chapter has described the conceptual framework of this research, comprising the dimensions of the internationalization of higher education, sustainability and community engagement that forms the foundation of this research. The following chapter describes the methodology used.

3. METHODOLOGY

Chapter three describes the research methodology for the study. The chapter starts with the methodological foundations of the research, comprising both the ontological and epistemological underpinnings. Then, the chosen case study strategy as well as the selection of the cases and the generation of the research data is described. The chapter continues with a description of the analysis process and concludes with critical reflections on the research process.

3.1 Methodological foundations

This sub-chapter describes the methodological foundations of the research. The aim of this dissertation is to understand how and to what extent the internationalization of arts universities contributes to social sustainability in the domestic context as perceived by stakeholders within the university: senior managers, faculty, and students. The following sections will justify the ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods that support the aim of the dissertation.

3.1.1 *Social constructionism*

The philosophical orientations of research are often divided into positivism, interpretivism/constructionism, and critical realism (Welch et al. 2011), or (post)positivism, social constructionism and critical realism (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2009). Vicki Creswell and John Clark (2011) identify four worldviews: (1) post-positivism, (2) constructionism, (3) advocacy and participation, as well as (4) pragmatism. According to Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009), all orientations can be both qualitative and quantitative, although positivism tends to be quantitative and social constructionism qualitative, whereas critical realists do not have a tendency to favor either orientation.

My research draws primarily on social constructionism, which tries to make sense of the social world (Andrews 2012). The purpose of my research is to understand how internationalization and social sustainability meet locally within arts universities by means of arts and culture. The understanding of internationalization and social sustainability is constructed by the stakeholders within the arts universities, while their joint action evolves culture, social sustainability, and internationalization. Each informant brought their own understanding of reality, an understanding that had been constructed already before the interview or focus group discussion. The construction continued during

our encounter, and a new understanding of reality was formed within our interaction.

Social constructionism¹⁸ has been linked to a post-modern era in qualitative research and to the doubt that observations can accurately reflect the world (Murphy et al. 1998). Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln (1989) propose that constructionism denies the existence of an objective reality and suggest that “realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals (although clearly many constructions will be shared)” (as cited in Mills et al. 2006 p. 26). Social constructionism assumes knowledge to be socially constructed, not created (Andrews 2012; Berger & Luckmann 1966; Gehman et al. 2018). According to Charmaz (2014a), social constructionists are interested in what people consider real at a given time and place, how they construct their views and actions, whose constructions win, when constructions differ, and how this happens. Even though social constructionism and interpretivism have common philosophical roots, the origins of social constructionism are partially within interpretivism. However, Andrews (2012) considers social constructionism and interpretivism separate concepts despite their shared focus on the process by which meanings are created, negotiated, sustained, and modified (Schwandt 2000).

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, who published their seminal book *The social construction of reality* as early as 1966 (Berger & Luckmann 1966), are considered the pioneers of social constructionism (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2009). Berger and Luckmann (1991) argue that the knowledge that emerges through the interaction of individual people is gradually institutionalized in society and becomes experienced as objective knowledge, which is continuously reconstructed by the interaction of people. According to them, reality still remains a subjective experience instead of an objective reality of the natural world. Universities can be understood as institutions that use power and change slowly. It is possible to interpret the perceived stiffness related to institutions as an understanding that has gradually been institutionalized in society and is thus experienced as objective knowledge. Although arts universities are a prominent and immediate context for this research, there are other contexts, both physical and virtual, affecting reality (see Section 3.2.1.2).

¹⁸ There is some variation in the use of terminology. According to Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009), social constructivism and social constructionism are often used for the same concept, even though “constructivism” refers to disciplines such as mathematics and developmental psychology. Andrews (2012) points out that constructivism and social constructionism are often used interchangeably and merged under one term “constructivism”, especially by Kathy Charmaz (e.g. Charmaz 2006). The term social constructionism will be used in this research.

Thomas Schwandt (2000) differentiates between social constructionism, described above, and radical constructionism, which suggests that the world cannot be known independently of people's experience. Social constructionism can be either contextual or strict. Contextual social constructionism acknowledges objective reality, whereas strict social constructionism takes a relativist stand with multiple realities (Andrews 2012). This corresponds to the concepts of realism and relativism that are at the opposite ends of objective reality and multiple realities. A realist stand ignores the researcher's interpretation of the findings and expects the results to be a true interpretation of reality. A relativist view denies the existence of an objective reality and claims that there are multiple individual realities that are influenced by the context (Mills et al. 2006). In relativist research, nothing is definite (because multiple realities exist) or has precedence in claiming to represent the truth (Andrews 2012; Mills et al. 2006).

The social setting of my research called for an approach based in relativistic social constructionism with multiple realities. The informants consisted of diverse stakeholder groups: senior managers, faculty members, and students representing different genders, ages, and cultural backgrounds. This diversity supports the assumption that there are multiple realities, which is a typical ontological view of qualitative research (Creswell 2007). Even though my primary understanding is that in the social world, there is no objective reality, I acknowledge the potential of objective knowledge as experienced by individuals (Berger & Luckmann 1991). I also believe that the social world and physical world are inter-connected, and that the understanding of the physical world experienced by individuals is being reconstructed within social interaction.

According to Andrews (2012), most of the criticism against social constructionism is directed at how realism and relativism are conceptualized. It is widely accused of not recognizing objective reality (Andrews 2012; Schwandt 2000). Andrews points out that there is a tendency towards relativism, which makes the usefulness of studies using this methodology questionable (Hammersley 1990). However, I find social constructionism and relativism justified in research on internationalization, social sustainability and community engagement in the context of a higher music education institution (HMEI) of an arts university: The informants – senior managers, faculty members, and students as well as community members – represent diverse cultures and have their own worldviews, which continuously change within interactions and engagements through music.

3.1.2 *Interpretive epistemology*

My research can be considered interpretive. It is interpretive not only because it is qualitative research (Creswell 2007; Gephart 2004) but also because I draw from

social constructionist grounded theory, which is interpretivist by nature (e.g. Gardner et al. 2012).

Epistemologically, social constructionism focuses on the relationship between the researcher and the informant and how they co-construct meaning (Mills et al. 2006). Instead of being objective observers, researchers become part of the research and their values affect the outcome of the research, which must be acknowledged both by the researchers themselves and their readers (Mills et al. 2006). According to James Scotland (2012), interpretive epistemology is one of subjectivism, which is founded on phenomena in the real world – the existence of the world is dependent on our knowledge of it. According to them, knowledge and reality are being constructed within the interactions between people and their world and transmitted in a social context, which is why the social world can be understood only from the perspective of the participation of individuals.

Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2018) have elaborated on the complex and multi-layered concept of interpretation. *Simple hermeneutics* refers to individuals' interpretation of themselves and their own reality, whereas *double hermeneutics* relates to the interpretations of researchers, such as interpretive social scientists, on interpreting human beings. Critical theory, which can be described as *triple hermeneutics*, includes a third critical dimension of interpreting unconscious processes, ideologies, power relations and other expressions of dominance. This dimension shifts the focus from the obvious, natural, and unproblematic to something that may be interpreted as the freezing of social life, the irrational, and the changeable. The following step could be called *quadruple hermeneutics* or *quadri hermeneutics*, the focus of which is in reflection and interpretation. Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2018) call this *reflexive interpretation*, which they consider an open play of reflection across an indefinite number of levels of interpretation. According to Alvesson and Sköldbberg, research and methodologies that emphasize one specific aspect, method or level of interpretation is reflective, but not reflexive. They point out the double meaning of *reflexivity*: One level may reflect other levels, and the levels can interact and affect other, which means that the researcher and the object of study affect each other during the whole research process. In this research, this is in line with the social constructionist approach. During and after the interviews and focus group discussions, both the informants and I adjusted our thinking based on new insights. In the same way, my understanding of the universities, internationalization, and sustainability developed during the research process. However, as Stake (1995) points out, the researcher is not the one making the ultimate interpretation, but it is the reader of the research (Piekkari & Welch 2018; Stake 1995).

The use of language may be considered from various angles. The relationship of language to reality, sign, and expression is one such angle. This interpretive

approach perceives language as a way of constructing phenomena rather than mirroring social reality or an individual's state of mind (Shotter & Gergen 1989; Vilén 2010). According to Charmaz (2014b), language shapes meaning, fosters the formation of meaning as well as clarifies or hides the connection between meaning and action. Therefore, an interpretive researcher should also look for hidden meanings in both the language of the researcher and the informants (Charmaz 2006; Scotland 2012). According to social constructionists Berger and Luckmann (1991), children become members of society through the first socialization by significant others. The child adopts the roles and attitudes of their significant others and internalizes them, language being the most important entity to be internalized. Whereas language is the key in the internalization process, conversation is the most important means for maintaining, modifying, and reconstructing subjective reality.

The language of everyday life is far richer and more ambiguous than the language of the natural sciences (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2009, 2018). During my interviews and focus group discussions, I needed to make continuous interpretations. First of all, for most of the participants, including myself, English was not our native language. Sometimes my attention was on what was not being said as well as on how my informants expressed certain issues; for example, whether they talked about the university as *us* or *them*. I also had to evaluate whether some opinions were genuine or an attempted representation of the presumed official thoughts of the university. At the focus group discussions, I needed to be especially alert, since there were informants with diverse backgrounds who potentially all interpreted language in their own way.

3.1.3 Research methodology

This section clarifies how my interpretive social constructionist approach was applied in practice. I first introduce constructionist grounded theory, connecting strategies, and abduction as methods in theory building, and then describe how I use them in my reflexive interpretative methodology.

3.1.3.1 Theory building

My research methodology was inspired by grounded theory and connecting strategies. Over time, several forms of grounded theory¹⁹ have developed that can be applied according to the assumed ontology and epistemology; that is, the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the informants and what can be known (Mills et al. 2006). Constructionist grounded theory is a research methodology that can be used for an ontological and epistemological viewpoint

¹⁹ Grounded theory was first founded in 1967 by Glaser and Strauss (Sebastian 2019).

that leans on social constructionism. It is ontologically relativist and epistemologically subjectivist, as with my research, reshaping the interaction between the researcher and the informants during the process and placing the researcher at the front as the author (Mills et al. 2006).

Grounded theory aims at constructing theory that is grounded on data in the field, especially in the actions, interactions, and social processes of individuals (Creswell et al. 2007). The analysis is conducted by constantly comparing data and translating it into codes and categories and concepts, which eventually ground the final theory in the experiences of the informants (Mills et al. 2006). Although the data reflects the mutual constructions of both the researcher and the informants, the researcher has only partial access to the world of the informant, which means that the researcher needs to interpret the studied world (Charmaz 2006; Charmaz & Belgrave 2012) and that the conclusions remain suggestive, incomplete, and unresolved (Charmaz 2000; Creswell et al. 2007). Following Kathy Charmaz, the researcher should focus on the data and potential meanings that can be constructed from it, dig beyond the surface to search for the tacit meanings of the values, beliefs, and ideologies of the informants (Mills et al. 2006), and make hidden hierarchies of power, status, and meaning visible (Charmaz 2007). The researcher brings along their own values, experience, and priorities, making their own role visible (Creswell et al. 2007). Charmaz considers the researcher a co-producer who documents the interaction and keeps the participants' voices and meaning present in the theoretical outcome, trying to maintain a balance between a conceptual analysis and a sense of the participants' presence (Mills et al. 2006). An abstract understanding enables social constructionists to upgrade to a more general and conceptual level, and the meticulous attention to research problems is a basis for generic statements that are applicable according to context (Charmaz 2008). Grounded theory often uses a systematic inductive approach to collecting and analyzing data; that is, the researcher has no preconceived ideas that they want to prove or disprove (Charmaz 2008; Mills et al. 2006).

Although grounded theory is popular (Langley & Abdallah 2011), there are also critical voices. These criticisms concern, for example: the technical approach, rigor and codification emulating quantitative research, trivialization of the research results because of missing the interpretative problematics, lacking attention to the influence of political and ideological structures as well as ignorance of the effects of the language and text (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2018). Mats Alvesson and Yiannis Gabriel (2013) argue that coding decontextualizes the research data and lends it a unity, objectivity, and homogeneity that does not exist in reality and obscures the language people use. Joseph Maxwell and Margaret Chimiel (2014) also consider coding to strip away the context. Maxwell (2008) argues that categorizing, such as coding within grounded theory, may cause the researcher to ignore contextual relationships that are based on contiguity rather than similarity, thus preventing

the researcher from seeing alternative ways of interpreting the data. According to Maxwell, connecting strategies try to avoid this by attempting to understand the data, such as transcripts of interviews, in their context through looking for relationships between diverse elements of the text. Nevertheless, Maxwell and Miller (2008) consider segmenting, which is typical for categorizing, also an implicit process in connecting strategies. They suggest that during the analysis, the researcher could at each point choose to take either a categorizing step and look for similarities or differences, or a connecting step searching for connections between things. The difference is not always clear: According to Maxwell and Miller (2008), many steps after the first coding that are often considered coding are in fact predominantly connecting. Following my reflexive interpretation approach, I decided to complement my analysis with connecting strategies, even though I was originally inspired by constructionist grounded theory alone. See Chapter 3.4 for the application of coding and connecting in this research.

Understanding theory building is an important part of knowledge production. According to Kristian Philipsen (2018), knowledge production can be divided into induction and deduction, which are used in context justification, and abduction, which can be used for context discovery. Philipsen conceptualizes abduction as guesswork, where a researcher makes guesses based on observations that do not match extant theories. In the same vein, Anna Dubois and Lars-Erik Gadde (2014) suggest that an abductive approach that uses systematic combining is more suitable for research that aims at discovering something new. According to the researchers, the strong foothold of linearism that favors a deductive approach hinders creativity in theory building.

3.1.3.2 Reflexive interpretation as methodology

The methodology I used in my research is based on reflexive interpretation. Figure 6 illustrates my research process starting from theory and grounding the analysis and theory on the research data, while taking the contexts into consideration. Although the different phases of my research in principle followed each other, the process was by no means linear. During the iterative and emergent process, there was constant movement within and between the phases, so no specific timeline can be defined. Each phase affected the others, and the original framework was constantly modified and crystallized as a result of new empirical findings and theoretical insights.

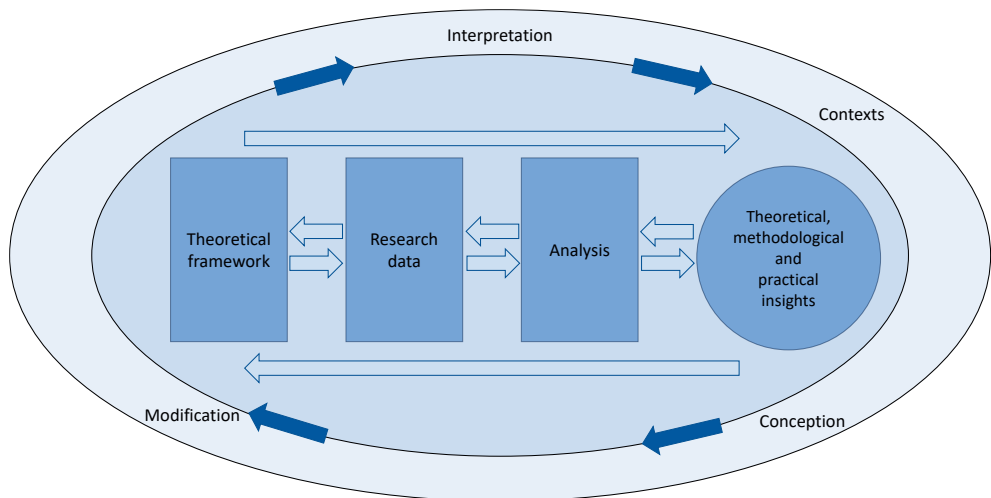


Figure 6. Reflexive interpretation process

Based on the interpretive qualitative research tradition acknowledging multiple realities, my research approach was inspired by various aspects of the social constructionist grounded theory presented by Kathy Charmaz (2006, 2014a), who uses grounded theory to bring forth multiple meanings. Grounded theory was easily approachable due to my data-driven management background. Furthermore, grounded theory fits well with Maxqda²⁰, which was my preferred tool for the coding. My reflexive interpretive method reflected upon how my own interactions, philosophical underpinnings and theoretical assumptions shaped my interpretations and affected the results (see Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2009; Welch & Piekari 2017). I perceived the interaction between the stakeholders of internationalization within the arts universities, including myself, to be a continuous construction of the understanding of reality. In addition to modifying the conception of internationalization, the interaction evolved our understanding of social sustainability. The social construction had started already before I met my informants, and it continued during our encounter and interaction and thereafter.

Social constructionist grounded theory provided a good starting point for me to manage the vast amount of empirical data. A data-driven reflexive study considers research data a construction of empirical conditions that needs continuous interpretation. Reflexive interpretation makes more demands on conscious interpretation and reflection, but less demands for rigor in procedures (see Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2009, 2018). Being aware of the issues related to grounded theory, I tried to take into consideration the role of interpretation and language as

²⁰ Maxqda is a software application for qualitative and mixed methods data analysis (MAXQDA | All-In-One Qualitative & Mixed Methods Data Analysis Tool n.d.).

well as the influence of institutional structures and other contexts. I used the codification and categorization inspired by grounded theory as a starting point to facilitate the data management and complemented it by connecting strategies in order to find relationships between diverse elements in context (see Maxwell & Miller 2008). I considered language as a way of constructing reality rather than mirroring social reality or the informants' state of mind (Shotter & Gergen 1989; Vilén 2010).

I tried to use reflexive interpretation as a means to go beyond mechanical classification. Grounded theory often starts inductively from the data (e.g. Charmaz 2008), but I considered an abductive approach more fruitful for my purposes. First, it was important for me to have a profound understanding of the theoretical framework of my study. Second, the abductive approach made me more sensitive to the nuances in the data and enabled me to contribute to extant theory. Being well acquainted with theory before going to the field is important (Piekkari & Welch 2018; Timmermans & Tavory 2012). Accordingly, I had to deepen my knowledge of the internationalization and sustainability dimensions before conducting the interviews and commencing the analysis. During the research process, my original framework was constantly modified as a result of new empirical findings and theoretical insights gained along the way (Dubois & Gadde 2002; Piekkari & Welch 2018). According to Rebecca Piekkari and Catherine Welch (2018), redirections may turn out to be a source of theoretical insight and learning. Abductive theory building serves as a link between old and new theory. Theories require both novelty and continuity: to be considered meaningful, they should be different from but connected to extant theoretical literature (Dubois & Gadde 2014; Sandberg & Alvesson 2011).

The description of reflexive interpretation as my research methodology concludes the sub-chapter on the interpretive social constructionistic methodological foundations of my PhD study. The following sub-chapter explains my reasons for choosing a case study as my research strategy and the selection of the specific cases.

3.2 Research strategy

This sub-chapter first discusses the case study as my research strategy. It then discusses the relevance of context and generalization in my research. Finally, there is a description of the selection of the case universities, some demographic facts about Austria and Finland and an introduction to my case universities: the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland and the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Austria.

3.2.1 Case study as the research strategy

3.2.1.1 Approach

Case studies have been defined in various ways. They have been considered as an empirical inquiry (Yin 2014), a research strategy (Eisenhardt 1989), a form of reporting (Wolcott 2002), an ideological commitment to qualitative positivism (F. Moore 2011), and a research strategy that involves more than a choice of method for data collection or analysis (Hartley 2004). In this research, a case study is understood as “a research strategy that examines, through the use of a variety of data sources, a phenomenon in its naturalistic context, with the purpose of “confronting” theory with the empirical world” (Piekkari et al. 2009 p. 569).

Kathleen Eisenhardt and Robert K. Yin are, according to Rebecca Piekkari and Catherine Welch (2018), the most popular authorities of the case study in management research. Eisenhardt and Yin represent qualitative positivism (Piekkari & Welch 2018; Welch et al. 2011; Welch & Piekkari 2017), which assumes that qualitative and quantitative can meet the same criteria (Welch & Piekkari 2017). Qualitative positivism uses qualitative methods but combines them with a positivistic view on ontology and epistemology, which assumes a concrete reality detached from the researcher that can be revealed by objective data collection methods (Piekkari & Welch 2018). Qualitative positivists prefer an exploratory approach, research propositions as well as multiple case studies, which they consider more appropriate for making generalizations (Welch & Piekkari 2017).

Case studies do not follow any particular method. Robert Stake (2005) argues that the case study is not a methodological choice but rather a question of what is being studied, irrespective of the chosen methods. Catherine Welch et al. (2011) identify four methods of theorizing from case studies: inductive theory building, natural experiment, interpretive sensemaking, and contextualized explanation, which is a more recent approach. According to Welch et al. (2011), interpretive sensemaking in case studies aims at understanding the particular, not at producing law-like explanations. Interpretivists believe that individuals attach meaning to their own behavior and consider researchers to be a part of the world they research. Accordingly, researchers should try to understand an action on the basis of the actor’s own experience (*verstehen*) instead of explaining it with external causal factors (*erklären*). Stake (1995), one of the advocates of interpretive sensemaking, makes a clear difference between case studies that try to find causalities and those trying to understand human nature. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), case studies are especially suitable for understanding because they allow rich contextual descriptions. In accordance with my social constructionist interpretive methodology, my theory building followed interpretive sensemaking.

By using the case study strategy founded on my social constructionist interpretive methodology, I wish to gain a contextual understanding of socially sustainable internationalization within arts universities through rich data from multiple data sources and to theorize on the topic. The case study strategy is compatible with my interpretive approach following an iterative and emergent logic (Bartlett & Vavrus 2016) in which I work between the theoretical framework and my research data constantly redirecting the focus of my study (Dubois & Gadde 2014). According to the emergent logic, being sensitized to reorientations and utilizing them well are even considered to indicate quality (see Piekkari et al. 2009).

I view the cases through my informants' personal experiences and their meanings. However, my focus is not on the individuals and their stories, nor the cases per se but instead, on a phenomenon within the cases (see Creswell et al. 2007). My aim is to understand how internationalization within arts universities meets social sustainability, as understood by the stakeholders within the case universities. My intention is to gain a holistic understanding on how my case universities combine internationalization and social sustainability (Piekkari & Welch 2018; Stake 1995, 2005) instead of being *variable-oriented*; that is, drawing out variables from the rest of my cases (Piekkari & Welch 2018). The format of my research, a monograph, also supports the aim of a holistic view. Piekkari and Welch (2018) consider the holistic approach a distinguishing feature and a strength of the case study. Stake (2005) believes that comparison between cases reduces the holism, which is why they endorse comparison only between objects such as departments, time periods, or locations within individual cases (Piekkari & Welch 2018). My aim is not to compare the cases. However, it is impossible to discuss the universities without comparing them to some extent, at least implicitly when bringing forth specific differences between the universities. Nevertheless, I intentionally leave any other comparisons to the reader.

3.2.1.2 Role of context

The context plays an important part in my case studies. It is relevant from the theoretical point of view as well as in the philosophical underpinnings of my research. My interpretive social constructionist orientation, whose main advocate is Stake (1995, 2005), aims at thick description and considers contextual description a necessity for understanding. Although this orientation emphasizes contextualization, it does not aim at making causal explanations, as can be seen in Figure 7 below.

Emphasis on contextualisation	Strong	3. Interpretive sensemaking	4. Contextualised explanation
	Weak	1. Inductive theory-building	2. Natural experiment
		Weak	Strong
		Emphasis on causal explanation	

Figure 7. Contextualization and causal explanation in case studies

Source: Welch et al. (2011 p. 250)

Internationalization and social sustainability have intrinsically multiple dimensions. Some geographers argue that the dimensions are not distinct and unrelated. However, Lesley Bartlett and Frances Vavrus (2016) call attention to scale, which is often used to differentiate the local, regional, national, and global levels. Actions at different scales can influence each other and the relationships are important when understanding how structures of power are constructed. According to Bartlett and Vavrus (2016), attention should be paid to the power relations within a specific institution or community and across communities, states and nations, such as an arts university and its contexts in my research.

Bartlett and Vavrus (2016) consider context as both relational and spatial. In everyday speech, context is typically used for the physical setting. Bartlett and Vavrus argue that context is often used as a static, confined, and deterministic concept, whereas they think that any location can be influenced by economic, political, and social processes. According to Bartlett and Vavrus, practices produce locations, which is why they argue that social interaction and activity create settings (Dyson & Genishi 2005).

Doreen Massey (2005) proposes that instead of considering places as areas with boundaries, they could be thought of as moments in social networks and understandings, in which a big part of what happens has a much larger scale than what we understand at that moment. This allows for an extroverted sense of place that is conscious of its connection to the wider world, thus connecting the local and the global levels. In other words, the locations are influenced beyond the local context and the current moment (as cited in Bartlett & Vavrus 2016).

Context is a fluid concept in my study. Bartlett and Vavrus suggest that we should not fix a study to a certain context in advance, but rather identify the past and present networks of actors, institutions, and policies that form “a sense of a bounded place for specific purposes” (Bartlett & Vavrus 2016 p. 15).

3.2.1.3 Generalizability

The positivist, social constructionist, and critical realist orientations have different views of generalization. Positivists, such as Kathleen Eisenhardt and Robert K. Yin, favor generalization (Piekkari et al. 2009; Welch et al. 2011). The social constructionist Stake (1995) questions the generalizability, causality, and objectivity advocated by positivists. Instead, they believe in particularization, which means understanding the uniqueness of the case as such, embracing the context, the personal engagement of the researcher, thick description, and subjectivity (Welch et al. 2011) or “naturalistic generalizations” in which people can draw conclusions based on personal memories or vicarious experiences provided by other parties, such as case study researchers (Stake 2005). The critical realist orientation relies on contingent and limited generalizations (Welch et al. 2011).

The social constructionist case study approach used in my research has been criticized for not being suitable for theory building, transferability, or generalization (see Flyvbjerg 2006). Multiple case studies are usually favored by positivists, who consider them more suitable for making generalizations (Welch & Piekkari 2017), whereas my approach is interpretive. I chose a multiple case study approach instead of a single case because I believe it to generate richer theory (e.g. Welch & Piekkari 2017) and to provide a multifaceted view of the phenomenon. Case study researchers Gary Thomas and Kevin Myers (2015) do not believe that generalization should be the aim of a case study. Instead, knowledge is gained through experience or from a specific context and may be transferred to other contexts (Flyvbjerg 2001, 2006; Piekkari & Welch 2018; Thomas & Myers 2015). Stake admits that instrumental case studies, such as mine, could be a source for generalizations (Stake 2005). I believe that the results of my case study are valuable as such. Although I do not primarily aim at generalizability, I have used naturalistic generalizations for theory building, especially where previous theory supports my findings. The results may also have potential for transferability or naturalistic generalization (Stake 2005) to other arts universities that are curious about combining internationalization and social sustainability, at least in the European context. Yet, I believe each case will eventually be unique, having its own context and history.

3.2.2 Case selection

3.2.2.1 Selecting the case universities

I have chosen two European arts universities and their higher music education institutions as my cases, which I scrutinize in their context through rich data (Stake 1995). I applied purposeful selection to find case universities that are relevant to my conceptual framework of sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions (SIHEL) and my research questions, and would generate rich data so that I could create credible descriptions of socially sustainable internationalization (e.g. Bartlett & Vavrus 2016). The aim was to find intense cases that are “information-rich [and] manifest the phenomenon intensely (not extremely)” (Bartlett & Vavrus 2016 p. 118) using the following criteria:

- I. The arts universities are public universities located within the European Union. The reason for this criterion was a desire to find cases that have a similar operational and policy context to facilitate understanding the cases. I have limited experience in higher education outside of Europe and believe that I can contribute to the field more by researching a region I come from and have studied in.
- II. The arts university has higher music education as one of its specialist fields. Higher music institutions have high potential for being international since music is considered intrinsically international.
- III. Internationality is described as a priority for the arts university.
- IV. The arts university has community engagement activities and shows an interest in social and cultural sustainability.
- V. There would be material available in English, or at least in a language that I understand.

My focus was on the higher music education institutions of the arts universities, but the university level was vital because strategic decisions are typically made at that level. The scope of my research would have been too large if I had chosen complete arts universities with several academies operating quite independently. Many larger universities also have higher music institutions as one of their academies but I decided to exclude these larger universities, since I expected that the influence of the music academies on the university-level strategy would be relatively small compared to the non-artistic disciplines forming the majority in such universities.

The University of the Arts Helsinki (Uniarts Helsinki) was the first case university I selected. As a student of the Sibelius Academy of Uniarts Helsinki since my

Master of Music studies in Arts Management²¹, I was well acquainted with the university. I was already familiar with the strategy of the university and knew that there was at least one department as well as ongoing projects and festivals that were of interest to my topic. The language policy at Uniarts Helsinki was multi-lingual, so virtually all material could be found in English and Finnish, which is my mother tongue.

Finding the second case university proved more challenging than I had expected. I first made a desktop study based on the websites of universities and AEC. I was then in contact with those candidates with the most potential and finally used my own experience and intuition to choose the one that seemed to be the best match (see Flyvbjerg 2006). I first investigated higher music education institutions (HMEIs) in the Netherlands because of my knowledge of the country and the language but was not able to locate a case that would have both matched my criteria and been willing to participate in my research. I then expanded my search to other countries within Europe and acquainted myself with the web sites of over thirty arts universities. I contacted and talked to five potential cases, out of which I eventually chose the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (KUG), an Austrian arts university with a sizable international student population and an affinity towards artistic citizenship. I was also aware of their community engagement initiative Meet4Music, which will be discussed later in this dissertation. KUG's information was largely in German, but as I know German, I decided to approach the university and came to an agreement. During the interviews it turned out that artistic citizenship was only at the very beginning of its trajectory at the university, but the informants showed openness and interest in my topic. Therefore, my research changed from what I had originally planned, and the results probably ended up being even more interesting.

I believe that the cases provided a good potential for learning and expanding my understanding, giving a holistic but multifaceted perspective to the phenomenon being studied (e.g. Creswell 2007; Piekkari & Welch 2018; Stake 1995, 2005). My research is an instrumental case study (e.g. Stake 1995, 2005). The case universities themselves are not the focus of my interest, but my attention is on the socially sustainable internationalization of the universities. The cases are described in sections 3.2.2.3 and 3.2.2.4.

3.2.2.2 Demographics of Finland and Austria

The demographics of Finland and Austria differ to some extent.

²¹ The department called Arts management, society and creative entrepreneurship at Uniarts Helsinki is called the Arts Management Department in this research.

The population of Finland in 2023 was about 5.6 million. The population is quite homogenous: in 2021, 8.1% had an immigrant background. This number is small compared even to other Nordic countries. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the population speaks one of the national languages (Finnish, Swedish or Sámi) as their mother tongue. The capital, Helsinki, is the biggest city in Finland with some 664,000 inhabitants in 2022 (*Statistical Data* n.d.).

The population of Austria was about 9 million in 2022. The proportion of people with an international background in 2021 was 25.4%. German is the official language, but Croatian, Slovenian, and Hungarian are recognized as official languages in some regions (*Geography and Population* n.d.) Being the second largest city in Austria, Graz had a population of about 293,000 in 2021 (*Demographic Statistics Municipality of Graz* n.d.).

3.2.2.3 Organization of Uniarts Helsinki

Founded in 2013, the University of the Arts Helsinki (Uniarts Helsinki), the only arts university in Finland, is a merger of three academies: the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, the Theatre Academy Helsinki and the Sibelius Academy, which is a higher music education institution. Uniarts Helsinki is a public university, like most universities in Finland. In 2022, the number of students was 1,985 and the number of full-time-equivalent employees 769. The university is popular, the acceptance rate of students was about 7% (2022). In 2022, 17% of the bachelor and master level students, 21% of the doctoral level students and 12% of the teaching and research personnel were international, coming from outside of Finland. In the same year, there were 1,232 public performances, concerts and exhibitions as well as 264 publications, out of which 112 were peer-reviewed scientific articles (*Key Figures* 2023). The organization chart is presented below in Figure 8.

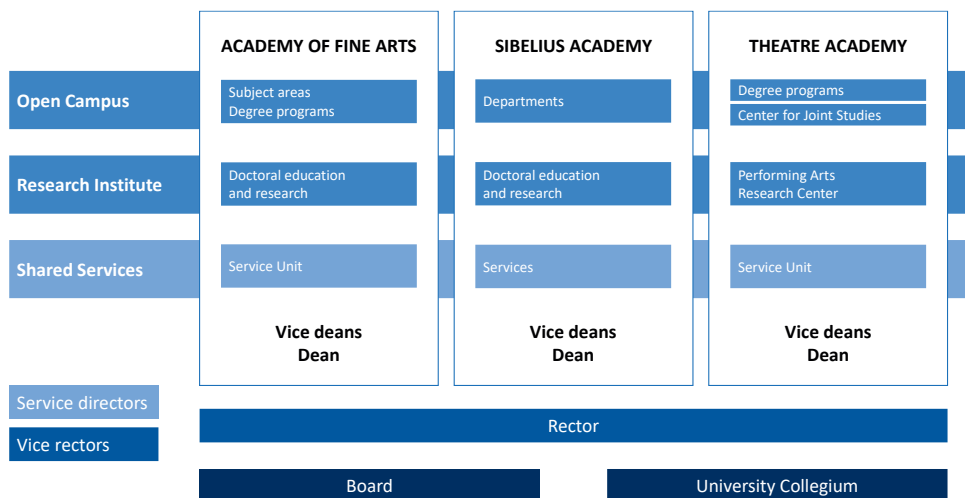


Figure 8. Organization chart of Uniarts Helsinki

Source: Adapted from Organizational Structure (2020).

The Sibelius Academy is one of the largest higher music education institutions in Europe with about 1,400 students and 500 teachers. The Academy, which provides the highest-level music education in Finland, has been ranked among the world’s best institutions of higher education in the performing arts (QS World University Rankings by Subject) every year. Artistic activities are presented at about 600 concerts and other events every year. The Sibelius Academy has campuses in Helsinki, Kuopio, and Seinäjoki. (*About Us* n.d.)

The programs of the Sibelius Academy comprise Accordion (classical instrument), Arts Management (society and creative entrepreneurship), Church music, Composition, Conducting, Cultural music studies, a Doctoral Program in Music, Early music (classical instrument), Folk music, Fortepiano (classical instrument), Global music, Guitar (classical instrument), Harp (classical instrument), Jazz composition, Jazz (instrument or voice), Kantele (classical instrument), Music education, Music technology, Music theory, Nordic master in folk music, Nordic master in jazz, Opera coaching, Opera, Organ (classical instrument), Percussion (classical instrument), Piano (chamber music and lied, classical performance), Piano (classical instrument), Sibelius Junior Academy, Sibelius Academy summer courses, Strings (classical instrument), Vocal arts, and Wind instruments (classical instrument) (*Study Options* n.d.). At the time of the research, there were two doctoral schools: Docmus Doctoral School of Classical Music and Mutri Doctoral School of Music Education, Jazz and Folk Music comprising music education, jazz music, folk music, music technology, global music, and arts management. (*Key*

Figures 2023)

The overall satisfaction of students as well as that of exchange students is praised. Uniarts Helsinki mentions its selection as a national Best Practice University within Erasmus mobility and the increase in exchange student applicants especially within music. (*World-Class Education and Research 2020*)

The Sibelius Academy reorganized its operations at the beginning of 2024. The previously separate classical music faculty and the faculty for music education, jazz, folk music, global music, arts management, and music technology were united and the number of vice deans was reduced from four to three, so that each vice dean manages one of the university's three core areas, which are education, research and artistic activities. (*Sibelius Academy's Change Negotiations Concluded Unanimously n.d.*) The new organization chart is presented below in Figure 9.

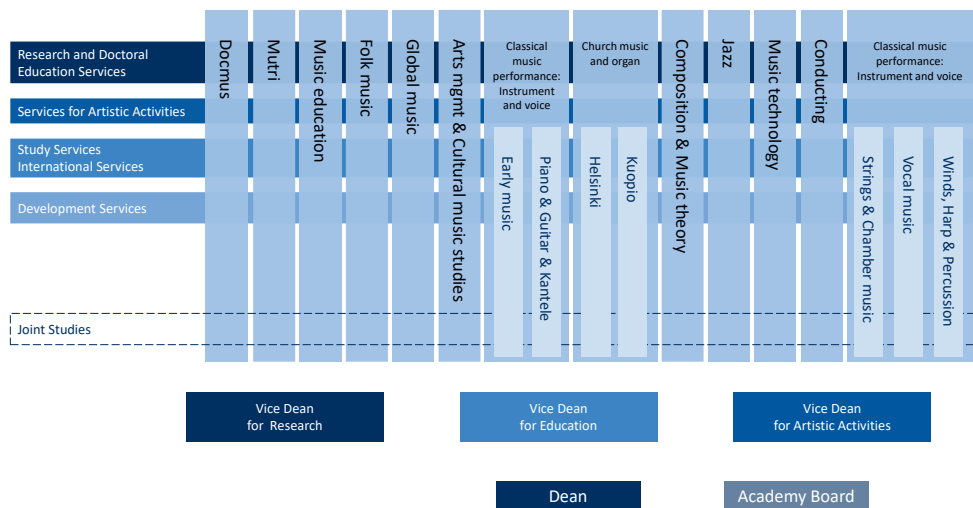


Figure 9. Organization chart of the Sibelius Academy

Source: Translated and adapted from Organisaatorakenteet: Yliopisto Ja Akatemiati (n.d.).

According to Uniarts Helsinki, the new organization model clarifies responsibilities in academic leadership and removes the previous faculty structure that was considered unequal. The removal of the previous faculty structure also increases the autonomy of individual departments. (*Sibelius Academy's Change Negotiations Concluded Unanimously n.d.*) The reorganization of the Sibelius Academy has not affected this research.

3.2.2.4 Organization of KUG

The University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (KUG) has over 2,300 students that are located both in Graz and Oberschützen. This public university has 17 departments and 2 doctoral schools and a center for gender studies. The university combines the Austrian tradition in music and performing arts, but also positions itself in a uniquely contemporary direction. The university seeks an *interplay* with dichotomies such as *university AND society*, *art AND science* and *local AND international*, which gives the university a unique flavor. (*Mission* n.d.)

The fields of study featured at KUG comprise the following: Catholic and Protestant church music, Composition and Music Theory, Computer Music and Sound Art, Conducting, Doctoral study programs, Early music, Education in choral conducting, Education in composition and music theory, Electrical engineering and audio engineering, Instrumental studies, Jazz, Mediation of music and theater, Music education—voice and instruments, Musicology, Music therapy, Performing arts (drama), Performance practice in contemporary music, Sound design, Stage design, Teacher education program, and Voice (*Fields of Study* n.d.). The instrumental studies include the following: Accordion, Bass tuba, Bassoon, Flute, Guitar, Harp, French horn, Clarinet, Piano, Double bass, Oboe, Organ, Trombone, Saxophone, Percussion instruments, Trumpet, Viola, Violin, Violoncello, Instrumental—correpetition, Chamber music for guitar, strings and piano, Piano—duo, Piano—vocal accompaniment, and Performance practice in contemporary music—instrumental. The organization chart of KUG is presented in Figure 10.

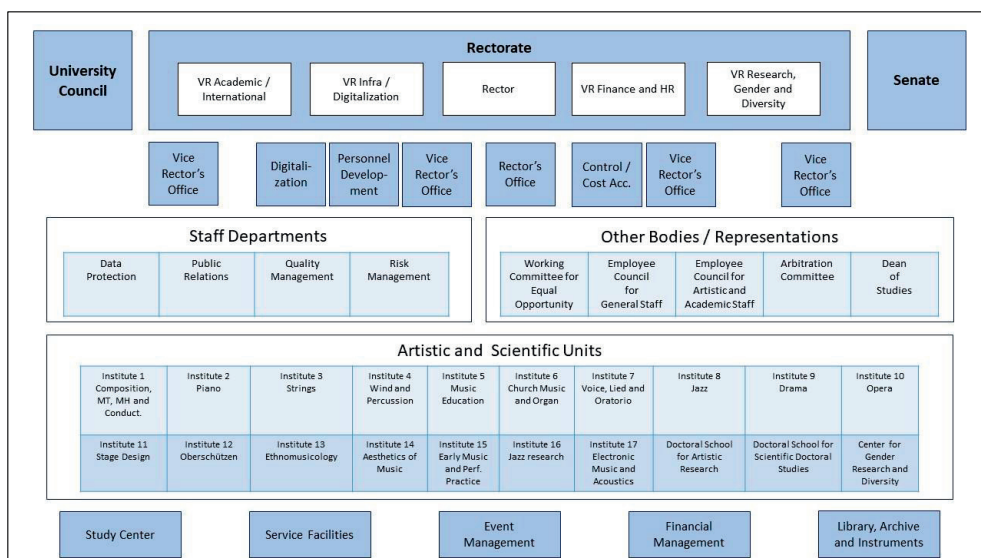


Figure 10. Organization chart of KUG

Source: Adapted from Organigramm & Satzung (n.d.)²².

The origins of KUG date back to 1815, when the Academic Music Society (Akademischer Musikverein) was founded in Graz. A year later the society opened a vocal school, which became Austria's oldest music institution and the root of KUG. In 1920, the school became a conservatoire, which turned into a federal institution called the Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Graz (Akademie für Musik und darstellende Kunst Graz) as recently as 1963. In 1998, the institution attained the status of a university. (*History* n.d.)

In the winter term 2022/2023, the number of degree students was 1,537 and the total number of students 2,295, out of which 49% were from Austria, 30% from other EU countries and 21% from outside of Europe. In 2022, 35% of the employees and 57% of the professors did not have Austrian citizenship. There were students from 69 and employees from 44 countries. (*Wissensbilanz 2022*) There were 850 events in 2022, whereas the peak was 1,420 events in 2017 (*Facts & Figures* n.d.).

This sub-chapter has described the strategy chosen for my research. First, the case study approach of my research was justified and then the relevance of the context was described. Finally, the selection of the case universities was described and some information on the demographics of Finland and Austria as well as the case organizations – Uniarts Helsinki and KUG.

²² Translation of the organization chart is made by the researcher.

3.3 Research data

This sub-chapter describes my primary and secondary research data and how they were produced. Encouraged by the case study strategy, I have incorporated a rich selection of data (see Creswell 2003; Piekkari et al. 2009). The data is typical for qualitative research and case studies: it is based on people's spontaneous descriptions of the lived world (Brinkmann & Kvale 2018) and complemented with other sources, such as archival data, documents, and observation (e.g. Gephart 2004). The aim is to understand the perception of the stakeholders within the university, i.e. the primary data. The secondary data is used to verify and contextualize the primary data when necessary and provide background information. The purpose is not to compare the two data sources.

3.3.1 Primary data

The primary data of my research consists of semi-structured interviews with senior managers and faculty members, as well as focus group discussions with students at the case universities. Semi-structured interviews are typical for qualitative research and particularly for interpretive research (Al Balushi 2016). They are well-suited to exploring people's attitudes, values, beliefs, and motives, and they offer an opportunity to evaluate the answers by observing non-verbal indicators (Barriball & While 1994). For the students, I chose focus group discussions instead of semi-structured interviews because I presumed that peer support would encourage the students to delve deeper when discussing topics they might not be familiar with. This is in line with the idea presented by Steinar Brinkmann and Svend Kvale (2018) in which focus group discussions suit exploratory studies of a new topic. This is because collective interaction may generate more spontaneous expressive and emotional views than individual interviews, even though I consider my research interpretive, not exploratory.

Before starting to collect the data, I acquired research permission from each university. I also had informal discussions with people related to the internationalization of potential case universities and other people involved in the internationalization of higher education. These conversations enabled me to narrow the focus of my research and to select the cases, locate suitable informants, and form an overall understanding of issues related to internationalization and sustainability within arts universities. The method for selecting informants can be considered "non-probability sampling", which according to Oisin Tansey (2009) is used in elite interviews (see also Brinkmann & Kvale 2018) to establish the thoughts of a certain group of people, such as senior managers, faculty members and students in my research. The advantage of "non-probability sampling" is the control over the selection process, although selection bias may cause a challenge

and there may only be limited potential for generalization, which is not the primary aim of my research. I applied purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, to find suitable senior managers and faculty members with diverse cultural backgrounds who would be relevant for my topic. In this type of sampling the purpose of the research and the researcher's knowledge of the population determine the process (Tansey 2009). Information-rich cases, as well as informants, relevant to the phenomenon are identified and chosen so that essential issues relevant to the purpose of the research can be learned (Bonache 2019). The purpose was not to have a representative sample of the whole organizations, but rather to encounter individuals who are closely involved in the topic of my research (e.g. Tansey 2009) and manifest the phenomenon intensely but not intensely (Bartlett & Vavrus 2016 p. 118). The students, on the other hand, were found using the snowball method, one of the most well-known non-probability sampling methods (Tansey 2009). Faculty members of diverse departments recommended students they assumed suitable for my research. In addition, I approached some students through personal contacts. Tansey (2009) recommends using a combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques. A similar process was followed for both case universities.

The informants consisted of four (4) senior managers and four (4) faculty members from each university, as well as altogether twelve (12) students: seven (7) from Uniarts Helsinki and five (5) from KUG. I had planned to have two (2) focus groups with four (4) students in each university. However, at Uniarts Helsinki there was one focus group with four (4) students and another one with three (3), as one student canceled their participation. At KUG there was only one focus group with five (5) students because of the challenges of finding enough participants at the end of the semester. All students were either bachelor or master level students except for one, who had recently graduated. The total number of informants was twenty-eight (28), out of which half were domestic and half had an international background. The informants originated from fourteen (14) different countries on four (4) continents. In some cases, the informants had mixed identities, so their origin was not clear-cut. Given the limited number of informants, the countries and continents are not revealed to protect the anonymity of the informants. Different stakeholder groups and the diversity of the informants' backgrounds enabled me to get a deep understanding and a multifaceted view of my topic.

I contacted the potential informants by email (see Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3) and provided them with data privacy and interview consent notices, which they agreed to before the interview or the focus group discussion. The interviews and focus group discussions took place between January and July 2022, first at Uniarts Helsinki during winter, and then at KUG in the spring and summer. The sessions lasted 1–1.5 hours, totaling around 22 hours of interview and discussion material. I had planned to conduct live interviews, but due to the Covid-

19 pandemic, all interviews and focus group discussions were conducted online. The interviews with native speakers of Finnish were conducted in Finnish. All other interviews as well as all focus group discussions were conducted in English.

Before the interviews, I made a pilot interview, which helped me test the technology and the length of the interview as well as make some adjustments to the interview questions (Appendix 4). Although I had prepared the questions, the interviews were designed to be flexible. The themes of internationalization, social sustainability, and socially sustainable internationalization that are at the center of my conceptual framework were covered in all interviews and focus group discussions, but the themes evolved to some extent during the sessions. The community engagement dimension of my conceptual framework was not directly addressed as a theme, as I wanted to see how strongly it would emerge in the sessions. The interviews were interactive so that both parties affected each other and the situation (e.g. Brinkmann & Kvale 2005). I wanted to allow and maintain a natural flow in the sessions. The focus group discussions proceeded more freely than the interviews. All the themes – internationalization, social sustainability, and socially sustainable internationalization – were covered in all focus groups (Appendix 5), but I let the discussions flow freely and encouraged the participants to discuss specific topics introduced by the participants.

The sessions were recorded with informed consent. In addition, I made some notes to help me remember my thoughts during the sessions, which enhanced my understanding when making the analysis. The research data was then stored on my privately used laptop, which is secured with a strong password and mirrored to Microsoft OneDrive.

The nature of my interviews and focus group discussions can be characterized as localist (see Alvesson 2003; Welch & Piekkari 2006). According to Alvesson (2003), a localist approach assumes that the interview has a social and interactional nature and that it is tied to the social context in which it takes place. In a localist interview, the informants do not give reports on external events. Instead, the data is produced by both the interviewer and the informant at a given time and place so that both parties make sense of each other by drawing on their shared knowledge of the social world (Welch & Piekkari 2006). Therefore, the data reflects the situation at the time of the interview or focus group discussion. Combined with my epistemological social constructionist viewpoint, the language used in the interviews and focus group discussions did not mirror reality, but is rather a form of construction (e.g. Welch & Piekkari 2006).

3.3.2 Secondary data

The primary research data is complemented with a document review and onsite observation. This secondary data provides versatile material that allows a multi-faceted view of the topic, which is typical for a qualitative case study. It also supports the primary data and provides necessary background information for the findings in the primary data, which helps in contextualizing the data. The documents comprise material at European, national, and institutional levels, the latter being my primary interest.

The secondary data in my research includes the following:

- web pages and accessible intranets of the case universities, including documents such as strategies and policies
- field notes from the interviews, focus group discussions, and observations
- my research diary, which I started during the second year of my research project
- national and EU level documents concerning internationalization and sustainability within higher education institutions
- observation of life, events, and projects on campus
- attendance at seminars, symposia, and congresses.

This sub-chapter has described the research data of my research and its production. The following sub-chapter is a description of the data analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

This sub-chapter describes the process of analyzing the data from the interviews and focus group discussions as the primary research data. The analysis was inspired by constructionist grounded theory and connecting strategies (see Section 3.1.3.1.).

Before the analysis, I deepened my knowledge of the theories of the internationalization of higher education as well as social and cultural sustainability in line with my abductive approach to case research (Dubois & Gadde 2002). I also pinpointed the methodological approach of my study as interpretive social constructionism (Andrews 2012; Berger & Luckmann 1966). The first concrete step of the analysis was the transcription of the interviews and focus group discussions. All interviews and focus group discussions were conducted either in Finnish or English. The interviews conducted in Finnish were transcribed by a third party and

the English recordings were transcribed automatically using Otter²³. Only the voice recordings, not the videos, were sent to the transcription service provider to protect the identities of the informants. Using transcriptions produced by a third party and an automated process were a great help, but it was important to check the transcriptions against the recordings to verify their accuracy (e.g. Braun & Clarke 2006). Even though the aim was to have verbatim transcriptions, I decided to edit the quotes used in this study to some extent. I deleted fillers, such as “um”, “uh” or “like”, which are typical in spoken language and corrected the grammar to some extent to make the text more understandable. The Finnish language recordings were transcribed in batches by the third party and each English language recording was transcribed when it was completed. When the transcriptions were ready, I re-read them and made a summary of each transcription as well as the potential themes I had identified in it.

After the transcription, the informants were pseudonymized. Nevertheless, it is not possible to guarantee complete anonymity because of the limited number of potential informants in some stakeholder groups. After the completion of the research project, the recordings and the codes to the informants as well as the interview consent forms will be destroyed, and the transcripts will be stored securely for up to five years and thereafter destroyed.

The analysis started in my mind already during the interviews, which is typical for case studies and qualitative research (e.g. Stake 1995), as well as for grounded theory in which the data collection and analysis phases are intentionally blurred (Charmaz 2014a). Drawing from social constructionism, each informant brought along their own understanding of reality and the construction continued during our encounter forming a new understanding of reality. According to my reflexive interpretative approach (see Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 2018), I reflected the data and its interpretations continuously at various levels, which is why it is not always clear whether an idea was originally expressed by one or more individuals or whether it has been my interpretation.

I started working with the transcriptions and the analysis already before I had completed all of the interviews. When I had completed all the interviews at Uniarts Helsinki, I identified some central themes: punctuality, overlapping local and global levels, international vs. intercultural, elitism, language, and Global Music. After just a few interviews at KUG, I sensed that the two case universities would differ.

As I knew there was going to be a large amount of data and I was used to making observations and conclusions based on data, I decided to use Maxqda to help me with the data management. I made a test coding as soon as I had my first

²³ Otter is an online tool that can be used for transcribing interviews (*Otter for Personal Use* n.d.).

transcription ready and practiced using Maxqda regularly. I started serious coding when all my interviews and focus group discussions were completed and transcribed. I first went over my summaries and the potential themes I had noted at the first university, reflected them against the theories in my conceptual framework as well as my research questions, and formed preliminary ideas about categorization. I then started initial coding (Charmaz & Belgrave 2012; Charmaz & Thornberg 2021; Timonen et al. 2018) in the transcripts using automatic coding. I selected all the possible words relating to a specific code and selected some context to be included before and after the selected word. It became apparent that the codes and the amount of context needed some adjustment.

Maxqda was flexible in allowing me to enter potential words for each code both in English and in Finnish. I decided to use roots of words to make better matches. As an example, for searching data related to admissions, I used the words *hakija*, *haku*, *applica*, *pääsy*, *otetaan*, *recruit*, *enrol*, *haet*, *hyväksyt*, *accept*, *admit*, and *admission*. I went through the transcripts of the first university one-by-one, adding some codes and deleting some as well as adjusting the segments. I then ran the improved codes automatically for the transcripts of the second university and again went through the transcripts one-by-one. After that, I went through all segments code by code, which may be considered focused coding (e.g. Charmaz & Belgrave 2012; Charmaz & Thornberg 2021). During this phase I made further adjustments to the segments, deleted some codes, combined some codes, added some codes and sub-codes, and altered some of the original hierarchies and wordings.

Maxqda allowed a complex multilayered treatment of the data, which was quite an improvement compared to coding with Excel, which I used in my master's thesis. Building a simple hierarchy with codes and sub-codes would not have worked in Excel, since many of the segments had several codes, which made connecting strategies useful. For example, the following segment had five codes attached to it:

In some areas of the university, this is working very well and there are real interconnected threads of people working actively together in this direction. In other areas, there might be gaps where perhaps the management is giving a certain message, but the academic staff are not necessarily acting on it or being so active with it. And therefore, it's not filtering down to the students and being thought of as sort of a fully integrated aspect of the studies... there's definitely work to be done there.

Code: Challenges for the transformation > Pistemäisyys (ihmiset, osastot, yliopisto) ²⁴

Other codes assigned to segment:

Curriculum > Integrated (Weight: 0)

Stakeholders' roles = co-creation > All people (+) (W)

Stakeholders' roles = co-creation > Faculty

Stakeholders' roles = co-creation > Power

²⁴ Translation: patchiness (people, department, university)

It became very concrete that several themes and topics were intertwined. I had categorized the segment with five different codes, which suggested that the topics were related to each other. Looking for similarities, typical for grounded theory, and connections, typical for connecting strategies, I reflected the segments at various levels: scrutinizing them in their own context, comparing them to other segments under the same code, and looking for connections to the other categories I had defined for the same segments. This was in line with the reflexive interpretation (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2009, 2018) I applied in my research.

The coding and connecting alternated rather than happened one after another. Joseph Maxwell and Barbara Miller (2008) consider many of the steps after the initial coding in grounded theory as connecting, although they are called coding. The process resembled thematic coding starting with familiarizing oneself with the data, then creating initial coding and finally locating themes (e.g. Braun & Clarke 2006). At its highest, the number of entered codes was 2,743. At the end of the analysis in Maxqda, I had reduced the number of entered codes to 1,446, out of which 810 occurred in the transcripts of Uniarts Helsinki and 636 in the transcripts of KUG. Ultimately, I did not use all the codes. Appendix 6 exhibits an example of the codes when their number was the highest.

At this stage, I reflected on the categories and organized them into more theoretical concepts that could potentially work as chapters of the dissertation (e.g. Charmaz & Belgrave 2012; Charmaz & Thornberg 2021). The themes turned into the following: contextual, structural and managerial issues, strategy and its implementation, social justice with two sub-categories: diversity, equality, and inclusion within the institution, and reaching out. I then moved the coded segments into my dissertation draft and named the sub-chapters according to the themes. After that, I started reflecting and reducing the segments to find the essence of each topic and started writing around the topics. The themes needed to be rearranged and renamed, and some of them had to be deleted or combined. I had created a specific code for all segments that I had found particularly important for the research topic to make sure that I included the most essential parts of the research data. Although the connecting strategy helped me understand how some of the topics were closely related and even overlapping, there was a challenge how to arrange the themes so that the analysis would be readable without too much repetition. Finally, I rearranged and revised the chapters a few times to condense the message and to avoid repetition caused by overlapping themes. The Finnish language quotes used in the final analysis chapter were translated into English by a third party, who only received pseudonymized material for translation.

During the analysis, I worked in an iterative and emergent manner (Bartlett & Vavrus 2016, 2016), moving constantly between the theoretical framework, methodology, data and analysis. Having chosen the abductive approach, I was

already familiar with the theoretical framework, trusting that knowing the literature would increase my sensitivity to subtle nuances in the data and be of advantage in the analysis. I used the help of existing theory to formulate the categories. However, the ones that I had not encountered in the literature were especially important. For example, my conceptual framework included community engagement as the third dimension (see Sub-chapter 2.4). I had familiarized myself with the theory of community engagement as a part of internationalization in higher education of society (IHES) before the analysis. However, during the analysis and its conclusion it became apparent that I had to expand my theoretical knowledge into higher music education research. With my growing understanding, I had to revise my research questions, methodology chapter as well as the theoretical and conceptual framework several times to gain a crystallized focus (see Section 3.1.3). For example, I had started my methodological approach by combining social constructionism and critical realism. When doing the analysis, I started feeling that combining the two paradigms did not work the way I had hoped. Following my abductive approach, I decided to omit critical realism from the methodology, while trying to keep a critical attitude to my reflexive interpretations. During the entire process, I tried to be aware of the context of the specific case as well as the larger contexts, which is in line with my connective strategy (Maxwell 2008) and interpretive approach (Stake 1995).

The research data was constructed within the interaction between the informants and myself. However, as I have used reflexive interpretation, the data has been interpreted by me and will further be interpreted by the reader. I may have drawn conclusions based on what has not been said directly or on how something has been expressed. I have verified some information in the secondary data, but it has not always been possible. I have deliberately not made a comparison between the primary and secondary data, since my focus is on the perceptions of the stakeholders of the universities. The data has been co-produced with the informants, but I have been the one to choose the cases and the quotes and make the final conclusions in the text. Yet, I do not believe that there is one correct interpretation of the results, although at the end of the day, it is the reader who makes the final interpretation (see Section 3.1.2). I am not a part of the original interpretation made by the informant before our encounter, nor the interpretation made by the reader of this research and therefore cannot affect them. In the analysis chapter, I have used words such as *potentially* or *may be* to indicate that my interpretation may be based on something not directly said by an informant, but I have interpreted the matter by listening to several informants or placed a saying in a larger context. Due to the reflexive interpretation approach, the origin of each idea is not always traceable.

This sub-chapter has described the analysis process of my study. The following sub-chapter continues with critical reflections on the whole research process.

3.5 Critical reflections on the research process

In this sub-chapter I reflect on my research process. The topics discussed include three areas: (1) the role played by myself as the researcher, the informants, and the data collection, (2) the impact of Covid-19, and (3) research ethics.

When conducting the research, I tried to follow procedures that are appropriate to my paradigmatic positioning; that is, interpretive social constructionism. The guiding principles were that quality rises from an iterative and emergent logic (Bartlett & Vavrus 2016) and being sensitive to the contextuality of the research process (e.g. Welch & Piekkari 2017). However, some issues deserve critical reflection.

I have tried to treat the two case universities equally, but that may not always have been possible, not least because of my interpretive research approach. First, I was born and raised in Finland and have a deeper understanding of the Finnish culture and context. I have also studied and been a student representative of various organs at Uniarts Helsinki, so it is inevitable that I know my own university better than KUG. I have aimed at evening out the situation by trying to use only the interviews and publicly available material as my research data. Second, the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki emerged quite early as a promising example of socially sustainable internationalization. Before I started doing my research, my understanding of cultural and social sustainability was quite limited, and I knew the Global Music Department only by name. Accordingly, I was not aware of the potential of the department before deepening my knowledge of social and cultural sustainability and analyzing the research data. Additionally, my professional background as an entrepreneur and manager as well as a graduate of arts management made it easy for me to relate to the responses given by the senior managers. However, I found it important to listen to the faculty and students carefully to get a holistic picture of the phenomenon being researched. Nevertheless, I acknowledge a potential bias.

The interviews and focus group discussions touch the topics of role and multiculturalism in respect to myself as researcher and my informants. I acknowledge my personal involvement in the research process, but consider my identity a source of understanding rather than bias (see Welch & Piekkari 2017). The informants are representatives of their arts universities, so they may at times have tried to give a rosy picture of their organization (see Alvesson & Sköldbäck 2009). Therefore, I have firstly tried to use data source triangulation and verify the information from written materials as well as other interviews. Second, following reflexive interpretation (Alvesson & Sköldbäck 2009, 2018), I have tried to reflect the data and my interpretations from different angles at diverse levels. Furthermore, as a social constructionist, I have tried to pay attention not only to

the story and the content told by the informant, but also to the silences and what lies between the story and the silence (Charmaz 2009).

The multicultural and cross-cultural setting (Welch & Piekkari 2006) presented an additional challenge in my research. Catherine Welch and Rebecca Piekkari (2006) indicate that the chosen language may affect the power relationships between the parties. In an interview, the native language speaker has a linguistic advantage and if both parties speak a non-native language, they face a mutual linguistic challenge. However, if both parties have a good command of the second language used in the interview, which was the case in most of my interviews conducted in English, the platform may be considered neutral. Some of the informants were native speakers of English, but I felt that the power situation was neutral, as my command of English is good enough, due to my first master's degree in English philology and my career in the language industry.

According to Robert Stake (2005), in data source triangulation multiple perceptions not only serve as a means to validate a case study but they also clarify meaning by identifying multiple viewpoints. Piekkari et al. (2009) argue that the quality of a case depends on how well it manages to present the myriad of perspectives. The triangulation used in my dissertation concerned primarily the data. The aim of capturing multiple voices conforms to my interpretivist approach delivering diverse perspectives, experiences, and meanings of the stakeholders and allowing multiple voices to speak (Balogun et al. 2011; Piekkari et al. 2009). I also consider validity as context-dependent and ultimately, it will be judged by the research community (see Welch & Piekkari 2017). Due to the scope of a PhD research, the perspectives of partners and local communities were left out and I decided to focus on the internal stakeholders within the universities. The importance of local communities started to emerge gradually only during the interviews. The omission may potentially cause a bias concerning the conclusions and recommendations I have made based on the analysis.

The Covid-19 pandemic had its toll on my research process. After the first half year of my research, social interaction within the university changed dramatically. I continued working on my theoretical framework and methodology, but the interviews and observations were postponed. All the time, I had to have a plan B for my topic in case life would not return to normal, at least to some extent. Contrary to my original plan, the interviews and focus group discussions were conducted online. Without the pandemic, the results of my research might have looked quite different. It is also to be noted that the research is a snapshot of a given time. Many things may have changed since the interviews and the focus group discussions because of the pandemic or otherwise. My research reflects the situation at the time of the data creation process.

I have conducted my research aiming at integrity and ethicality and following the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity (2023), which are also in use at Uniarts Helsinki.

The critical reflections on the research process have concluded the methodological chapter. The next chapter presents the analysis and the results.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter analyzes how the informants perceive internationalization and social sustainability within the University of the Arts Helsinki (Uniarts Helsinki) and the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (KUG). First, the strategies and language policies of the two universities are introduced. Then the informants' views related to admission and recruitment as well as the curricula are analyzed. The following sub-chapter discusses the case universities' relationship to society and examples of community engagement. The chapter concludes with a discussion of stakeholder roles in co-creation towards a socially sustainable university in the domestic intercultural context.

The sub-chapters represent the themes that emerged in the research data. The themes support the aim of this study, which is to understand how and to what extent the internationalization of arts universities contributes to social sustainability in the domestic context as perceived by stakeholders within the university: senior managers, faculty, and students. Drawing from Nokkala et al. (2023), arts universities are considered both as institutions that are a combination of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements (W. R. Scott 2008) and nested organizations (Hüther & Krücken 2016), where the competencies for internationalization and sustainability reside on diverse levels. The concept of "the university" is not problematized. The analysis reflects the perceived understanding of a stand or practice of a university expressed in the discourse of the informants. Although there are references to specific stakeholder groups, the analysis does not intend the form an understanding related to specific stakeholder groups but rather form a holistic view. The themes also reflect the theories in the conceptual framework of the sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions (SIHEI), which has been revised during the analysis according to my abductive manner of working. The data presented in this chapter is distilled from the primary interview data based on its relevance to the conceptual framework. Some ideas may have been expressed by a single informant, but they have been included, if they contribute to the holistic picture of the phenomenon being researched.

Drawing from social constructionism, each informant brought their own understanding of reality that had been constructed already before the interview or focus group discussion and the construction continued during our interaction forming a new understanding of reality. According to my reflexive interpretative approach (see Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2009, 2018), the researcher and informants affected each other during the whole research process. The data has gone through my own reflection, which is why it is not always clear whether an idea is originally expressed by one or more individuals or whether it has been my interpretation.

4.1 Strategies of Uniarts Helsinki and KUG

This sub-chapter first presents the general strategies of Uniarts Helsinki and KUG, followed by the strategic approaches of the universities towards internationalization and social sustainability, two central dimensions in the conceptual framework SIHEI in this doctoral dissertation. Finally, the language policies chosen by the universities are introduced.

4.1.1 General strategy

The strategies of Uniarts Helsinki and KUG do not resemble each other. This is understandable since the strategy should be created from the unique starting point and context of the university. Nevertheless, both universities emphasize concepts such as excellence, internationality, sustainability, and societal dimensions.

Following the traditional format with a vision, mission, values, and goals, the strategy of Uniarts Helsinki for 2021–2030 manifests excellence, internationality, and sustainability. The university wants to “represent the highest global standards and to be one of the most internationally appealing centers of arts education and research” and founds its strategy on “the idea that art is part of a good life. It helps us build an equal and sustainable world.” (*Strategy 2021–2030* n.d.)

The mission statement for Uniarts Helsinki promotes art as a change driver. The vision of Uniarts Helsinki is “Art creates the future”. Art is described as a basis for well-being and a tool for connecting people as well as a basis for the success of Finnish society. Uniarts Helsinki also aims to support artists in pursuing successful careers globally by stating: “Uniarts Helsinki offers the best possible support for also pursuing international fame and success.” (*Strategy 2021–2030* n.d.)

The values of Uniarts Helsinki are skill, courage, and openness. Cultural and social sustainability are not mentioned directly, but the descriptions of the values reflect both forms of sustainability: “We draw inspiration from our traditions but also reinterpret them” and “We value diversity and consider it a resource. We seek an active dialogue with the world that surrounds us”. (*Strategy 2021–2030* n.d.)

KUG has an 86-page development plan (*Entwicklungsplan*) for the years 2022 to 2027 that serves as the university strategy²⁵. Parts of the development plan can be found on the KUG website, but they appear in a slightly different format. The complete development plan can be found on the KUG website as a link to a newsletter (*Entwicklungsplan* n.d.). At present, both the development plan and the web texts are available in German only. KUG also has separate strategy

²⁵ When the development plan of KUG and the strategy of Uniarts Helsinki are referred to collectively they are called *the strategies*.

documents for some focused areas, such as diversity (*Diversitätsstrategie Der KUG* n.d.).

KUG's strategic profile as a university is based on five guidelines (*Leitlinien*), four focus areas (*Schwerpunkte*) and six goals (*Ziele*). The guidelines include topics such as excellence, connections to society, and the need for regional anchoring as well as international orientation. KUG sees itself as a part of an open society and considers art, culture, and science to have special potential for change within areas such as the diversity of society, worldview, and ethnicity. According to the guidelines, arts are understood as a social practice and artistic citizenship is claimed to enable students to open new spaces for art in society. Topics such as social responsibility, artistic excellence, flexibility, inventiveness, entrepreneurship, leadership, and the ability to cope with challenges are emphasized. The focus areas at KUG from 2022 to 2027 are contemporary arts, Western classical chamber music and orchestra, jazz, and research. (*Entwicklungsplan* n.d.)

The strategic goals at KUG include topics such as international competitiveness, international visibility of research, societal relevance, diversity, as well as sustainable and quality-oriented use of infrastructure. Outstanding artistic quality and societal responsibility are emphasized. KUG encourages cultural participation for all through programs such as Meet4Music. KUG also offers other low-threshold community-oriented programs for children, youth and families, promotes artistic citizenship as a means of connecting to society as well as linking its strategies to the societal dimension through diversity and sustainability. KUG relates artistic citizenship to audience engagement (*Kunstvermittlung*). The relevance of artistic activity from a social perspective requires topics such as new target groups, engaging the audience within a performance, and collaboration with both local and regional partners. KUG has analyzed the relevance of the SDGs for its activities in the development plan. (*Entwicklungsplan* n.d.)

4.1.2 Internationalization and social sustainability

Internationality is present in the general strategies of both case universities, but internationalization is not promoted as a specific goal, which is emphasized by the fact that neither university has an internationalization strategy. Besides the aspiration to be international, the universities also need to take national interests into consideration.

The approaches towards internationalization in the case universities are somewhat different. At Uniarts Helsinki, internationalization is a cross-cutting theme in the strategy; a conscious decision has been taken not to make it one of the main “pillars”, explains one senior manager, who further comments that the present

formulation complicates the allocation of resources and lacks clarity in its overall view and specific goals. Furthermore, the internationalization initiative of the Ministry of Education and Culture²⁶ in Finland has made it important to update the strategy regarding internationalization. A faculty member comments that even though the strategy helps to develop their relationship to internationality, it is not always reflected in the organization, leaving a gap between the policies and the interpretation of internationalization by individuals and departments. There is nevertheless confidence in the organization that internationalization at Uniarts Helsinki is becoming more broadly apparent and that there is increasing interest in engagement.

At KUG, internationalization appears to be “a mission completed”. The number of international students has become so high (51% in winter term 2022/2023, see Section 3.2.2.4) that there is no need to concentrate on quantity within internationalization – so thinks a senior manager: “... *we have the goal to be an international university here. This is our goal and this goal is fulfilled...*”. The number of international students at KUG is already relatively high and according to some informants, KUG receives a natural flow of students from Southeast Europe because of its geographic location.

The rationales for internationalization in both case universities that stand out in the research data are international fame, networking, and quality. They are not only intertwined but also a mixture of rationales, tools, and outcomes. According to the research data, the reasons for international reputation, appeal, visibility, and acknowledgement include the hope to attract funds and new talent to the universities on the one hand and an expected increase in quality on the other. International networking provides an opportunity to reflect how to improve the quality of education and research, while the high quality of international students, especially in instrumental studies, is perceived by several informants to increase the level of the whole institution. The research data suggests that the latter seems especially important for KUG.

Many stakeholders in both universities consider issues related to internationalization at home to be important, even if the term is not always used. Internationalization at home is mentioned in the development plan of KUG. It is not in the strategy of Uniarts Helsinki but mentioned in the Erasmus Policy Statement included in the approved application for Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2021–2027 by Uniarts Helsinki (*Erasmus Policy Statement 2020*). Mobility, which is not in the scope of this research, is considered important especially at KUG but is also recognized at Uniarts Helsinki.

²⁶ *International Cooperation - OKM - Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland* (n.d.)

Societal impact, which in this research lies at the intersection of internationalization and social sustainability, is also important for both case universities. Social sustainability, which is not clearly visible in the strategy of either university, is approached in somewhat different ways. While there has been a considerable amount of dialogue at Uniarts Helsinki, the concept of social sustainability is relatively unknown at KUG.

Even though social sustainability is not directly included in the strategy at Uniarts Helsinki, the research data suggests that there is confidence that the concept as such is understood, and that an understanding of its importance is gradually developing. A faculty member believes that social sustainability is already high on the strategic agenda, and that there is a lot of willingness to find solutions together. They think, however, that there are still challenges to be faced in the implementation of the strategy and policies, as well as reaching a common understanding throughout the university. A senior manager believes that social sustainability will eventually find its way to the strategy, and that it should complement, not replace, environmental sustainability as a goal.

At KUG, the concept of social sustainability is not well-known, but specific components of social sustainability, such as intercultural dialogue, are more familiar. According to the research data, social sustainability has not been raised as an issue that needs to be addressed at the moment, as other aspects of sustainability appear more urgent. One senior manager admits that there is no strategy for social sustainability at KUG at the moment: “... *I think social sustainability is not in our scope so clearly, because we don't have the notion of this...*”. This is confirmed by several informants.

All in all, according to the research data, the concept of social sustainability is new to both case universities, and it is challenging to plan concrete measures – it is like navigating new territory for everybody.

The case universities want to offer experiential knowledge on how a socially sustainable community works so that the graduates can apply the practices, values, and attitudes that they have acquired either consciously or unconsciously to working life. Awareness of responsibility in social issues comes with artistic liberty. Accordingly, a senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki ponders that a graduate should grow into a socially responsible actor who can reflect the value base, sustainability, and impact of their own artistic choices. Even if there is doubt concerning the concept of social sustainability at KUG, there is a clear goal that students know their role in society when they graduate, thinks a senior manager. This view is clearly in the domain of social sustainability, but also within cultural sustainability, which is related to artistic citizenship, a concept that is cherished at KUG.

Cultural and social sustainability are closely related and entangled with each other. A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki suggests that social sustainability could be a

combination of social equity and cultural tolerance. A faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki thinks one of the issues concerning sustainability within higher music education is the sustenance of existing systems and education programs, as well as diverse musical traditions that are in danger of disappearing because they are not commercially successful or have a big budget. On the one hand, this idea brought up by the faculty member leans towards cultural sustainability, on the other hand, if one considers the diverse people involved in those programs and traditions, social sustainability comes into the picture.

4.1.3 Language policy

Language plays a central role in delivering internationalization in a socially sustainable way. The language policies at Uniarts Helsinki and KUG differ considerably. The official languages in Finland are Finnish and Swedish. In addition, the indigenous Sámi people have legal rights to their own language and culture²⁷. In Austria the official language is German, but Croatian, Slovenian and Hungarian are recognized as official languages of autonomous population groups in specific regions (*Languages, Culture and Religion* n.d.). German is the principal language of instruction in Austrian universities (*Learning German* n.d.). The University Act (*Universitätsgesetz 2002* n.d.) states that admission to a degree program in Austria requires knowledge of German, which is necessary for a successful completion of the program. In the same way, a command of the English language is required in programs that are conducted in English. The act also requires that measures should be taken to give extra support to the admission of non-traditional applicants and those from under-represented groups for access to higher education.

The position of the official languages in Finland and Austria sets the context for the language strategy chosen by the two universities. The language guidelines of Uniarts Helsinki were in the making during this research (*Language Guidelines* 2023). To cover the gap, the Sibelius Academy of Uniarts Helsinki has its own language policy (*Language Policy at the Sibelius Academy 2.0* n.d.) as a part of its action plan for 2021 to 2024. The aim of the policy is to enable all community members to participate in discourse and activities as well as to support the language and communication skills of the staff. According to the policy document, the administrative language at Uniarts Helsinki is Finnish, and the working languages are Finnish, English, and Swedish. The policy also states that the

²⁷ The position of Sámi and Swedish is not in the domain of this research. The Sámi language act ensures the constitutional right of the indigenous Sámi people to their own language and culture (*Saamen kielilaki 1086/2003* n.d.). Swedish is also a minority language in Finland, but it is a national language in Finland and the rights are secured by the constitution.

Sibelius Academy is obliged to provide an equal opportunity for all students to learn and study in Finnish, Swedish, or English. According to the document, all degree programs at the Sibelius Academy can be completed in English, except for church music and music education. (*Language Policy at the Sibelius Academy 2.0* n.d.) However, today, it is also possible to complete studies in university pedagogy in the arts aimed at teachers and degree programs in English, as pointed out by a faculty member.

At KUG, the development plan addresses both students and staff who are not native speakers of German. Measures are taken to lower the language barriers of potential students, and German language courses are promised to new students. Language and origin are mentioned as aspects of diversity that will be taken into consideration to attract highly qualified international staff. The development plan also suggests that the diversity of students and staff strengthens intercultural competencies and fosters understanding various cultures. Bilingual communication is promised on the web page of the international office concerning mobility. According to the development plan, implementing English language courses in selected subjects or individual master's programs is under discussion. (*Entwicklungsplan* n.d.) The KUG diversity strategy is a plan for implementing diversity agendas so that KUG can meet its social responsibility and role model function as an inclusive and innovative higher education institution (*Diversitätsstrategie Der KUG* n.d.). The strategy has a gender focus; language and culture issues are touched only briefly.

The Sibelius Academy language policy includes comprehensive information on the usage of English in diverse communication situations. Academic affairs information systems and key data concerning studies and teaching should exist at least in Finnish and English, but the teachers can decide on the language of course level information. A detailed description concerning the language requirements in diverse situations is included. Communication in English is emphasized for the benefit of international members of the community. (*Language Policy at the Sibelius Academy 2.0* n.d.) For KUG, information on the use of languages in communication, meetings or information systems cannot be found on the web page.

During the interviews, the language policy at Uniarts Helsinki is labeled as strategic trilingualism. The trilingual language policy supports diversity and one of the reasons for the chosen policy may be inclusiveness, as can be seen in a senior manager's comment:

We have invested in multilingualism and that things would not be excluded for those who, for example, do not speak one of our two official languages... (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

At KUG, the German language requirements can be found on the web page. The applicants typically need to have a basic knowledge of German to be admitted to a degree program. A defined, higher level of German is usually required before the second or third semester, and in some programs already before admission. The required level is mostly intermediate B1²⁸ for bachelor level studies and B2 for master level in music-related studies. Some departments have higher requirements. The only exceptions are the Jazz Department and doctoral studies. The jazz vocal and instrumental master level studies have no requirements for German, as the tuition is in English, and doctoral studies require a C1 level in either German or English before admission. (*Required German Language Competency for Studies at KUG* n.d.) Language studies are recommended before arrival and further studies are advocated if a language test is needed to continue studies. Incoming Erasmus exchange students are not required to take a German language test. (*Knowledge of German Language* n.d.)

Informants at KUG, including senior management and faculty members, do not consider the required level of German very high. Even though German is the dominant language used in the university, they admit that German is not a lingua franca like English, and that English is needed at least in some departments. Some informants even think that in reality there are people who do not speak German despite the requirements. Some informants wish that English was an alternative. Some changes have already been made, but the path has not been easy according to some informants.

The present financial situation for universities in Finland, such as Uniarts Helsinki, is quite tight (e.g. *Taideyliopiston toimintakertomus ja tilinpäätös 2021*). Even though the cost of multilingualism is recognized to be high, it is the chosen policy of Uniarts Helsinki. According to senior managers, Finnish is being used the most at Uniarts Helsinki, then English and the status of Swedish could be improved. English is being used as a lingua franca, irrespective of the native language of the speaker. A senior manager tells that Uniarts Helsinki continuously contemplates increasing the status of English, even though a lot of other countries have chosen another path. According to them, the native language has a much stronger position in other countries, such as Norway, Sweden, England, and Germany, where, for example, the meeting language is automatically the native language of the country. The senior management at Uniarts Helsinki acknowledges that administrative barriers concerning languages need to be eliminated and enough resources should be ensured. Nevertheless, applicants must have a certain level of language skills, but Uniarts Helsinki appears, according to the senior management, to be relatively liberal in that respect. In summary, it can be concluded that Uniarts Helsinki and

²⁸ Language skills are defined by the European Union (*Common European Framework of Reference for Language Skills | Europass* n.d.).

especially the Sibelius Academy as an institution try to support international students and staff in the use of language, aiming at inclusiveness, and equality.

At KUG, the German language requirement is justified by saying that knowing the language facilitates living in the region, engaging with other students, and participating in studies. A senior manager also considers it as an asset for potential future careers in German-speaking countries. Other languages can still be heard. According to another senior manager, the benefit for domestic students at KUG is that they obtain an intercultural flair through the diversity of cultures and languages.

This chapter has so far explored the case universities' general strategies, strategies towards internationalization and social sustainability as well as language policies. The following sub-chapter continues with an analysis of international student admission and staff recruitment.

4.2 International student admission and staff recruitment

International student admission and staff recruitment are crucial moments, where universities can choose whether they wish to foster social sustainability. This sub-chapter first describes the diverse dilemmas that the case universities face when deciding what kind of position they want to take towards international applicants. Subsequently, the challenges faced by some applicant groups are analyzed, and finally, the sub-chapter addresses international staff recruitment.

Arts universities may have distinct differentiating features that affect student applications. Universities recruit students actively, but in the end, it is the student who decides which universities they want to apply to. Do the informants believe that social sustainability plays a role for potential applicants?

Informants at Uniarts Helsinki tend to believe that some international students seek a university based on social sustainability, especially when applying to programs such as Global Music, which are founded on an inclusive process that embraces all approaches to music making. In contrast, social sustainability-related issues do not come up in the interviews and discussions concerning admissions and recruitment at KUG. The most prominent reason to apply to KUG, according to many informants, may be a specific teacher or professor. That means a lot of responsibility for the university in choosing their staff, the faculty being the interface of the university with the students. A senior manager comments that KUG's location in a German-speaking area may be an asset because that is where the big names in the Western classical music tradition originate, but within Austria, KUG has a disadvantage compared to many other arts universities because Graz is a city which Mozart apparently never visited:

... we are [a] typical second biggest town and Mozart was never in Graz, that's the biggest problem of this city. So, we have to be different... Sibelius Academy [doesn't have] to be different, because it's the big Academy in Finland. And it's very attractive through [the] whole [of] Scandinavia. If the strategy of both institutions would be the same, something would be wrong, because they're totally different cities... we have to find our way in a way in that context. (Senior manager, KUG)

The case universities have their own unique strengths, which influence the potential students' interest in applying to the university. The research data suggests that the strengths are highly dependent on the context and environment in which the universities operate.

4.2.1 Values at stake

Arts universities face several dilemmas when considering their values and policies related to international applicants. These topics are connected to issues such as the level of international students, how to compare quality and sustainability, and how to achieve diversity.

4.2.1.1 National or international?

The case universities are international per se, but it is important for the university to decide what the level of internationality should be. Uniarts Helsinki and KUG both wish to be international, but as publicly funded universities they also need to look after national interests. A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki reflects that guarding national interests does not, however, mean that all students need to be domestic, but going truly international without national concern might affect the structures of the university. According to them, some fields might be replaced by other fields, which has already happened in some universities in the United States of America (USA) that have actively recruited international students. Nevertheless, the same senior manager cherishes the idea of going beyond the national ideal: the university could be a forum for students coming from diverse backgrounds and levels, even though there is no guarantee that they stay in the country after graduation.

Despite the senior manager's wish, there are concerns related to graduates leaving the country. According to some informants, international students are sometimes seen as a mere cost for the university and the country because they may enjoy free or affordable education and then leave the country without contributing to the domestic economy. According to them, one of the reasons for the students departing after graduation is the challenging work situation, which is often related to insufficient knowledge of the local language. The concerns about leaving students apply primarily to Uniarts Helsinki, whereas the research data suggests

that KUG is happy about the international opportunities the education provides for their students. Some informants at KUG even point out that the graduates leaving the country spread the positive attitudes and habits they have acquired during their studies, which could be seen as socially sustainable.

If international students stay in the country after graduation, there are still challenges to be faced. The research data suggests that if the students' command of the local language is not good enough, graduates staying in Finland or Austria may not get a job that corresponds to their education, or they may not be eligible to take jobs in which a command of the local language may be crucial. Many informants in both universities express a worry concerning international graduates and teaching music in the early childhood sector. If the number of international students becomes too high, there may not be enough teachers for local children in music schools because of the language issue. This worry is, according to the informants, shared by music school teachers in both countries. A senior manager from Uniarts Helsinki reflects that this topic is also related to social sustainability:

The number of international applicants at our university has been increasing all the time, so at some point the question of social sustainability arises, where the proportion of international students is so high that it is no longer socially sustainable from a national perspective. Because the challenge is that these international students don't necessarily stay here. If they do stay, they may not be willing and able to take on all the jobs where Finnish is essential. This is typical in education and training for young children... (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

This issue has been acknowledged but the university does not know what it could actively do about it, says the senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki. According them, one possibility is to support students in building networks during their studies. Networks help students find work opportunities and see some light in the future, should a student like to stay in Austria or Finland. One of the contacts in the network is the university, which offers not only many opportunities and support but also a safety net. Unfortunately, the research data indicates that students do not always find these or feel that they are eligible for them. A faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki suggests that the alumni play an important role for the university. They can act as bridges between the university and society and become artistic ambassadors. This has happened especially in the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki. Some informants at Uniarts Helsinki think the alumni activities could perhaps have a stronger international focus. Irrespective of their origin, many students go abroad after graduation and spread the word. A senior manager reflects that the alumni should be kept in the community one way or another. KUG does not have a strategy or administration for the alumni, so according to a senior manager, contact can easily be lost when the alumni leave the university. However, if the alumni themselves are active, they can benefit from a two-way street: If the

alumni inform the university of their doings, the senior management of KUG promises to give them visibility in the monthly newsletter of the rector.

Towards the end of this research, a general discourse emerged in Finland concerning the difficulties of international students and graduates in getting jobs without proper knowledge of Finnish. This topic did not come up widely at the time of the data collection.

Even if the situation with international graduates could be improved, there is still concern expressed by the informants in both universities about international students replacing local students. This concern goes hand in hand with the informants' thoughts on the quality of students. In Austria it is hard for Austrian applicants to compete with some other nationalities, such as Eastern European students, whose quality may be so high because of school systems that have more music theory, rehearsing, and discipline, as can be witnessed by the comment by a senior manager at KUG.

[W]e need to cater for, not only local, but maybe people on the national level. Very often, there's quite an imbalance between students from Austria compared to students from other countries. In some instrumental programs there [are] very few Austrian students compared to students from other countries. And then you ask yourself why is that? Should we do something about it? Or is it just okay. (Senior manager, KUG)

While the quality of Balkan students is praised at KUG, the best students at Uniarts Helsinki may, according to some informants, come from Asia; for example, in orchestral instruments. This presents a challenge of how to maintain a balance between top quality and diversity, shares a senior manager:

It's a big challenge how to maintain that level of excellence, how to recognize that in many fields, such as orchestral instruments, the best people come from certain places, more and more from Asia, and still maintain a level of diversity. Yes, it's quite a challenge. (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

The research data suggests that it is a big question whether universities can afford to say “no” to the best skilled applicants because of their origin to keep the ratio of national and international students at a desired level.

4.2.1.2 Quality or sustainability?

The concept of quality does not only concern the discourse on national versus international but also quality versus social sustainability. According to many informants, students are not selected based on their background at either university. A senior manager at KUG thinks that the admission process typically aims at getting “*the best musicians or the best artists*”, most probably referring specifically to instrumental students. However, the issue is not as clear cut as that.

Some informants express a desire for an inclusive policy in recruiting both students and staff – maintaining top quality and supporting people instead of discouraging applicants who do not make it. Not everybody can get in, no matter how good they are. A senior manager at KUG proposes that the goal should be to find the students that fit best. The statement specifically refers to the students' interest in science and in certain fields of study, but it could leave room for including a social viewpoint in the selection criteria.

Quality is a topic that is reflected extensively by many informants in both universities. A faculty member at KUG shares that the “*expression of excellence... is around all over the place*”. At Uniarts Helsinki, a student also expresses their concern about exclusivity:

I sometimes feel like Sibelius Academy and the student body and the music house even [are] exclusive or viewed very exclusively. I think it would be very beneficial if we could blur those lines between the institution and the outside world... (Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

Some study programs within the universities have more traditional and narrowly defined selection criteria, while others, such as the Global Music Department, evaluate their applicants based on holistic musicianship. According to the research data, some people have turned to the Global Music Department if they do not fit the more traditional selection model. This is not, however, possible for everybody, remarks a Uniarts Helsinki student. A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki thinks the university should maybe introduce variety in how they measure musicianship during the applications.

The research data suggests that both universities recognize the need to be more inclusive, but a perfect solution is yet to be found. At least in Finland, positive discrimination is forbidden by law, says a senior manager of Uniarts Helsinki.

4.2.1.3 Diversity or homogeneity?

Diversity, a topic closely related to internationalization and social sustainability, the central theoretical dimensions of this research, raise interest in many of the informants in both universities. A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki says that people with different backgrounds give the university community an opportunity to question their understanding of art, the content of education, and expand their views on people as well as cultural sustainability and the essence of art. Diversity is generally viewed positively. Nevertheless, the homogeneity of the student body is raised frequently among the informants from both universities.

It could be thought that shared norms and values as well as an equal starting point would create a socially sustainable situation. That may not be the case, however. Many informants connect diversity to social sustainability. Even though the

diversity-homogeneity dilemma may apply to all kinds of universities, the research data suggests that it is especially deep-rooted in the arts education field. According to a Uniarts Helsinki senior manager, diversity has traditionally not been a priority for universities, and in arts schools and higher arts education institutions diversity does not play any role, apart from in some individual study programs. According to them, in principle, anybody can apply and be accepted, but in practice, the selection is exclusive and some strong filtering mechanisms give the university the role of gate keeper. They remark, however, that diversity has been under discussion already for some years, and that it should receive more attention when selection processes are being developed. It is important because the audition processes may unintentionally close doors to some international students. The selection process may appear democratic, but the system nevertheless excludes people who are skilled but look at the field from a non-traditional angle. It is difficult for universities to evaluate applicants who have diverse backgrounds and come from diverse educational systems. This creates a need to ensure that there are no structural barriers for people with diverse backgrounds. The same Uniarts Helsinki senior manager concludes that self-critical questioning and re-evaluation of equality and potential structural racism are part of the internationalization process. It is crucial from the social sustainability point of view as well.

International students bring diversity to universities. At KUG, the large international student body is considered to increase their potential for dealing with internationalization. For some domestic students it may be the first time they are in such an international environment, and for some international students it may be their first time abroad. At Uniarts Helsinki, the number of international students is considerably lower than at KUG, but international people are considered important. A senior manager of Uniarts Helsinki stresses the importance of rotation for diversity: student generations change at least every five years, which also means a flow of new ideas. They consider it a process, where the university community constantly recreates itself and where diversity provides an environment which is easy to enter from any corner of the world.

One of the reasons given by the informants for the homogeneity of the student population may stem from the programs offered by the university. Both case universities have excluded the genre of popular music²⁹. Offering popular music would make the student population more diverse. A KUG senior manager reflects that creating new study programs might be the only way to broaden the social background of the community:

[E]verybody is coming from mostly the same backgrounds... if we would have a pop department, it would look some[what] different. But we don't

²⁹ Uniarts Helsinki may offer some individual courses related to pop-music in the Music Education Department.

have this, we are just focused on classic and on jazz. So, they are very similar to each other. (Senior manager, KUG)

Some departments may compensate for the homogeneity with music to an extent. The Ethnomusicology and Jazz Departments at KUG ensure that not only the classical repertoire of the European music tradition is being taught but also other kinds of music. According to a faculty member, this indicates that internationalization is an ingredient of the music itself. Nevertheless, the research data suggests that the student population in these two departments resembles the classical music students in having similar backgrounds.

The Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki is an example where diversity has already been achieved. The program of the department is based on the idea of diversity and inclusivity, as expressed by a faculty member:

... the program is really based on the idea of internationalization or diversity, and inclusivity. We are trying to create a framework where that can really exist within the structures of the university. I would say, from the Global Music Department perspective, its [a] central aim and central aspect of the work of the department. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The openness of the Global Music program towards diversity beyond ethnic diversity seems exceptional among the different departments. One of the reasons may be its relationship to the Western music tradition discussed in the following section.

4.2.2 Potential barriers to application

International applicants may face some barriers when considering which arts university they want to attend. Some of the barriers include the Western music tradition, the need to have started making music as a child, language, and the location of the audition. These issues are highlighted for some groups, such as immigrants and refugees.

4.2.2.1 Western music tradition

One of the barriers for potential international applicants is the Eurocentric framework and focus, including the need to have prior knowledge of Western music theory. Arts universities are mainly driven by Western art approaches: *“I think Siba [Sibelius Academy] is working within a frame of European culture, like what you learn”* (Student, Uniarts Helsinki). Because of this, people with a different background have relatively limited opportunities to find a potential study place outside of their home country; for example, in Austria or Finland. This topic is mostly raised by informants at Uniarts Helsinki, but it applies to most music

departments at Uniarts Helsinki and KUG, especially those related to instrumental music.

A student at Uniarts Helsinki describes their own background in learning music, which was not academic but rather on the street with peers. Still today, their learning happens mostly by ear, and they do not consider themselves good at reading music, which they consider a useful tool that should have been learned earlier. The Jazz Department, which requires a knowledge of Western music theory, had been unreachable before but their deficiency did not prevent them from being accepted to the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki:

*... there was... I will call [it] the reading test... I didn't do well, I could read but I didn't do well... the good thing is they didn't consider this aspect. They wanted to see your musicality, if you have a good ear. Can you play? Can you do this? So, they saw that. Okay, there's potential and... we can teach [them] or [they] can find out the in the process while [they are] here.
(Student, Uniarts Helsinki)*

A faculty member explains that admissions for the Global Music Department are based on an inclusive open process that embraces all approaches to music making. The students can bring along their own musicality, skills, and musical identity, which has been an important aspect in fostering diversity and internationalization. The Global Music Department is one of the only departments at Uniarts Helsinki for music-based studies that does not, according to the same faculty member, require the applicants to come from a Western music background:

*... one thing that we were able to shift within the Global Music Department and the admissions is that we're the only department actually that doesn't require the applicants come from a Western music theory background. So, to enter any of the other departments, music-based studies, the applicants have to have this background in Western music theory.
(Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)*

A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki shares that the need to change the admission policies has been identified and discussed at least as early as the 1980s, maybe already in the 1960s. It is not always necessary to measure people in the same way. Instead, the perspective could be musicianship – one can be a perfect musician without knowing how to read notes. Why should the ability to read notes be a decisive criterion, they conclude.

4.2.2.2 Children need to start making music early to qualify

According to the research data, it seems that a normative student in a higher music education institution in Europe is typically assumed to be white, middle or upper class, and rarely a first-generation student; they also started playing their instrument as a child or at least long before they apply to the university: “I have

played [since I was] seven years old and that is very usual for [an] instrument player... you can play it so well, that it's quite natural to just apply for the instrument studies" (Student, Uniarts Helsinki). The research data suggests that the families are into music and the parents may themselves be musicians who have an idea that music is something good and they can afford it. Entering an arts university may be challenging if one does not conform to this normative model.

According to the research data, to ease the path to an arts university, the relationship to potential future students should be built long before young people finish school and apply to the university. The idea of doing music actively, studying it, and having a career as a musician or researcher should be planted within children and their parents already in kindergarten, school, and music school. A real integration of diverse backgrounds requires the university to locate children with diverse backgrounds already early and accompany them until the entrance exam.

A senior manager at KUG points out it is challenging for universities to take the diversity of backgrounds into account. Not everybody has the same background and resources, and in that sense, we are not equal, and that the issue is complex as such, but the most challenging task may be to try to find a solution for instrumental students, for whom the lifelong path is almost an obligation. The students at KUG elaborate on the socio-economic factors related to music education, as can be seen from the comment made by a student at KUG:

... at least jazz is a privilege. It's the privilege of the middle class, of the well-educated white middle class. It's access to education, it's having the money to buy an instrument, having the money to support the study that you're doing... It's an expensive hobby... arts education is expensive, and it's only really accessible to people who are wealthy, not necessarily wealthy but the middle class. People in low socio-economic areas don't have the money to buy an instrument, they don't have the money to travel, to get educated, they can't afford lessons... they're producing huge amounts of white, wealthy middle-class artists which is problematic, because it's not diverse.
(Student, KUG)

In Finland, basic education in the arts is important for social sustainability, as some informants reflect. Even though tens of thousands of children participate in arts through this system, certain groups are under-represented. The topic has been worked on in a collaborative initiative: *Vision 2030 for Finnish Music Education* that brought together all actors at all levels of music education (*Vision* n.d.). In addition, the cross-sectoral *Floora* project at Uniarts Helsinki offered instrumental music education to children who have limited access to basic arts education due to socio-economic and other reasons (*Floora-Hanke* n.d.).

Some informants in both universities point out that making music and entering an arts university may not be what everybody wants. Nevertheless, the university

should not pretend that it is open for everybody – that can only be an imaginary ideal situation. A faculty member of Uniarts Helsinki suggests:

Not everyone wants to make art and not everyone wants to go to art school, that's for sure. But at no point do we imagine that we are open to everyone. In reality, of course, there is no such situation. It is more of an ideal. But we are always aware, in all our decisions, of... what they mean from the perspective of different people and from the perspective of possibilities. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The case universities are aware of this barrier related to the need to start making music at a young age and are trying to address it (community engagement related to children is discussed in section 4.4.3.1). The challenge applies in principle to all applicants but especially to disadvantaged international applicants, such as immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

4.2.2.3 Immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers as applicants

The requirement of starting to practice music at an early age touches local communities in particular. According to the research data, there seem to be considerable barriers for people with an immigrant, refugee, or asylum seeker background to find their way to arts universities. There seem to be certain groups to whom it would not even occur to apply to an arts university: *“I wouldn't get there anyway, because I'm like this...”* (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki).

According to a Uniarts Helsinki senior manager, Finland has relatively few immigrants even compared to other Nordic countries. Second-generation immigrants do exist, but according to the senior manager, they do not apply to the arts university very often. What could the university do to be more open to international people already living in Finland and to not exclude any demographic groups? The senior manager reflects that one of the root problems might be that arts is commonly an option for those whose primary concern is not money. According to them, immigrant parents may have a strong influence on their children's decisions. If the family is not oriented towards arts, music would not necessarily be the first choice, even as a hobby. The same applies to KUG, as can be seen in this comment by a KUG student:

I think this is sometimes a bit of a cultural issue because maybe in their home, parents are not musicians, so children are also not musicians, and they may not appreciate classical music. (Student, KUG)

If interest in music arises as a teenager, applying to an arts university might not be an option any longer. A Uniarts Helsinki senior manager suggests that immigrants might also have a different perception of the relevance of education than domestic people.

Refugees have a somewhat different situation from immigrants³⁰. Even if a family has applied for asylum in a country when the children are young, there are still many hurdles to overcome, as suggested in this quote from a Uniarts Helsinki faculty member:

So even if a family has come here as asylum seekers when the children were small or even a little older, there are so many barriers before children who are enthusiastic about music can find this hobby and receive quality, long-term education. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

All the informant groups bring up the situation of refugees from Ukraine at KUG. According to some informants, KUG has tried to do their utmost to help Ukrainian students through financial aid as well as a low threshold for entering the university, applying to courses, and taking part in diverse projects. Refugees in general is raised by Uniarts Helsinki informants, but the focus is not specifically on those from Ukraine. At Uniarts Helsinki, there have been successful projects engaging refugees, such as the World in Motion Project (WIM). Many of the projects also involve immigrant children, a faculty member tells. At KUG, the activities related to refugees described by the informants are geared more towards adults.

Africa seems almost to be a blank continent for both universities, as can be witnessed from one comment by a KUG senior manager:

And we have, for instance, nobody coming from Africa, no students, no teachers, this is for us, [a] continent as if it wouldn't exist. (Senior manager, KUG)

Both Uniarts Helsinki and KUG have virtually no students or staff with an African background, except for the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki. There can be several reasons for the lack of African students, both local students with an African background and those coming from African countries. At KUG, language could be one of the reasons. A student at KUG suggests that West Africans may want to study in France or the United Kingdom and other people in an English-speaking country. This would not necessarily explain the situation at Uniarts Helsinki, where one can also study in English in most programs. Another reason could be the lack of representation and role models, which applies to both universities as well as potential students with other immigrant backgrounds. This idea can be reflected in the thoughts of a KUG student:

... there are a lot of African people in Austria, if you are talking about the African community, and why they are not jumping at the beautiful history

³⁰ Refugees are persons who are outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and, as a result, require international protection, whereas a (im)migrant is “someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status” (Definitions 2016).

of Western art music here? Maybe because it's a really white history, and it's not so exciting, maybe because there are no black role models, there are no black people playing in, as far as I know, in the Vienna Philharmonic. (Student, KUG)

This situation may not apply to the Global Music Department of Uniarts Helsinki. Uniarts Helsinki has started addressing the situation with African communities within the EDUCase project³¹ and some other projects initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture. One of the aims of the project is to let people in African communities know more about the opportunities to study at Uniarts Helsinki. This kind of community engagement makes people realize that what they had considered impossible might be possible and there could even be scholarships available to help them with their studies, as suggested by the research data.

4.2.2.4 The role of language in application

The research data indicates that the language policies chosen by the universities can sometimes be discriminating and close doors to some potential international applicants. This can happen because of the barrier caused by the language requirements or challenges in dealing with practicalities.

At KUG, the German language may scare some potential students. The strict requirements may keep talented people from applying to the university or sometimes students want to leave if their German language skills do not meet the requirements. Compromises are desired, says a student from KUG:

It would be good if some kind of alternatives would be found for people who are worth keeping at the university... it certainly does not benefit anyone to be very stubborn in speaking just German. (Student, KUG)

At Uniarts Helsinki, the local language requirement should not be an issue because of the strategy of trilingualism. Instead, there may be structural barriers related to language. A faculty member remembers an incident where the requirement for an English language test proved unusually complicated. There was an applicant from an African country where English is a second unofficial language so that almost everybody speaks fluent English. Nevertheless, the university language policy required a language test. Luckily, the applicant was finally accepted to the university, despite the hurdles described by the faculty member:

... a few years back in [an African country] that test wasn't available locally, and it wasn't available online. So, we had an applicant who had to travel to [another African country] to take the test. This is very expensive, of course. And the reality is that in [that African country], English is a second unofficial language. And, you know, [Africans from that country] speak

³¹ See also (EDUCase n.d.).

English extremely well, and there's no problem at all with the level of the language, and certainly no problem with them being able to communicate within the structure of the Global Music studies. So, it was very clear that this applicant's level of English was completely fine. But still, because of the regulations, [they] had to go through these steps. And thankfully, this applicant made it through all of those steps, but we have had other applicants who have... not had the right bit of paper to prove their skills in English... the door has been shut even before we are allowed to see the applicant in the audition. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The situation described above has recently resulted in a structural change at Uniarts Helsinki, whereby applicants can now prove their proficiency in English as an integrated part of the Global Music audition process. To be socially sustainable and inclusive to all international applicants, policies should aim at lowering structural barriers wherever possible.

4.2.2.5 Online or on-site?

Admission procedures in arts universities have traditionally required onsite presentation. The Covid-19 pandemic, according to several informants, brought a welcome change. According to some informants, most of the auditions were held remotely during the pandemic, which allowed people from diverse parts of the world to participate. Uniarts Helsinki received applications from places that were not considered financially possible before, which led to unplanned social responsibility. A Uniarts Helsinki senior manager describes how the Global Music Department has aimed at this kind of diversity before, but for the rest of the university it was more or less unplanned.

Even though the informants mainly consider online auditions during the pandemic positive, the situation potentially caused some compromises to be made that would not have been possible in the past, as can be seen in a comment by a faculty member at KUG:

I have a feeling that there had to be some compromising that would not have been [possible] in the past. So there was some compromising more in the sense okay, let's take him/her. Let's give him a chance. Maybe with a bit of extra help he/she develops even faster than we would expect? Or let's give him a chance, which we wouldn't have done the year before. (Faculty member, KUG).

It remains to be seen how the pandemic will affect the admission procedures in the long run. Most departments of the case universities seem to have returned to onsite auditions with some exceptions, such as the Global Music Department of Uniarts Helsinki. The research data indicates that remote entrance exams would not only help the less privileged applicants but also be environmentally more sustainable.

4.2.3 Recruiting international staff

Social sustainability and internationalization are dimensions that not only touch upon the admission of students but also the recruitment of new staff. This section analyzes the recruitment of international faculty and senior management.

4.2.3.1 Recruiting international faculty

Internationalization and social sustainability play a role in the recruitment of faculty in both universities. Many vacancies are announced internationally. Some international faculty members describe the time when they applied for a job with the university. The university explicitly wanted to find an international candidate who would have connections outside or they were expected to help the university with internationalization. The informants suggest that the universities wanted to hire a future role model. In some cases, the role of a change agent was mentioned already during the recruitment and even in the job contract.

At KUG, the recruitment of faculty appears to be highly international, but according to the research data, there seem to be some barriers related to social sustainability. Recruiting faculty members who have societal ambitions might help a change towards social sustainability. However, because of the recruitment process the selected candidates are typically musicians with a reputable career as an artist. A senior manager says, “*we don't take a community musician as a professor for violin, we take a soloist or orchestra musician to a top position as a professor*”. The management has little power to steer the selection in a more socially sustainable direction:

Because the professors are giving me a shortlist, which new teacher I should take... I have only the choice between the three last on the shortlist. The shortlist is made by the professors. And the old professors are normally searching for someone who is similar to them. (Senior manager, KUG)

Although this senior manager considers faculty recruitment inflexible, they believe that the situation will change gradually, but the change will take time.

Uniarts Helsinki has an ongoing three-year internationalization program. One of the initiatives within the program is Talent Boost³², the aims of which include promoting the recruitment of international students and staff, improving their services, and supporting the employment of students after graduation. One of the goals is to facilitate the integration of international members of the community into Uniarts Helsinki as well as Finland (*Internationalisation programme promotes integration in Finland 2023*). Considerable efforts seem to have been made within

³² Talent Boost is one of the internationalization programs of the Ministry of Education and Culture for strengthening the international dimension of Finnish higher education and research by 2035 (International Cooperation - OKM - Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland n.d.).

this initiative that have elements of social sustainability to break down diverse barriers within international recruitment. The management of Uniarts Helsinki discuss the Talent Boost project in the interviews, but the students are not familiar with it, neither are all of the faculty members.

4.2.3.2 Recruiting senior management

The senior management of both case universities consists of members with a local background. One of the reasons may be that it would be challenging to operate in the management team if one did not have an excellent command of the local language, as reflected by a senior manager at KUG:

But when it comes to who is elected to be in the rectorate... those are the German-speaking people who understand all these papers they have to read, to understand all these things... you have to deal with them. And then it's again, a community of Austrians or German-speaking people. And if there are others inside, they have really a hard job. (Senior manager, KUG)

The equal opportunity aims within universities, which could be considered socially sustainable, may in practice not apply to senior management, as far as language matters are concerned.

This sub-chapter has explored issues related to international student admission and staff recruitment with a focus on social sustainability within the case universities. The following sub-chapter describes how internationalization and social sustainability are reflected in the curricula of the case universities.

4.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is a central concept for the internationalization, sustainability, and community engagement of HMEIs. In internationalization literature, it is commonly thought to consist of the formal and the informal curriculum (Beelen & E. Jones 2015b; Leask 2009, 2012, 2015a; Leask & Carroll 2011). This sub-chapter describes the informants' thoughts on the formal curriculum. Within an arts university, community engagement and activities such as festivals and community projects lie at the intersection of the formal and informal curriculum. Thoughts related to the informal curriculum are discussed in sub-chapter 4.4.

4.3.1 Internationalization and social sustainability in the curriculum

The curriculum plays a key role when developing international and intercultural competencies in students. It is one of the tools to implement the strategic goals in practice.

At Uniarts Helsinki, some informants believe the new strategy for 2021 to 2030 has paved the way for increased care for internationalization and social sustainability. A senior manager ponders that even though the strategy indicates that diversity should be supported, universities as well as the art world easily form their own bubbles. Nevertheless, the following statement suggests that diversity is important not only for learning to accept difference but also for making art interesting:

In our strategy it is explicitly stated that we should support different perspectives and the acceptance and inclusion of different life-worlds... But then, of course, both universities and art circles quickly become bubbles... a certain kind of diversity, which feeds itself, and in a good sense supports the ability to tolerate diversity and the willingness to encounter it is probably the most important thing for us because art is not very interesting if it always comes from only one perspective.

(Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

Uniarts Helsinki is currently going through the first university-wide curriculum process. The first phase has been to identify principles that guide the curriculum process. A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki elaborates on the process:

This is the first common curriculum process for us. The first step was to develop common principles to guide [the] curriculum planning... There is ... a strong desire to create a common process in which we can create synergy and on the other hand the richness of views from many different artistic disciplines and in this way to critically examine our own ways of working.

(Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

The guidelines at Uniarts Helsinki are relatively general for the time being, and internationalization and social sustainability do not stand out. Even though the topics are not explicitly addressed, the themes come up in the interviews and have a solid basis in the background, as can be seen in the following comment:

At the moment these guidelines are still quite general in nature and these issues [internationalization and social sustainability] have not been highlighted that much. But in our discussions, yes. They are not directly visible in the wording, but these issues are definitely there in the background. (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

Common guidelines given by the university should at the same time be loose and effective. They should enable internationalization where possible and desirable but in such a way that the community will not consider them as unwanted interference, as expressed here by a Uniarts Helsinki senior manager:

The university's common guidelines should be general and loose enough not to be perceived as a forceful intervention in the content or methods of teaching, and yet they should also facilitate a much stronger

*internationalization where it is perceived as possible and desirable.
(Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)*

The senior management emphasizes that internationalization has been in focus in the new curriculum process at Uniarts Helsinki. According to them, there are hopes that the international aspect will be visible in the final versions of the curricula in 2024.

At KUG, the concept of social sustainability appears not to be familiar to all informants. Some informants seem to think that social sustainability should come from the senior management, whereas internationalization appears to be there already and is also sought by the faculty and students. Nevertheless, the senior management is not yet very well-versed on the concept. In contrast, artistic citizenship is already included in the strategy at KUG. The description of artistic citizenship in the development plan resembles social sustainability, but the connection has not been explicitly made. The senior management of KUG wants to have artistic citizenship as a compulsory part of the curriculum to promote the idea that students should understand the relevance of art in society and their own role in it. Even though the understanding of social sustainability is not fully clear, the management understands that it should be in the curricula to be effective, as can be seen in the thoughts of a senior manager:

*[Social sustainability]... in the end, it should be in all curricula. And it should be clear for everyone that I have to show the importance of my art for society, to graduate. We are on the way to this... everywhere there are some seeds, and we are fostering the seeds to get hopefully in some years a flourishing garden... there are seeds, some small and beautiful seeds, but not a real garden... So, in the curricula, I think... [it] is not yet there.
(Senior manager, KUG)*

Social sustainability is not yet in the curricula of either of the case universities and the change is not expected to be easy. This view is confirmed by a senior manager at KUG:

Normally we should change the curriculum... changing the curriculum that's really lobbying... if something new would come in, what would go out, and how do you do that? That's the complicated job. (Senior manager, KUG)

The challenge of changing the curricula is reaffirmed by the informants at Uniarts Helsinki. At KUG there are also comments on the complexity of the curricula:

*[T]he individual curricula as such are all already very hard to read through. Well, this brings me to the point that the format of such documents [Entwicklungsplan] might not be very socially sustainable.
(Faculty member, KUG)*

At KUG, the curricula are partially available in German only, which may cause a challenge for some people.

In both case universities, the faculty appears to play a central role in the content and delivery of curricula. At Uniarts Helsinki, the research data suggests that the management is given the role of an enabler, whereas the brainstorming and implementation is on the faculty. At KUG, the faculty is given a more passive role as an executor of what the management asks them to do. According to some informants at KUG, social sustainability can already be seen at KUG, but it needs to be integrated even deeper in the strategy, which the faculty should then follow when planning the curricula.

4.3.2 Intercultural competence

Intercultural competence is a vital skill in an international and intercultural environment, when social sustainability is understood to include the “compatible cohabitation of culturally and socially diverse people” and social integration is encouraged (Polèse & Stren 2000 pp. 15–16). Intercultural competence is a concept that relates closely to internationalization at home in the curriculum (e.g. E. Jones 2020), higher music education (e.g. Thapa 2020), artistic citizenship (e.g. Bartleet & Carfoot 2016), and cultural sustainability (e.g. Acton et al. 2017).

It is important that there is dialogue between people from diverse cultural backgrounds so they can understand each other. However, the mere presence of international people does not automatically guarantee that there is a real connection between them, as can be judged by the comment of a Uniarts Helsinki faculty member:

... there are a lot of international students now studying at the university. But on the other hand, it doesn't necessarily mean that there is real contact between the students or real integration, or a real sense of connectedness within the university. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The informants are not unanimous on whose responsibility it is to develop intercultural capability. In an arts university the skills can be practiced within the core activities related to music. All students are trained in a different way because they come from different learning backgrounds and musical backgrounds. When playing together, students automatically interact with other students with different cultural backgrounds and face difference: “... music is also a language. We can say that, and we have the same Ziel, aim of making music together...” (Student, KUG).

In most cases the situation arises naturally on its own, sometimes teachers try to support intercultural dialogue on purpose, but for some others it feels somewhat awkward, as one faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki shares:

... [intercultural capability] is a skill that is extremely necessary, especially for artists... having people of different cultural backgrounds that is... a fortunate side effect... but... training people to do this, I don't even know how this would go, how this would work for people that are fully in the profession, like I am completely absorbed by my daily tasks, so that to me would be a bit of a challenge. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

Sometimes intercultural engagement is not even considered to belong to higher music education studies. This idea is related to instrumental students, especially those coming from abroad, who may want to concentrate on their core studies. A faculty member at KUG shares that, “[T]hose students mostly study classical music, and they're not really here to exchange interculturally... Not many of them, at least”. In both universities there are informants who do not consider the promotion of intercultural dialogue a university-level responsibility: “I don't think intercultural dialogue is, or can be, the goal of a giant institution...” (Faculty member, KUG).

Despite the views that intercultural competency is neither the responsibility of the faculty, nor the university, there are informants and departments at both universities that believe in promoting it. In the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki the whole idea of the department is based on intercultural dialogue and collaboration. There are wishes among the informants that the idea expand across the university. At KUG, bringing more cultural aspects into teaching has been discussed. A KUG senior manager believes the relatively new diversity strategy may facilitate dialogue between people on intercultural issues and on how they could be brought into teaching.

4.3.3 Courses related to social sustainability

There are diverse ways of integrating social sustainability into the curriculum. According to a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki, a lecture may not be an effective way of promoting social sustainability because of the existence of different learning types and world views. They think that universities may not have enough resources to cover different learning types and thus fall into conventional and limited models. Direct contact and attitudes might work better than presentations on the screen: “training sessions, with experts showing the principles is maybe not the only way. Presenting the principles on the screen is not the only way to learn... Direct contact and direct attitudes, behavioral model...” (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki).

The topic of separate courses relating to social sustainability in the intercultural context is mostly elaborated by students and some faculty members at Uniarts Helsinki. They mention classes such as *Cultural diversity and music research*, *Community engagement*, *Intercultural communication skills* as well as a series of

anti-racism lectures that have mostly been arranged within the Global Music Department. According to some informants, the Music Education Department offers an intercultural music education course, but otherwise, the teaching mainly has a national focus. However, it is possible to have international and intercultural encounters by taking classes in other departments, enjoying guest lecturers from diverse countries and cultures, as well as sharing information on different cultures with fellow students. Nevertheless, some students say that they would prefer interculturality to be a broad theme across the whole university: *“I think it should be a theme that intersects a lot of other studies at our university as well. Maybe it's also my personal interest, so I notice the lack of it when there is that a little bit...”* (Student, Uniarts Helsinki).

At Uniarts Helsinki, it becomes clear that students can customize courses towards social sustainability if they have an interest in that direction. A student talks about their path to collaborating with refugees:

There's this one course in Siba [Sibelius Academy], in which students do some kind of concert or musical event somewhere... A couple of students started to do this musical event at this refugee center, and they needed more performers there. So, I joined them for that one event. And that was [a] very touching experience for me. So, after that, I started to do that myself.
(Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

In a case like this, the curriculum enables students to pursue socially sustainable community projects. Personalization may be the key to making the studies interesting, but a student at Uniarts Helsinki fears that if social sustainability and internationalization are not built into the mandatory part of the curriculum, as they are in the Global Music Department, they will not touch the whole student body:

... there's room for customizing... if you want to expand and work with different kinds of communities and we chose to do that... most international or diverse courses that I've taken have been the ones that I've specifically chosen, that are not mandatory. So, I would say that it's not very much built in. (Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

The need for flexible curricula is expressed by many informants. Flexibility is felt to be important for students to find their own paths as well as for teachers to customize the teaching. In principle, it is felt important that the curricula supports a culture within the university that allows diverse kinds of musicianship. The change is not an easy task, as expressed by Uniarts Helsinki senior manager:

They [curricula] should be more flexible. And hopefully we'll create a kind of curriculum culture that allows you to reach the very top... But then you should also be able to find a number of ways to get there, because I think there are more ways to be a musician or an artist in general than just one. But art schools somehow assume that there is only one way... especially

conservatories, because in music the ethos of the performing musician is so strong... there has to be that flexibility... I think those criteria should be open to ... review ... But it's not easy... the legislation is not very supportive of diversification. (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

The need for flexibility has been recognized in arts universities and it is currently being worked on. Faculty members at Uniarts Helsinki and KUG have participated in an AEC project for decentering curricula³³, which deals with re-evaluating diversity and inclusion within HMEIs. A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki points out that individual educators and heads of departments are relatively independent in deciding about the curricula even on an individual student level:

... we have an awful lot, which I think is good... of decision-making power at the grassroots level... that individual teachers or program directors are able to decide very independently... how, for example, an individual student's curriculum is structured... (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

Students tend to like flexibility in their own curriculum. One may choose topics, such as community engagement, even if the courses are not compulsory. Nevertheless, there are also students who believe that some things, such as social sustainability, should be included in the studies for everybody. A student at Uniarts Helsinki reflects that the schedules of the students are often so full that it is hard to find time and energy to take diverse classes and participate in societal engagement projects.

I think timewise music education is quite demanding... if you want to graduate in five and a half years, you have to... put quite a lot of time on that... and your student loan, it's dependent on that. So, there's quite a lot of pressure moneywise also... I sometimes feel like... [students don't] have time and energy to work on this kind of stuff. (Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

According to the research data, there is a lot of pressure in completing the studies in the targeted time. The time pressure does not only affect individual students but also the university, which students are painfully aware of. It is a challenge for students to participate in voluntary projects, such as community engagement, if the schedule is overly full already. A Uniarts Helsinki student describes how bachelor level studies are especially tightly planned, whereas master level studies leave a bit more room to follow one's own interests. It requires students to be active, but it is also rewarding. The student reflects on their own path:

I also feel like it requires a lot from an individual student to branch out in our department... we have... a lot of mandatory courses that are very strictly planned for us, especially for the first three years... in the masters, we have a little bit more space to branch out and choose our own courses

³³ *Decentering Curricula* (n.d.)

and everything. But if you really want to do community-based things or innovate something or... create international communities and work together, I think it still requires a lot of activeness from the students... (Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

The full schedules of students are mostly described by the informants at Uniarts Helsinki. Yet, a KUG faculty member points out that as KUG students are “*very over tasked with practicing and very focused*”, it is a challenge to get students to participate in activities related to societal issues. Therefore, according to them “*I think [covering] the view of art as artistic citizenship... there's a long way to go...*” (Faculty member, KUG).

There are some community engagement classes that are a part of the compulsory formal curriculum, at least in the Global Music Department. Collaboration between departments can already be witnessed, as expressed by a student at Uniarts Helsinki:

It is fantastic to experience that for the last five years, in terms of community engagement, it is part of obligatory studies, you have to have a set of credits, both in bachelor's and in masters. And I think that a lot of these projects are in connection... with the Music Education Department, and we have had collaborations with Folk Music Department as well. So, in that sense, there are attempts, of opening up common projects and being inclusive towards all directions. (Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

The Global Music Department also features classes on a more advanced level, such as *Cultural diversity and music research*, which deal with different issues and perspectives on cultural diversity related to research. The Nordic Master in Folk Music at Uniarts Helsinki, a collaborative master's program with four universities, is given as another example of a program where intercultural engagement is present.

4.3.4 Social sustainability embedded in the curriculum

Many of the informants touch upon on the topic of internationalization and social sustainability being embedded in the curriculum instead of being taught as separate courses. A faculty member suggests that social sustainability could be “lived and breathed” during the course, instead of being a specific theme:

... these issues can be embedded in them not just as a subject, like one of the themes in the course. But kind of lived and breathed in the way the courses are taught. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The curricula at Uniarts Helsinki differ in respect to intercultural engagement between the departments. The Global Music Department appears to be a place

where internationalization and social sustainability are at the core of the curriculum. According to the research data, the main scope of the studies in the department is based on creating an intercultural environment that values diverse cultural and musical approaches, allowing students to learn through interacting with each other and the world around them. The department not only has an intercultural community studying together but also actively engages with local communities. Learning the skills involved in connecting with society and communities is considered as important as all other skills that are being developed, such as artistic, performance, and pedagogical skills, and that is why they are integrated. Students gradually adopt these ideas during their studies, as can be seen in the comment by this student:

I have to acknowledge that it really helped me... that some of the things were inside the curriculum already. Whether I wanted it or not, I had to go through some specific experiences that started altering my viewpoint in what is necessary and what is not. (Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

The Global Music Department uses art as a tool. The very idea of the studies is based on intercultural dialogue and collaboration, which is believed to filter into all activities the students and the faculty are involved in, as expressed by a faculty member:

... the arts are one of the tools, it's the vehicle that we are using. And within Global Music Department, the whole idea of the of the studies is that it's based on intercultural dialogue and collaboration. So, all of the artistic activities [are] centered around that concept. And that then filters out into all of the other activities that we are involved in. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

A Uniarts Helsinki student reflects that the Global Music Department treats intercultural dialogue as a skill that can be both taught and learned. The studies prepare the students for the future if they decide to stay in Finland but also give transferable knowledge that is applicable anywhere in the world.

The Nordic Master in Folk Music at Uniarts Helsinki, a collaborative master's program with four universities, is mentioned as another example of a program where intercultural engagement is present. In the other departments at Uniarts Helsinki, social sustainability-related issues may not automatically be built into the curriculum. Social sustainability is not deliberately integrated as part of the studies but rather described as random occasions based on the initiatives of individual faculty members who have an idea for a project engaging with the community setting they would like to involve the students in. This view is confirmed by the students. Both students and faculty members agree that there is work to be done to correct this.

The curriculum is not a topic addressed much by the informants from KUG. According to the research data, the Jazz Department includes international aspects and engagement with diversity through international professors, who bring their cultural identities into the teaching process. A faculty member notes that the curriculum touches upon diversity through topics such as Afro-American history. They stress the importance of international artists-in-residence, who come in once or twice a year for some days or weeks, even though they are not part of the regular curriculum but an add-on. The Ethnomusicology Department at KUG is another department that relates to intercultural engagement through the nature of the discipline.

At KUG, some informants bring up social sustainability in connection with audience engagement (*Musikvermittlung*) that appears to have societal ambitions. According to a faculty member, there are ongoing discussions with the senior management concerning some projects, but they do not consider the present status to be very promising: “... *if you ask what is happening currently, what has happened, I'm not so confident that you would find a lot of that. At least not from the management and curricula side of it*”. Nevertheless, there is hope amongst the informants that audience engagement would be an integrated part of some departments in the coming years. Some faculty members do societal projects on an individual basis, partially outside the KUG umbrella.

The senior management at KUG, however, clearly shows an interest and feels that social sustainability should be in the curricula, even though the content of the concept is not quite clear. Nevertheless, they admit that there is still work to be done before that is a reality. A faculty member hopes that the situation will develop through artistic citizenship, which the senior management embraces.

4.3.5 The role of language in education

Many informants consider music as a language of its own. Nevertheless, a student needs to understand the language used in the arts university, not only in order to feel included and to interact with other people but also to follow the tuition.

Language is a key element for students to feel equal and included. The situation can be considered more socially sustainable if the students' language skills are taken into consideration, as a senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki comments:

... a more socially sustainable situation where... language is automatically used in a way that includes the person. (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

At Uniarts Helsinki, trilingualism is in principle considered to support inclusion and equality, but in practice challenges are encountered. At KUG, equality and inclusion are being challenged in situations where German is required, and the

skills are not at the expected level. Learning the language is the key to feeling integrated, as a student at KUG comments:

That was quite hard, and I think it was like that for the entire first year of my studies, but then, when the language barrier was overcome, I think I started to feel more and more integrated. (Student, KUG)

Students at KUG describe insufficient language skills causing them to feel shame or discomfort. The situation was especially bad in the beginning but improved when their language skills got better. The situation is even more challenging when dialects are being used, which is frequent around Graz. According to a student at KUG, this applies to instruction in class as well, which causes irritation:

... what always bothered me, and continues to bother me, is the expectation of us understanding, if not speaking, the dialect, and understanding the different accents. (Student, KUG)

Students' feelings about the language requirement at KUG differ. In general, life appears to be easier for those who already know the local language before starting their studies. Once the initial challenges with German were overcome, most informants felt relatively comfortable. The support of fellow students is considered important.

Both universities have flexibility regarding language skills. At KUG, people often start with artistic subjects and take academic subjects when their German has improved. According to a senior manager at KUG, challenges arise in subjects, such as music theory or writing a bachelor's thesis, where the command of German should be at a higher level; about 50% of international students struggle with the language at that stage. Uniarts Helsinki is committed to a study path where the student can go through their studies in their preferred language (Finnish, Swedish, or English). The languages of instruction are defined in the admission criteria and curriculum of each degree program. Some departments, such as Arts Management and Global Music at Uniarts Helsinki and Jazz at KUG, use English as their language of instruction and communication.

According to the research data, at Uniarts Helsinki, the teacher can decide the language of instruction depending on the mix of the attendants. Nevertheless, making multilingual tuition possible also requires cooperation from the students. At KUG, the language of instruction is relatively set, which may at times be challenging for some students. If they cannot cope with the German language, they may need to change their chosen study path. A student at KUG describes their experience:

I originally came here to study [a subject taught in German], and I did one semester, and then, I took the entrance exam for [an instrument in the Jazz

Department], because my German was not good enough and I failed all my classes. (Student, KUG)

Challenges may also arise, if a student studies in an English language department and wants to take classes from another one. Even though the course selection is flexible, courses outside the primary program at KUG require a command of German, a student at KUG comments:

... the classes were small, and not many people were speaking German as their first language... It was absolutely impossible to study, because none of my professors... would even answer my questions in English or would be helpful at all with German. I think now, my level of German is good enough to do it, which is why I plan to start there next year. (Student, KUG)

The international aspect appears in a different light in different departments. In the education department of both universities, instruction is automatically given in the local language, in other words Finnish, Swedish, or German. In other subjects, such as orchestral work, where music is the central element, language does not play a major role. In one-to-one instrument tuition, the language can be virtually anything if the teacher and student share a common language, reflects a senior manager at KUG.

This sub-chapter has analyzed the role of the curricula in the case universities in fostering internationalization and social sustainability as central theoretical concepts in this research. The following sub-chapter discusses community engagement within the case universities, which is the third dimension of the conceptual framework.

4.4 Community engagement

This sub-chapter presents an analysis of how the informants perceive the relationship between their arts university and society. The focus is on the approach that the university takes towards engaging local communities. Within an arts university, community engagement, the third dimension of the conceptual framework of this research, lies at the intersection of the partially overlapping formal and informal curricula.

4.4.1 University embedded in society

Internationalization could help universities in addressing societal issues within and outside the campus in a new way and enable them to understand which areas an impact might be necessary. The need to connect to society is recognized in both case universities. The informants tend to think that arts universities should ensure

that instead of being just a “nice add-on”, culture and especially music should contribute to the well-being of society. To fulfill their third mission, arts universities should reach out to society and encourage their students to do so. If the university community does not connect with the outside world, there is a danger that the arts university and the community within the university isolate themselves in a bubble, as expressed by a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki:

... the university, all of us within the university can increasingly find more and more ways of connecting with the outside world so that we don't stay in a bubble of people studying within the university... our activities actually connect outside the walls and... we [can] engage communities in art making and... create opportunities. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The statement suggests that universities could do more to have a better social and societal impact by engaging local communities.

Even though many of the current issues in the world are wider than just the arts university, some systemic problems touch people who study in an arts university directly. According to a senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki, universities want to offer experiential knowledge on how a socially sustainable community works so that the graduates can transfer the practices, values, and attitudes acquired during their studies to their working life. They think that awareness of responsibility for social issues comes with artistic freedom. Accordingly, a graduate should grow into a socially responsible actor who can reflect the value base, sustainability, and the impact of their own artistic choices. Even if there is doubt concerning the concept of social sustainability at KUG, there is a clear goal that relates to the students' role in society, as explained by a senior manager:

I think we have a goal. I don't know if this goal is really in social sustainability, but we have the goal that in some years every student that finishes our academy understands his or her role in society. (Senior manager, KUG)

Some informants in both universities view the situation as an opportunity: the arts university could be a forerunner or serve as an example to other universities – either in looking into the larger world from a small city or in engaging local communities. According to them, the role of a forerunner requires students to be aware of their role in society. If they focus intensively on a small area of their studies in order to perfect their skills, there may be little exposure to working outside the campus, such as in a community setting. Therefore, the research data suggests, if the universities want to prioritize the third mission, all students should participate in connecting with society and communities. This could happen if community engagement is made central in all studies, as reflected by a Uniarts Helsinki faculty member. This is not the case at the moment, however, as

confirmed by many informants in both universities. The challenge is recognized especially at KUG and a change of mindset is called for.

4.4.2 Different paths to societal engagement

4.4.2.1 Societal engagement at Uniarts Helsinki

Informants at Uniarts Helsinki, especially faculty and students, talk extensively about local communities and how they can be engaged. The importance of reciprocity, co-creation, collaboration, and working on equal terms comes up frequently. The focus appears to be on marginalized communities and communities with immigrant, refugee, and asylum backgrounds, even though the number of people with an international background in Finland is not particularly high. A faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki talks about their view on the topic:

[I]t can create a great opportunity for further internationalization and social sustainability, where... we move away from a situation where they [African artists in Finland] might still be marginalized... to a place where their expertise and knowledge and artistry is really thought of as being an integral part of society. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

Those devoted to community engagement believe in making art together so that the collaboration is based on reciprocity. It is not something that one party gives to the other like welfare; it benefits both parties, as a Uniarts Helsinki faculty member comments:

... these are mutually beneficial processes. It's not like one group of people is doing something for another group of people or creating a kind of charitable situation... it is really about creating opportunities for people to engage in dialogue and learn from each other and learn from each other's differences and different perspectives and different ways of seeing the world, different ways of approaching what art is, what art means to them.... it is a reciprocal process... I think there are countless benefits from engaging with difference and internationalization and having opportunities to do that. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The purpose is, among other things, to increase well-being within local communities and create opportunities for the youth with less privileged backgrounds to find their way to Uniarts Helsinki. At the same time, students learn intercultural skills and the role they can take in society through arts. Community engagement is mainly elaborated by faculty and students at Uniarts Helsinki. The senior managers touch on local communities to some extent, but their main focus lies on the community within the university.

Based on the research data, the level of activities with communities varies from department to department within Uniarts Helsinki. The Global Music Department can be considered the spearhead of community engagement. The idea of the studies in the department is based on connecting and engaging locally but thinking globally. According to a faculty member, this is more of a mindset, but also a pedagogical and artistic approach. The department considers it important to connect with communities with diverse backgrounds locally as well as internationally and provides representation and role models, as can be judged by the following comment:

[T]his has also been an important aspect in terms of the Global Music... a lot of different cultural backgrounds are represented within the student body. And this has been an important aspect, I think, also in terms of connecting with communities from immigrant backgrounds, and having representation and role models working in community settings, who are coming from diverse backgrounds themselves as well... We have local initiatives, but we also have a series of international projects with the same approach as well in terms of connecting with communities in different environments... essentially, this is seen as part of our work as artists and part of the studies. And it's really about how we use our artistic skills and musicianship and artistic thinking to engage with different areas of society and communities. And essentially, a lot of the time, it's also based on co-creating together. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The idea is to “*go into the community and give back*”, says a student. About half of the students in the Global Music Department have an international background. The diversity enriches the student body and is considered a positive thing. However, in terms of social sustainability, it is crucial for this international community to move outside of its own bubble and actively interact with local communities and the wider society, which is another reason why the concept of community engagement is embedded in the curriculum, says a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki:

I think one thing that I can see within the Global Music Department is that again, the community is very international by nature. But in terms of sustainability, and if we think of social sustainability, there can be a disconnect if the community is very international in itself, but it stays within the bubble of its own activities. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The department is working on extending the connections within and outside the campus. Engaging people with diverse backgrounds is little by little spreading to other parts of the university, a senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki confirms. Nevertheless, the interest in and understanding of internationalization and social sustainability are still relatively patchy at Uniarts Helsinki.

4.4.2.2 Societal engagement at KUG

At KUG, artistic citizenship holds a central place in the strategy, and it is intensively elaborated on by the senior management. Faculty members also appear to be familiar with artistic citizenship, but students do not mention it in the focus group discussion. The *groundbreaking* ideas, however, are not yet implemented in the university: “*It's too early. It's in the development plan... to be frank, it's not in place now*”, a senior manager admits.

At KUG, artistic citizenship is related to connecting to society. The central goals of societal engagement are to find new audiences, audience development, and to “*make our society learn that music, art is an aspect of daily life*” (Senior manager, KUG), as can be seen in the following quote:

[O]ur idea [is] to have more education about artistic citizenship, to feel part of the society, to have audience development, where you're also trying to get other audiences and... help students see how they can develop their own audience that is not the normal audience in this specific field. That's what our social activities are more or less here, in our society.
(Senior manager, KUG)

The approach differs from that of Uniarts Helsinki, where, according to many informants, the connection to society is strongly related to communities and working in reciprocal collaboration with communities. However, the focus of finding new audiences does not appeal to everybody at KUG. When talking about artistic citizenship and the goals related to it at KUG, Meet4Music is brought up by some informants. Artistic citizenship at KUG and Meet4Music are described as being far from each other, almost mutually exclusive, as can be seen in the thoughts of a faculty member:

I understand artistic citizenship here at KUG is that they want to play for new audiences... we go one step further, we engage the people [to] find themselves... and being able to express themselves artistically... everybody participates equally. And I think this is a difference in artistic citizenship, the way KUG does. They are still the artists and the audience as different objects. (Faculty member, KUG)

Community engagement in the sense the activity is understood at Uniarts Helsinki and presumably at Meet4Music is not the focus at KUG, which is confirmed by all informant groups. Several potential reasons for the limited involvement of community engagement at KUG are raised by the informants. One of the reasons suggested is that Graz does not have intense local intercultural communities and its surroundings are not perceived as international and intercultural, unlike KUG itself. Vienna is described as an example of a city where the situation is quite different.

Another reason for the lack of outreach or third mission activities at KUG that comes up clearly in all informant groups is the focus on the core of the university: music, studying, and practicing: “I don’t think I’ve really heard anyone speak about that [outreach within communities outside of the university] before. It’s really focused on study and on what you’re doing” (Student, KUG). This kind of focus is closely related to the strive for excellence, especially among instrumental students, according to several informants. The research data suggests that KUG tries to combine excellence and attracting new audiences through artistic citizenship, which leaves little room for reciprocal engagement with other people:

I think, when we are speaking about the instrumental students, they are very focused on the[ir] instruments, they were focused on their expertise and to reach a level of expertise, which requires practicing, practicing, practicing. And the question for us is, why do we do this? And I think of music as artistic citizenship. It's... exchange between individuals and society, you know. So, I think sometimes we lose the focus of why we make music... communication with others. (Faculty member, KUG)

According to a KUG senior manager, the traditional understanding of quality should be questioned. According to them, students appear to have understood the need for a change better, but there are some challenges in convincing the faculty. There have been initiatives that have a social and societal dimension, such as projects that bring music to places like hospitals. However, the activities tend to have arts as the spearhead, whereas other goals are described as secondary or sometimes even non-existent, as can be seen from the following comment:

... our outreach is mainly on the artistic area ... the focus... is mainly on the music... So, in the topic of outreach, we are mainly focused on the main things we are doing, and not on additional things like internationalization or diversity... this is maybe a side effect, but it's not the message. So, in general, I would say no, we don't have diversity outreach. (Senior manager, KUG)

Even though international students participate in playing for local patients in a hospital and the repertoire may be adapted to fit the needs of the occasion, the approach appears one-directional, from the musicians to the audience. At KUG, where the tradition of collaboration is not so strong, there is a concern that not enough attention is being paid to the other party’s perspective — all activities are done from the Austrian perspective, as a faculty member puts it:

It's always our European way of doing it and sometimes it's European repertoire. Even if it's an improvisation... it's not a multicultural open improvisation but always with our approach and the background... we usually do without thinking, we really have to always think about trying to see the world from the other perspective... and maybe see [that there are

many kinds of] art, not always the classical Western music... we have to learn that we don't look down at other kinds of music just because they don't fit in our perspective... (Faculty member, KUG)

According to some faculty members and students, outreach is not visible in the curricula at KUG at present. However, there are plans to reach out to the local community as well, as a senior manager comments:

[S]ociety is very diverse... if we don't bring these people together, it's not a sustainable society... it hasn't been in our scope until now, but it came more and more with artistic citizenship... this kind of social sustainability is quite young in our strategic considerations. (Senior manager, KUG)

There will be a change in the next five to ten years, a senior manager at KUG believes. Then, the graduates will see that they have received the education paid by society and want to give back. Among the faculty there is some skepticism about this idea; a change of mind away from success in a traditional way is needed throughout the university in all stakeholder groups, including the senior management, faculty, and students. Despite the present lack of a more formal structure for community engagement at KUG, there are individual faculty members and students who have engaged or would like to engage in third-mission activities.

KUG is considered to be on the right path by many informants, even though a faculty member thinks the university should adopt a broader understanding of socially related issues, and the management should revisit the concept and the goal of artistic citizenship more profoundly. The management at KUG appears curious and positive about the possibilities of social sustainability. Nevertheless, in both universities there are informants who think that social responsibility should not be the task of a big institution.

4.4.3 Working with local communities

The engagement with local or regional communities elaborated by the informants mostly targets children and people with immigrant, refugee, or asylum backgrounds. The informants also mention engagement with communities abroad as well as projects without an intercultural dimension. Collaboration and partnerships with local municipalities are mentioned by many informants at Uniarts Helsinki. At KUG, the informants bring up collaboration with music schools and the conservatoire in Graz.

4.4.3.1 Reaching children

Informants in both universities find it important to work with children to break the elitist path leading to higher music education. The path is considered elitist because

music is considered to belong to privileged middle or upper-class families and because being accepted to a higher music education institution requires that involvement with music has started at a relatively early age. Both universities try to co-operate with music schools, kindergartens, and schools to open the path towards higher music education for young musicians without a typical music higher education student background. A KUG senior manager elaborates on the topic as follows:

... we can't change the social backgrounds of our students when they come to admission because they have this backpack of musical training since they were children. And that's only possible in families who have an eye on this. So, if we really want to make a change, then we have to think about new ways. And one is to really reach out to young pupils in schools... if you really want them to come to our university, then we have to make a common effort with the music schools and try to team up. (Senior manager, KUG)

The same KUG senior manager talks about Austrian students coming from farming or other non-academic backgrounds who may not have an intercultural background. However, this outreach model that is already in use could easily be applied to children who specifically have an intercultural background.

Another goal besides making the path to higher music education more accessible is to offer more children an opportunity to engage with diversity through music instead of having no or merely a one-time tokenistic experience, as suggested by some informants. At Uniarts Helsinki, some faculty members refer to a specific occasion in Tampere, one of the bigger cities in Finland: Some faculty members and students of Uniarts Helsinki collaborated with a local music school in a project giving young local musicians an opportunity to work together with musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds. A faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki elaborates on the project:

... suddenly, you had a situation where there was a big group of young people working together who were from really different backgrounds and really different situations and had also experienced music in very different ways... through working together... for me, it was a really good example of a model of social sustainability where suddenly these young people who maybe had had very little opportunity to engage with cultural diversity or to meet other young people from different cultural backgrounds, were really working together and creating something together... it was just a really clear example for me of how the vehicle of the arts can be an opportunity to create these opportunities for dialogue and connection between people. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The project was considered a big success. The collaborative way of working made the skills and ideas of both children and adults visible. The team created something

new together and had an opportunity for dialogue and connection in an intergenerational, intercultural, multilingual, and multi-genre process, as described by a faculty member. There are also other ongoing projects that aim at opening opportunities and results can already be seen, says the Uniarts Helsinki faculty member.

4.4.3.2 Collaboration with local communities

Engagement with diverse communities can occur in various forms, such as festivals, seminars, PhD defenses, scientific events, such as the Lange Nacht der Forschung³⁴ in Graz, conferences, special projects, or just any communal events. What the events have in common is the creation of a sense of community, as a Uniarts Helsinki senior manager reflects:

I think ... building a sense of community, with common events and activities, is really important. (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

Science-related events may not represent typical community engagement but perhaps target a more exclusive audience. The most frequently described events for engaging with local communities are festivals, such as the annual Global Fest arranged by the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki. The festival features students, teachers, alumni, and special guests, including local communities, bringing together musicians from all over the world. The festival is described as having dynamic, innovative, and inspiring concerts and pop-up events celebrating the diversity of our planet (*Global Fest 2022*). A faculty member describes a memorable moment during one of the Global Fest editions where a Syrian choir and their Arab speaking audience first participated in their own performance in the festival, and then went on to listen to a concert given by a student originating from Mozambique. The concert hall had been full of people with diverse backgrounds enjoying music together.

The Syrian choir were large, there were about 40 women singing there together... they brought with them, their families and the wider Arabic speaking communities. So suddenly, the Music Center was full and buzzing ... after their performance... the whole choir then went into see one of our students who's from Mozambique, who had [their] own concert and very diverse group of musicians playing very different music to what the choir had just been singing. But I saw this community coming in with their families with children and everybody together. And suddenly the Black Box Hall was full as well, but not full of audience that you might normally see there. It was full of diverse members of society again, enjoying music together. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

³⁴ (*Lange Nacht Der Forschung* n.d.)

Besides the Global Fest, informants elaborate on several student-led initiatives engaging local intercultural communities at Uniarts Helsinki, such as the Global Club Nights events with talks and live music as well as music sessions in refugee centers. One of these initiatives bringing international local musicians and domestic musicians together is an orchestra founded by a student from the Middle East. The purpose of the orchestra is not only to play Arabic music, even though that is the spearhead of the orchestra and the reason why people originally got interested. A faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki elaborates on the project:

*A student from the Middle East... has started an orchestra together with Finnish musicians... The whole point of this orchestra is to create cooperation that is meaningful for those who have come here recently as well as those who were born and raised here or have been here for a longer period of time. So, there's ... reciprocity at play.
(Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)*

The descriptions suggest that collaboration and reciprocity are the clue – it is not only meaningful for those who have arrived recently but also for those who have grown up here or stayed here longer. Initiatives like these are important for both the communities within the campus as well as outside. “[B]eing an international student, for me, it is important to have contacts, have local contacts and feel part of the community... we want to... mix and collaborate”, says a Uniarts Helsinki student.

The arrival of refugees has been an important and widely debated phenomenon in the past few years. First, there was an influx of Syrian and other refugees in 2015, and recently from 2022 onwards from Ukraine. Universities cannot change the circumstances, but they can still do a lot. Informants in both universities describe how they perceive the contribution of arts universities to the situation of refugees. At Uniarts Helsinki, there have been several projects with refugees involving students and faculty. Started in 2015, a project made in collaboration with refugees who were either professional or amateur musicians is one example, where social sustainability and interculturality were combined. A faculty member talks about the beginnings of the project:

... we were in our own kind of international bubble when there was upheaval in Europe in 2015 and thousands and thousands of asylum seekers arrived... we created our own world once a week with both asylum seekers and musicians who had come to Finland as immigrants and our students. And there was a lot of experimentation and co-creation, both artistically and socially... And we gained a lot more understanding of each other's backgrounds and ways of thinking... there was an emotional dimension to it, which is also always related to social sustainability... for something to be sustainable, it has to have meaning for us... we were moving on many different levels. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The sessions enabled reciprocal integration between the participants from the university and the refugees in making music together. Participants could interact and learn from each other in a safe place around the creative process. The current situation in the world became more concrete than just reading the news, as the same faculty member explains, describing the music sessions as participatory art without an audience.

At KUG, Meet4Music is a set of workshops known in all informant groups. Founded in 2015, the workshops were originally intended for refugees. The workshops played a role when the refugees were settling in Austria, but the participants gradually stopped coming to the sessions when they felt somewhat integrated in their new homeland. Meet4Music comprises diverse workshops, where “ordinary people” can make music together in a safe environment. I attended a drum session facilitated by a professional musician during my visit to Graz. It was fascinating to see how people with all kinds of backgrounds and ages played diverse percussion instruments enthusiastically without inhibitions. I felt part of a creative process and connected to the other players, who were unknown to me. Community projects like Meet4Music are rewarding, but it may also be challenging for students to encounter people, like myself, without a formal music education, describes a faculty member, and continues that music students have been trained to distinguish right from wrong, whereas community music is never without errors and requires acceptance:

... it pulls you out of your comfort zone, suddenly you're there and you try to communicate with someone who's not musically trained at all. And then you have to improvise... And we always judge the output of a musical piece, you know, is it good? Was it technically well done?... but in this case, we have to accept the piece of music, which is improvised there... we just have to accept it and get to know the other and we learn. We learn to accept the other person's musical statement and have to fit in... you're in the same boat, and you have to somehow get along... and at the end, there is a piece of art, which we did together. (Faculty member, KUG)

The faculty member reflects that it is difficult for somebody trained in music not to be in control. You need to improvise and pick up ideas. You may not always agree, but you just need to get along. You learn to accept and tolerate difference by stepping out of your comfort zone. They believe the participants can overcome their shyness and have a feeling of togetherness in these musicking sessions. Making music together is about reciprocity and co-creation where both parties benefit.

The Meet4Music workshops are now open to everybody irrespective of their linguistic or ethnic background and musical skills. The events are free, and registration is not necessary. It can be a challenge to have students join these workshops, as they are voluntary. There is an ongoing transition of leadership with

the workshops. For the time being, Meet4Music still continues, but its future seems open. One of the challenges pointed out by an informant is that the project may be competing with excellence, which is highly valued at KUG.

Both case universities claim to strive for inclusion and openness on their web pages. Reaching people outside the university is a goal for both case universities, even though the approaches differ to some extent. Despite the perceived openness, there are concerns in both universities that some people will nevertheless be excluded. A faculty member at KUG thinks the universities are like secluded places, to which only some people are welcomed. It may be true that the university does not want to include everybody, but some informants point out that not everybody wants to be included either. The homogeneity of the audience conforms to the homogeneity of the university:

... if we are honest, there are people we don't want to include... No one would ever say this aloud. This is sad. It is interesting, makes me angry too... This is hard to accept. No one writes about this. No one says this out loud... we're trying to be inclusive, but in fact, we invite people of different ages but... they're not such foreigners for the university. They are not afraid to come here... (Faculty member, KUG)

Comments made by informants in both universities suggest that the universities tend to approach a certain type of audience – people who feel comfortable with the university environment and are perhaps a safe choice for the university. They feel that classical music may be an intimidating and excluding factor. It may not appeal to the entire society, but instead, to a limited circle of people.

4.4.4 Working with communities abroad

In addition to working with local communities, arts universities collaborate with communities overseas. At Uniarts Helsinki, the cooperation includes areas such as Africa, South America, Asia, India, and Nepal. Even though the target communities are abroad, local communities are often closely involved. One of the projects headed by the Global Music Department was about cultural exchange between the Sámi people and American Indigenous peoples. The project led not only to networking between the Sibelius Academy and diverse actors in New Mexico in the United States of America, but also a million-dollar donation to Uniarts Helsinki to strengthen intercultural dialogue and collaboration³⁵.

Uniarts Helsinki also tries to bring about change for students with African heritage. The focus of an on-going *EDUCase*³⁶ project is to develop and disseminate equal

³⁵ See also *Sibelius Academy of Uniarts Helsinki Received a Million-Dollar Donation to Strengthen Intercultural Dialogue and Collaboration* (2022).

³⁶ See also *EDUCase* (2022)

peer-to-peer partnership practices and education methods. The partners develop approaches to community engagement with schools, youth groups, refugees, and immigrant communities in Tanzania, Mozambique, and Finland. The aim is also to build sustainable connections between local African artists and communities in Finland (EDUCase n.d.). A Uniarts Helsinki senior manager thinks this is closely related to social sustainability. The aim is not to export something to Africa. Instead, the Africans are treated as equal partners. The local African community has been closely involved in the pilot project from the start, as one faculty member explains:

... right at the beginning, for example, one thing that I tried to push forward was... an opportunity to involve local African partners, African artists who have made their home in Finland. They need to be involved in this initiative, and really, their voices need to be at the forefront here... it can create a great opportunity for further internationalization and social sustainability, where, in the case of African artists in Finland, we move away from a situation where they might still be marginalized or a little bit tokenistic in the opportunities that are there, to a place where their expertise and knowledge and artistry is really thought of as being an integral part of society. And really valued from within the structures of a university as well. And not just an add-on... these new initiatives from the ministry are really important in this regard. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

In these kinds of projects, the local and the global overlap. Involving people from the local community is an opportunity to make them an integral part of society. Local Africans are a bridge between the two countries. Their expertise is appreciated and needed for the project to succeed, the faculty member elaborates. Community engagement abroad does not come up in the interviews or focus group discussions with informants at KUG.

This sub-chapter has analyzed how the case universities engage in community and what kind of role this plays within the universities. The following sub-chapter explores the roles of the stakeholder groups within the case universities on the road towards socially sustainable internationalization.

4.5 From management to co-creation

This sub-chapter presents an analysis of the roles of the stakeholder groups – senior managers, faculty members, and students – in working towards social sustainability in the intercultural context of the case universities.

4.5.1 All stakeholders have agency

The strategy of a university sets the direction in which the university wants to go regarding internationalization and social sustainability. Individual community members can hardly influence the number of international students or staff, but their attitude and actions have an impact on the level of the social sustainability of internationalization within the university. If the university wants its community to endorse internationalization and social sustainability effectively, the topics should be clearly addressed in the strategy. It can also be considered as a statement or position if the topics are left out.

Stakeholder groups, such as senior managers, faculty members, and students, have somewhat different roles in developing the university towards socially sustainable internationalization. The informants give management an important role as enabler. Informants in both universities expect the management to actively create opportunities and ensure resources for internationalization and activities fostering social sustainability. This role gives the management a tool for steering the organization. As effective as this tool can be, there are also challenges involved. According to a senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki, even though everybody in the organization wants the same financial resources, it would be more effective to allocate funds to experimental ventures that try out novel ways of working or expand internationalization. The same senior manager thinks that if the money is divided equally between all stakeholders, it means in practice that everybody just gets “*breadcrumbs*”. Even though this role of the management is in general perceived positively, some informants think that there may at times be a conflict of interest or competing interests in terms of investing in community engagement.

Prioritization is considered another important task of the management in both universities. Everybody in the university should know what is being aimed at and be able to count on the management keeping the organization on the chosen path. At Uniarts Helsinki, the path is closely connected to the values of the university. The informants consider the management to be responsible for keeping the values clear and communicating them actively. A senior manager describes the process:

We could make these values even clearer, so that it doesn't get to the point where all the management people are just mumbling buried in their Excel sheets and not looking up at all to see if we are really communicating our values, so that it's not like 'we all know what we think about this'... where does it show? (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

While the informants expect the management to indicate the direction, the faculty is considered to play a key role in implementing the strategy and values of the university. In doing that, faculty members act as translators or transmitters, terms used by a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki. However, they do not act in an

isolated environment but need guidance in their important role as influencers, if a change towards social sustainability is desired:

.. getting foreign experts to do the job and we don't care how you do it, just do the job. That's the functional aspect and that would probably not increase social sustainability a lot. But if there is also care given to the way these people connect, and what kinds of attitudes they transmit and what kinds of ways the expertise is being transmitted, so it's about the contact.
(Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

In both universities the curriculum and the language used in the courses are mentioned as examples where the faculty has a major role. A KUG faculty member thinks that faculty members have an interesting position with an interface with both students and art, which gives them a huge responsibility. According to them, being artists and art educators, the faculty members should not only acknowledge the power of art, which is also used for political purposes, but also art itself and its connection to society – otherwise it is possible that “*art becomes a bottomless bubble that just flies around and is not perceived anymore by anyone other than the artist himself or herself*” (Faculty member, KUG). Being close to students gives faculty members an important role in promoting awareness of social sustainability:

I think teachers make it great. They're important here because...they're very near to the students. So, they have an impact on them.
(Faculty member, KUG)

The faculty can influence students and colleagues through “*contamination*” and “*contagion*”, which can be seen as a positive and gradual transformation, as a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki comments:

What I find interesting is imitation learning or maybe we can also use a very current topic, which is contamination or contagion. It actually helps to have situations where contagion can happen, and these situations actually need to be set up in different ways... with all the different learning types and all the different levels of worldview... there's also contagion between teachers. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

The research data suggests that the faculty’s role is to support and encourage students. The support can include creating opportunities and helping students with their projects. When a teacher knows that a student is involved with a social sustainability-related topic, they can provide information on specific opportunities, as a student at Uniarts Helsinki comments:

I don't know if it was advertised to a lot of students. I think my [thesis supervisor]... has been the person who helped me with that. [They] hinted that this might be something that would be interesting to me, because it

touches on something that I'm studying and interested in.
(Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

According to a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki, students sometimes have vague ideas which they may not even consider possible to put into practice. Teachers should help the students move forward and potentially build something more permanent. There should be room to experiment, and the atmosphere should allow ventures to turn out differently from the expected or even to fail. The faculty member concludes that students should have room to advance in small steps and develop their ideas in peace and quiet, and not necessarily immediately launch their projects on the public.

Sometimes encouragement may work against social sustainability. According to several informants, instrumental students focus especially intensively on practicing and excellence, which is not only encouraged by teachers but may also be a wider expectation at KUG. This attitude easily filters down to the students as well, as one senior manager at KUG comments:

There always comes this discussion because they say, don't waste time thinking about society, just practice. Otherwise, you won't get the job in the orchestra. There is a conflict of goals, the conflict of getting the highest possible position from their view, being part of the orchestra, a good orchestra. Therefore, you should foster technical training every day, 24 hours would be the minimum. (Senior manager, KUG)

The research data suggests that focused practice is important for instrumental students, but it should not surpass other important goals that the university expects graduates to achieve.

4.5.2 Participation and collaboration within the university

Participation and collaboration are an important ingredient of social sustainability that interest informants at both universities. Occasions where all stakeholder groups can collaborate are elaborated by informants at both universities. The curricula are forums in which stakeholders can have fruitful collaboration, even though the faculty has a major role in creating them. Diverse meetings are also places where general staff, faculty, and students participate and contribute ideas. *"This kind of participatory processes... will eventually lead to more specific goals or aims... this is something which... is quite difficult to establish top-down"*, says a senior manager at KUG.

Students take an active role in recreating the university and making it socially more sustainable. This role stands out more in what the informants at Uniarts Helsinki say. Sometimes the students' ideas are tacit, which is why the faculty as well as the management should actively ask questions and listen carefully to notice also subtle

signals, as a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki elaborates. Often, the signals are far from subtle, and the students know what they want. Students expect the university to be polyphonic, diverse as well as inclusive. They want the values not only to be expressed clearly but also acted upon, explains a Uniarts Helsinki senior manager and continues elaborating on the topic. Students at Uniarts Helsinki make active demands if they feel that the university does not provide something they need. They may experience more anxiety about the future, such as the effects of a polarized society and climate change, compared to their predecessors. Students have taken action, such as arranging a series of anti-racism lectures, and they participate actively in the strategy and curriculum process, the senior manager concludes. The student unions in both universities also play an active role in driving forward matters related to social sustainability. Understanding one's agency does not come automatically; awareness often develops gradually, as one student at Uniarts Helsinki explains:

I... started to realize my own active part as a student and as chooser... you easily become like a slave to the institution... it's quite the authority... when I came here, I did not feel like I have necessarily too much to say, a lot of inputs, whereas now I feel like a lot more things can happen from the ground up. (Student, Uniarts Helsinki)

The need to allow students to participate in decision-making is expressed by several informants at Uniarts Helsinki. According to them, transparency can be achieved by involving students in diverse administrative bodies and in the recruitment process. The idea of listening to students might be one of the most important recent changes, and it has been actively worked on, explains a Uniarts Helsinki faculty member, pointing out that involving students does not mean pushing aside the responsibility or judgment of the faculty or management, on the contrary.

The involvement of students in administration and topics of internationalization and social sustainability at KUG do not really come up in the interviews and discussions with the informants at KUG. Some informants at KUG think that it is not even the role of the students, or even the faculty to be actively involved in the development of the university, as can be judged by the following:

... students are here to learn and to get their things done, and to get the graduate exam at the end and hopefully go into the world... this is their task. The teachers are mainly here to be good teachers and make the students better students and better artists or better scientists or whatever they teach. So that's their task and they are here for the students... (Senior manager, KUG)

This view reflects the comments by some informants at KUG indicating that students and faculty show little interest in the strategy.

The university community is becoming increasingly international and intercultural, which is a challenge to its cohesion, as can be judged from the research data. A sense of community cannot be poured down from the top but requires horizontal collaboration. A faculty member ponders that the students at KUG appear to have built a strong community among themselves, which is like a little city inside the university, whereas the faculty members tend to build their own international networks outside the university, so they do not really have a community within the university. At Uniarts Helsinki, events are mentioned as an important tool for creating a sense of community. A senior manager thinks that the Covid-19 pandemic was a big challenge especially for international students because many of them didn't have social networks here and the normal process of becoming a part of a community was missing:

... a process in which the university community is, in a sense, constantly recreating itself. Each generation of students who come here settles here in their own way and creates their own unique place.
(Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

According to a senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki, communication is important, as everybody has their own interests, history, and ideas. The more encounters there are, the easier it gets. The importance of informal encounters, new students and faculty members as well as guests is also described by several informants, especially at Uniarts Helsinki. New student generations bring fresh ideas and the "circulation" (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki) of the faculty is fruitful for social sustainability and leads to intercultural capability. The same idea comes forth in the reflections of a faculty member at KUG, who thinks that the university is not a hierarchical pyramid where the orders come from the top, so it is important that all parties understand each other:

I think the most important thing is that different levels speak to one another... I think it's important to get to know the other perspective.
(Faculty member, KUG)

Despite these views, there are informants in both universities who think that there is still a lot to be done as far as social sustainability is concerned. It would be important to invite people to participate so that they could feel that they can be a part of the development of the university. The research data indicates that participation and transparency are also central ingredients of social sustainability. Some informants reflect that there are many international people, such as professors, teachers, and researchers, and the university could engage them more and use their expertise. The university culture is being recreated all the time. It is the daily actions that define whether the culture is inclusive or exclusive.

The Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki and the Ethnomusicology Department and the Jazz Department at KUG are mentioned as examples where stakeholder groups work well together. A KUG student rejoices at their own department:

I got really lucky at the Musicology Department. The professors in our community and the students, we really all work together to make [a] really beneficial improvement... (Student, KUG)

Good collaboration fosters a sense of community.

4.5.3 The role of language in participation and engagement

One of the topics related to participation described by informants at both KUG and Uniarts Helsinki is the role of language. An insufficient command of the local language is felt to hinder proper engagement in both universities. The challenges encountered by informants relate to diverse communication channels, such as emails, web pages, and intranets as well as participation in meetings.

At KUG, the communication language is German, which is a challenge for many international people, especially during the beginning of their stay in Austria. According to a faculty member, “*it's an effort for me to read every German email. So it's very possible that I miss 35% of the requests*”. At the Sibelius Academy of Uniarts Helsinki, the language recommendations regarding communication are defined in detail in the language policy document *Language Policy at the Sibelius Academy 2.0* (2021). In reality, those who do not master the local language well encounter problems, as a faculty member describes:

I can't tell you how many emails... [have been sent using Reply all] by angry students or angry doctoral researchers or staff members saying: “Am I supposed to know what this email is about? Because it came to my email address, and it's only in Finnish”. (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

In addition to emails, the language issue concerns information on the web page and in the intranet. Both universities face similar problems with incomplete language versions. An English version seems to exist, but the links unexpectedly lead to either Finnish or German text.

Participation and engagement in diverse activities can be challenging for international people who do not speak the local language fluently. Sometimes the language of a meeting is changed to English if there are international participants. Even that may not hinder awkward situations:

I walked into the room, and I could see people's body language, and the look on their faces completely changed, like, oh, god, [they're] here. Now we have

to speak English... so it doesn't feel so welcoming sometimes... (Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

On the one hand, a senior manager at KUG thinks changing the language of a meeting to English helps international people, but on the other hand, domestic people may not be able to express themselves properly. At Uniarts Helsinki, meetings, interpretation, or translated PowerPoint slides are sometimes available to help those who have not mastered the local language. However, a faculty member thinks that translation and interpretation can also be ethically problematic because of potential misinterpretations.

The research data suggests that if there are community members who do not have sufficient language skills to engage properly, it is not only a challenge for the individuals but also at a larger scale. The university will not be able to get its agendas through and develop to its full potential.

4.5.4 Getting the message through

Informants in both universities describe diverse ways of disseminating important missions and spreading the message concerning internationalization and social sustainability. The leadership and management of universities differ from corporate life in many ways. Being publicly funded institutions, universities are governed by many laws that regulate their operations. The management of universities cannot command people. Instead, they need to find other ways to promote important agendas, as can be seen from a comment by a senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki:

In our university it's pretty much impossible to tell people what to do... if the people you're trying to encourage... can't find a role that makes sense to them or fits in with their work, then you can't make them do it from the top down. (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki).

Top-down management does not work. Many informants think that the management may have a grand idea, but the idea will not work unless people in the organization find their own role in it. According to the informants, ideas related to social sustainability may need a different solution at each level, and they can be complemented by horizontal action among students and teachers. However, initiatives from all directions do not make leadership easy, as a senior manager at KUG comments:

... the initiative came from me, sometimes [it] comes from the professors, sometimes it comes from students, sometimes it comes from the international partners... the whole thing is always to keep all these seven balls in the air... I think that's the biggest challenge because they will never

[go] in the same direction, just because there are different stakeholders with different interests. (Senior manager, KUG)

Both bottom-up and top-down actions are needed, as the research data suggests. Individual stakeholders' own interests play a big role in which agendas move forward:

There has to be an individual saying "this is important to me, and I'm doing it". And so, it could be from any stage, you know, rectorate, whether it's an administration[al staff member], whether it's a teacher, whether it's a student, it has to be honest, it has to be very important for this person... there are also students doing projects like this on a smaller level... (Faculty member, KUG)

A KUG senior manager describes how a new senior manager changed the understanding of sustainability at KUG by introducing artistic citizenship. Suddenly the sustainability of culture and the idea of the diversity of society came into the spotlight. The whole KUG management team now believes in artistic citizenship. There is also increasing awareness of the concept among faculty members, but also some skepticism: the traditional forces fostering excellence at KUG are considered so strong that a change may not be possible during the present rectorate. There is still work to do to get the idea of artistic citizenship through at KUG; the students do not mention artistic citizenship at all in the KUG focus group discussions.

It is not enough if one person or a small group believes in an idea: *"If someone from the management has a strategy plan... he or she is lost if she can't find somebody in the university's staff who will go the path together..."* (Senior manager, KUG). An initiative can be started by one person, but more people are needed in the organization to carry it through. A faculty member at KUG says it is important *"to get support, find people from different levels that share your aim. And then you have stakeholders working together"*. Many informants consider support from all levels of the university essential, not only from one's peers. According to them, it is just as important that people want to work together for the cause, it is all about co-creation. One solution to take an idea forward is to find one or more influencers in the university community who support the idea:

Creating common guidelines to act at university level is really challenging and difficult... on paper everything can look very good. And then when you start to implement it, it all depends on whether someone joins in... a value leader, then it can be possible to succeed. (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

Persuasion is often not the right way. A personal contact is important, but convincing may not be enough to get the sustainability message through in the

university community. A senior manager at KUG describes the process as lighting a fire:

... not convincing but make the fire and if the fire burns in the person, they will support your work, they will work together with you... it's our role to be the fire maker first... and go around [with] the fire, and others light the fire and work with us together with the fire. (Senior manager, KUG)

Interest in topics tend to fluctuate. One solution suggested by a senior manager at KUG is to combine topics in working groups to avoid times when interest tends to decline:

... this is not digitalization versus internationalization versus sustainability... If you have one topic... then you can connect the other topic and you have a big group that works on both topics. So, this is a task... for the management to connect people and also to connect topics to make it a system and test this. Then the students and the teachers can be part of this system with little effort... I think in sustainability, we now have this critical mass... I think [we] are in the situation that it can go on and don't go down... (Senior manager, KUG)

Working groups within and outside the university are considered important for fostering social sustainability in both universities. The formats include forums such as AEC working groups, Creative Europe project³⁷ and the Talent Boost pilot in Finland.

Research is widely recognized in both universities as one of the ways of spreading the message about the importance of social sustainability and internationalization. Research is considered a good tool to disseminate important messages within and outside the university. A faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki thinks it is important to weave research into all activities in the university in different ways to help people develop their understanding of and thoughts about sustainable models for the future.

A recent research initiative, Arts Equal³⁸, coordinated by Uniarts Helsinki, explored how arts meet the social challenges of the 2020s. The initiative allowed the university to send out action proposals to a wide audience. A senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki says Arts Equal consciously brought together people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Collaboration like this typically stems from individual researchers and their field of research and is not steered at the university level.

Teacher education is one of the places where research moves quickly into practice, as a faculty member in Uniarts Finland thinks. The message not only spreads within the university but is multiplied among children in schools through

³⁷ *Creative Europe in 2023* (n.d.)

³⁸ *ArtsEqual research initiative* (n.d.)

graduates who go to schools as teachers. Informants in both universities mentioned that another important channel to spread the message outside the university is journals both national and international.

Although all stakeholders have their role in fostering internationalization and social sustainability, and there are diverse means to forward ideas, the chain is not always perfect. It is important that the goals and the mindset are shared and that all stakeholder groups are actively involved. Otherwise, there will be gaps, as mentioned by a faculty member at Uniarts Helsinki:

In some areas of the university, this is working very well and there are real interconnected threads of people working actively together in this direction. In other areas, there might be gaps where perhaps the management is giving a certain message, but the academic staff are not necessarily acting on it or being so active with it. And therefore, it's not filtering down to the students and being thought of as sort of a fully integrated aspect of the studies... there's definitely work to be done there.
(Faculty member, Uniarts Helsinki)

Both case universities face challenges related to the structure of the institution. Uniarts Helsinki is a merger of three academies with several departments and KUG consists of 17 departments (*Institute*). According to informants at both universities, students commonly relate more to their own academy or department than the university. Therefore, it is challenging to implement policies encompassing the whole institution as well as to create an institution-wide sense of community. Sub-optimization may also occur when an idea is taken further from the university-level. A Uniarts Helsinki senior manager describes the possibility that as soon as an idea supported by the whole management team is taken to the academies, the deans as well as the internationalization administration tend to look after the interests of their own academy. There can also be resistance at the department level, continues the same Uniarts Helsinki senior manager. In highly specialized areas, the program leader may feel the need to protect the quality and the existence of a *top program*. In a case like that, any interference from outside can be seen as a threat. Departments within the universities vary considerably – interculturality and social sustainability work better for some departments than others. Therefore, common policies should allow room for variation – one size does not fit all, the senior manager at Uniarts Helsinki ponders:

... it would make sense not to force everyone into the same template, but to accept the fact that we may have study programs where internationality is implemented in very different ways. And... that these can co-exist within the same academy. On the other hand, the differences between academies can be huge... (Senior manager, Uniarts Helsinki)

All informant groups at KUG describe how resistance is also encountered at an individual or stakeholder group level. When talking about the potential of social sustainability at KUG, a senior manager connects resistance with using power:

[I]t's about power and empowerment... it's not about social sustainability... Management gives the direction to staff which can follow or oppose... if they... want to join you on this path, then you can go really fast... when they oppose you, you stay still and can't do anything... your only luck would be to have a really good participation process in advance to find these directions together... And the students as well, I think the students have power to oppose or to neglect, they don't look at that and just rehearse and play their instrument and do nothing else on the side, or they really want to join us... (Senior manager, KUG)

The staff and students can either follow or oppose the directions shown by the management, which gives them abundant power. That is why, according to several informants, a participatory process involving a large amount of people is important to get things moving. According to all informant groups at KUG, the faculty comprising teachers and professors is considered the most challenging group. A senior manager thinks convincing them of the importance of sustainability-related issues is expected to be a long path. A faculty member believes that socially sustainable internationalization will become increasingly important in the following strategy (*Entwicklungsplan*). However, a change towards a more socially sustainable future would require less elitist thinking, which they conclude involves focusing on excellence only.

I see it [socially sustainable internationalization] as an integral part of our next Entwicklungsplan. And not only in words, but it has to become real action... [to] brief staff especially about this necessary progress, that we have to have less elitist thinking... will be a challenge to many professors that will think just okay, the art is compromising and it's going down, down down. And one has to be careful to avoid that. (Faculty member, KUG)

Moving from an *elitist bubble* in a more socially sustainable direction means re-thinking potential career-paths for music students, as a faculty member at KUG comments:

You cannot just carry on producing elitist bubbles and not care about the sustainability side of it. I mean, clearly the most obvious example is orchestral music jobs. You cannot educate ten fantastic orchestral cellists, if there's one position in three years in the near future. And you cannot lie about it... I see projects in the community in other segments of the society where these people can also find work and be eventually paid for it... all these projects also need some special training and that has to be done more in the future. (Faculty member, KUG)

Although it is widely accepted in both universities that the whole university community is needed for change to happen, social sustainability is still a new concept at KUG. Expanding the idea of social sustainability is the responsibility of the management, whereas internationalization at KUG is a more widely shared interest, thinks a senior manager at KUG:

[Y]ou have to convince the teachers that not only their own pathway is the right pathway. Social sustainability comes more from the rectorate and from the strategy, while internationalization comes more from the wish of the teachers and students to have collaborations... So, it's more work for the rectorate to do with social sustainability. (Senior manager, KUG)

The traditional background of many teachers and professors in the faculty is also reflected in the discussions of the KUG students. They acknowledge that the situation varies from teacher to teacher but think that a conservative attitude might hinder the readiness for change. Many informants at KUG consider the students as the most ready for change. If the students are interested in a topic, they are very aware and join in with the work towards the goals, if not, they just ignore it, says a senior manager at KUG.

This sub-chapter has analyzed the roles of the stakeholders in the case universities in fostering socially sustainable internationalization. The following sub-chapter presents a summary of the analysis, and the research then continues with the discussion on the results of the analysis.

4.6 Summary of the analysis

In this analysis and results chapter, I have analyzed the research data collected from the stakeholders of internationalization and social sustainability at Uniarts Helsinki and KUG; that is, the senior managers, faculty members, and students.

The topics of internationalization and social sustainability revolved around five central areas: (1) the strategies of the case universities, (2) international student admission and staff recruitment, (3) the curriculum, (4) community engagement, and (5) the need for co-creation. The areas that form sub-chapters were intertwined and overlapping. Therefore, dealing with many of the topics arising from the research data takes place within more than one sub-chapter.

The central results of the analysis are discussed in the following chapter.

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to understand how and to what extent the internationalization of arts universities contributes to social sustainability in the domestic context as perceived by stakeholders within the university. I have approached the topic through interviews and focus group discussions related to internationalization and social sustainability with stakeholders within the case universities – senior management, faculty, and students – in order to find answers to my research question:

How does internationalization in the domestic context contribute to social sustainability within an arts university?

The research question is divided into two sub-questions:

How do arts universities engage with people who have diverse cultural backgrounds?

What kinds of roles do senior management, faculty, and students take in fostering intercultural dialogue?

My research has been a qualitative case study of two European arts universities: University of the Arts Helsinki in Finland and University of Music and Performing Arts Graz in Austria, with a focus on their higher music education institutions. The social nature of my theoretical framework and research topic led me to choose a reflexive approach drawing on social constructionism, according to which the data was constructed during my encounter with the informants forming a new understanding of reality. In my analysis, I used reflection on diverse levels of interpretation, which Alvesson and Sköldberg call *reflexive* (2018), assuming that the researcher and the object of study affect each other during the research process. The text is a product of my interpretation of the interviews and focus group discussions, documents, and observations, but the final interpretation lies with the reader, as Stake (1995) points out.

Theoretically, I have drawn on the internationalization of higher education, social sustainability as well as community engagement within higher music education. As an interdisciplinary arts management researcher, I have also used auxiliary literature on topics such as cultural sustainability. These theories have proved to be intertwined, and it has not always been possible to know which theory the material is most closely connected to. Nevertheless, the theories have served as a source and inspiration for my conceptual framework – sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions (SIHEI) – that has enabled me to focus on and understand the object of my research (see Figure 5).

This chapter discusses the main findings of my research in connection with the conceptual framework (see Sub-chapter 2.4). The discussion in the four sub-chapters addresses the research questions and indicates a way forward to a more socially sustainable future.

5.1 Reimagining a socially sustainable higher music education institution

Arts universities differ from other universities with their focus on arts next to education and research. This uniqueness, positive as such, comes with a price and causes challenges along the path towards social sustainability, as can be seen from the conclusions made from the analysis, which are also supported by previous literature. As broad topics, these challenges comprise the perceived elitism of music education, the dominance of Western classical music in higher music education institutions (HMEIs) and the prevailing perception of excellence. These topics are interrelated and may be the root cause for the perceived homogeneity of the student population within HMEIs.

5.1.1 *Elitism of music education institutions*

Issues related to the perceived elitism of music education institutions, according to my research data, concern three main topics: the way towards an arts university is paved already during childhood, the potential barrier to starting music studies posed by a migrant background, and the perceived exclusivity of arts universities. These issues are interrelated.

According to my research data, a student at a higher music education institution in Europe is typically assumed to be white, middle or upper class, and rarely a first-generation student who has started playing their instrument as a child or at least long before they apply to the university. The students' families are into music and their parents may themselves be musicians who have an idea that music is something good and they can afford it. This is consistent with literature concerning music education. For example, the dominance of the white middle-class in classical music is described by Anna Bull in her book *Class, control, and classical music* (2019), and, according to music education scholar Ruth Wright (2019), the cost is too high for many young people or their families. According to my research data, the students' backgrounds are similar irrespective of the origins of the students – if you do not enter the path leading to higher music education as a child, you will not have the skills needed for admission into an arts university. According to music education researchers Lauri Väkevä et al. (2022), the exclusivity of music education is increasingly recognized and the middle-class culture of classical music

leading to inequality has also been confirmed in contemporary research (Scharff 2018).

The research data suggests that the normative image of a higher music education student may be a challenge for domestic students but for cultural minorities, such as migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, it may become a major barrier. If a family arrives in a country as refugees, for example, there are multiple hurdles before the children interested in music find their way to this hobby and goal-oriented high quality music education. At a later stage, the parents in migrant, refugee, and asylum seeker families may also have a lot of power when their youth choose a place to study. According to informants in my study, the question of a career in music may not arise unless the family is already oriented towards the arts. This finding is supported by previous research: According to a report about the state of basic art education in Helsinki, Finland, socio-economic status and cultural legitimacy may become barriers for students in being admitted to music education (Räisänen & Sairanen 2016). Corrective measures have already been tried. For example, music education researchers Heidi Westerlund et al. (2021) indicate that the situation has been addressed through several policy instruments that aim at facilitating the access of children, including those with a migrant background, who might not otherwise apply to extracurricular arts programs.

Some groups clearly tend to be under-represented in the case universities. There are young people who would not even consider applying, as they think they would not be accepted because of who they are. This reflects the previous finding by Price (2020) that people with low socio-economic backgrounds and representing ethnic minorities think they would look and feel *out of place* at traditional arts venues. According to my research data, it could be a structural issue for a university to ignore these people who could very well be eligible. As an example, students with an African background, both local and those coming from African countries, are virtually non-existent at both case universities. This topic has also been discussed in theoretical literature. For example, music education scholar Jayne Price (2020) confirms that students with ethnic minority backgrounds are under-represented in higher music education, black students in particular. According to music professional Sarah Derbyshire (2015), classical music offers few role models with minority ethnic backgrounds; the sense of lacking ownership has started already in childhood or youth (Price 2020). Music education researchers Kate Fitzpatrick et al. (2014) admit that access for and retention of marginalized people are highly relevant to social justice and cultural diversity within higher music education (Clements 2009; Koza 2010), which is also important to my research that relates to social sustainability.

Music education researchers Lauri Väkevä and Heidi Westerlund (2017) argue that the question of how the present system can offer goal-oriented arts education for

marginalized groups, such as cultural minorities, needs to be considered, and this is in line with the results of my research. Both case universities are aware of the elitist label of arts universities and efforts have been made to address the situation. A collaborative effort *Vision 2030 for Finnish Music Education*³⁹, completed in 2019–2020, brought together all actors on all levels in music education in Finland. There have also been multiple projects at Uniarts Helsinki trying to reach local children with diverse cultural backgrounds to help them find a path to higher music education. Projects like this do not only level the socio-economic differences between diverse groups but also serve as a feeding mechanism for the universities. KUG has similar ongoing projects in collaboration with music institutions at different levels, but the target tends to be on the rural areas in Styria⁴⁰ without an intercultural angle. The mechanism exists, so the threshold would be low to include marginalized children with diverse cultural backgrounds, such as those with a migrant background.

One of the areas where the presumed elitism and exclusivity emerges in the case universities is the ethos of excellence within higher music education institutions, which applies especially to Western classical music and jazz. This is in line with Anna Bull (2019), who argues that classical music spaces reflect the protectiveness of spaces and the reproduction of privilege through education typical for middle classes, which Ruth Wright (2019 p. 220) calls a “social reproduction carousel”. According to Bull, institutions, practices, and aesthetics are shaped by wider economic inequalities, which music can either enforce or work against. Because of the exclusivity, according to my research data, it is important to blur the line between the institution and the outer world. This may not be easy, as the audience who listens to classical music and jazz often consists of a limited circle of people. In addition, life is different within and outside the campus. Arts circles easily turn into bubbles with specific values. The word *bubble* appears frequently in the words of the informants in both case universities. Nevertheless, not everybody wants to engage in the arts or to study at an arts university, and it is obvious that arts universities do not imagine that they would be open to just anybody. This may apply to science universities as well, but according to my informants, arts universities seem to have a special flair for elitism.

5.1.2 Western music tradition

The Western classical music tradition is closely related to the perceived elitism of arts universities and their higher music education institutions.

³⁹ *Vision* (n.d.)

⁴⁰ Styria is a federal state in Austria.

The Sibelius Academy of Uniarts Helsinki and KUG are embedded in the European music culture. According to my study, European culture is often perceived as a superior culture and Western classical music as the most important genre, especially in European academic circles. Very little is known of other music cultures, except perhaps among the staff and students of Global Music studies at Uniarts Helsinki and Ethnomusicology studies at KUG. Unlike other genres, Western classical music has a long history of institutionalization. It is played not only in countries where Western art music is dominant but also in countries that have their own strong musical traditions. According to my informants, students have sometimes been much more in touch with Western art music than their own traditional local, regional, or national music. The opportunities to study abroad are quite limited for those with a background in a different musical culture, since there are not many universities in the world where you can study instruments from the traditional music domain. The Western classical music tradition within the case universities excludes both applicants who do not engage with music following the Western classical music tradition and those who are not familiar with the required theoretical knowledge, such as reading notes, except in the Global Music studies at Uniarts Helsinki.

The dominance of Western classical music that comes up in my research data is also discussed in the theoretical literature. British scholars Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (2000) question the prevailing recognition of difference in music, which they consider fictive, decisive, ideological, and hierarchical. According to musicologist Christopher Small (1998), privileging Western classical music above all other musics is strange and contradictory. According to them, it appeals only to a very small minority, even in Western industrialized societies. The dominance of Western classical music within higher music education institutions could be considered a manifestation of coloniality or postcolonialism, which has caused resentment calling for the decolonization of music education (Bartleet & Heard 2024; Hess 2018; Kallio 2020; N. R. Thomson 2021). However, following music scholar Alejandro Madrid (2017), music education scholar Lori-Ann Dolloff (2020) argues that merely incorporating indigenous music into music education without a reorientation of the teaching and learning context would not change the present situation. According to them, it would not address the power differential sufficiently: indigenous voices would remain guests allowed into the academy instead of becoming a part of the foundation. Colonialism is a topic that concerns education beyond music education. Internationalization of higher education literature is one of the forums where colonialism comes up. Fazal Rizvi et al. (2006) propose that scholars in disciplines such as education make the legacy of European colonialism visible and how it continues shaping institutions culturally, economically, and politically. According to Elspeth Jones et al. (2021), internationalization of the curriculum at home could provide a framework for

integrating decolonization among other ingredients related to social sustainability. According to them, being aware of colonial histories and being able to question one's own biases and stereotypes are a part of developing an international and intercultural mindset.

According to my research data, the educational content based on the Western tradition excludes large artistic communities, whose activities are not at all represented in traditional institutions. The present, more diverse culture makes it necessary for institutions to consider what to include and what to exclude and why. If you try to serve everybody, focus is easily lost, which also means a potential failure in pursuing excellence. However, the very notion of excellence needs constant questioning and redefinition. Could we consider that part of the future of artistic excellence needs to include skills in interculturalism and community engagement, for example? According to my informants, the university community potentially has tacit knowledge on the topic that can be utilized, and at best, local communities can also be involved in the discussion.

KUG and Uniarts Helsinki are arts universities that offer mainly music-related programs based on the Western classical music tradition. KUG has a solid reputation as a university that strives for excellence and international recognition. The university employs highly valued artists as teachers and professors, whom the students follow to the university from all around the world. Because of the present recruitment system, the teachers and professors, especially in classical music instruments, tend to fit the model of cherishing excellence, which requires disciplined practicing that does not leave room for anything else. This finding is supported by theoretical literature. For example, music education scholars Heidi Westerlund et al. (2021) argue that institutionalized practices and path-dependent educational systems may form self-protecting silos, which tie the hands of individual professionals through various norms and organizational boundaries.

The topic of the traditional understanding of excellence related to Western classical music that came up in my research data is also discussed by many researchers, such as Elizabeth Bucura (2020), Silke Kruse-Weber et al. (2023), and Darrin Thornton and Juliet Hess (2023). Thornton, whose interests include music education, educational access, outreach, and lifelong music engagement, and Hess, whose research intersects activism, critical pedagogy, and music education, discuss the need for re-envisioning music education. They elaborate on the topic of excellence and Western music and propose a concept of *pan-excellence* to include a full range of music genres and styles, including Western classical music, which has in fact also been the driving force for establishing Global Music studies at Uniarts Helsinki. According to Thornton and Hess (2023), the audition becomes a barrier to entry into both music and music education because of the typical understanding of *excellence*, which is based on Western classical music: including the ability to

read notes as well as knowledge and execution of Western classical music techniques. According to Thornton and Hess (2023), auditions typically exclude other types of music and thus enforce the hierarchy of Western classical music and other musics. They argue that nonclassical music is evaluated through a Western classical framework, which music theory professor Philip Ewell (2021) calls *the white racial frame*. Thornton and Hess think that biases should be broken down and call for a revised understanding and recognition of excellence to embrace the wealth of musics that would also diversify higher music education institutions. To accomplish that, Thornton and Hess remark that HMEIs should, contrary to the prevailing system, offer approaches that do not require non-Western music players to perform Western classical music as well, and that implementing pan-excellent pathways requires a re-envisioning of musical skills as well as how they are taught and assessed. Thornton and Hess's conclusion that "[R]ecognizing and embracing pan-excellence then potentially provides the key to social change within music institutions" is in line with my findings. According to music scholar Geoffrey Baker, excellence could also be achieved in music making by "emphasizing musical practices that stimulate democratic, egalitarian, noncompetitive values and interactions – things that mainstream orchestral practices rarely stress" (Baker 2016 p. 330). Elizabeth Bucura (2020) considers excellence to be a widespread idea that tends to come up with concepts such as distinction, success, and superiority, which support feelings of competition rather than inclusivity. This is in line with my findings and the idea that excellence described in these terms does not support social sustainability. Topics related to excellence were raised by many informants in my research, especially in relation to KUG and the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki.

There are exceptions to the Western music tradition in arts universities, such as the Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki and the Ethnomusicology Department at KUG. The Ethnomusicology Department at KUG is geared towards theoretical studies, although non-Western music is being played in practice. It would not be such a leap to expand the department in the direction of the Global Music Department to increase social sustainability. Internationality seems to be there already.

Even though the Western classical music tradition makes higher education music institutions exclusive, it also has some positive effects. According to my research data, the Western tradition forms a global music language. There is common ground on which you can easily connect so that you can work with local artists in various other countries, which fosters intercultural dialogue. In other words, Western classical music is a tradition that is both exclusive and inclusive.

5.1.3 Diversity

The elitism of music education, the dominance of Western music in higher music education, and the particular perception of excellence all contribute to the perceived homogeneity of the student population in arts universities. This finding is backed by previous research.

According to my research data, arts universities are perceived as homogeneous even though their aspiration is to cherish diversity. Diversity is a central topic in all dimensions of my theoretical framework – the internationalization of higher education (Buckner et al. 2021; E. Jones 2017a, 2022), social sustainability (McKenzie 2004; Messer & Kecskes 2008), cultural sustainability (Burford et al. 2013; Throsby 2017), and community engagement related to music (Crooke et al. 2023; Kruse-Weber et al. 2023; Rinde & Kenny 2021). International students are considered a source of diversity (Stein 2015), especially in the English-speaking Global North, where the normative domestic student is often thought to be a white, Christian, middle-class, monolingual citizen with little experience abroad (Buckner et al. 2021; E. Jones 2013). According to internationalization scholars Elizabeth Buckner et al. (2021), international students are connected to an abstract image of diversity in university strategies through visual images representing racial, ethnic, and religious diversity. Elizabeth Buckner and Sharon Stein (2020) argue that the dichotomy between *domestic* and *international* is defined narrowly without discussion of other forms of student diversity.

The distinction between internationalization and interculturalization (E. Jones 2020) might be key to viewing the dichotomy found in my research data between a diverse but homogeneous arts university. Internationalization researcher Elspeth Jones (E. Jones 2017a) argues that nationality is no longer a sufficient indication of diversity, giving examples such as domestic ethnic minorities, working class backgrounds, and students with rural backgrounds moving into big cities to study. Accordingly, while the student bodies may be ethnically diverse, they are culturally homogeneous; in other words, they represent the normative student within a higher music education institution in Europe described earlier in section 5.1.1. concerning the elitism of music education. Accordingly, Elspeth Jones (2020) proposes that *internationalization* could also be called *interculturalization*.

The problem of the homogenous student body has been recognized in the case universities. However, no easy solution has been identified. The Global Music Department at Uniarts Helsinki is perhaps the only exception. It is notable that popular music is a genre missing from both case universities, except for random popular music classes in some departments. According to my findings, a popular music department might increase diversity, which would also mean a step towards social sustainability. This positive influence of diversity has also been recognized in the theoretical literature. According to Jon Hawkes (2001), a pioneer in cultural

sustainability, a sustainable cultural life needs the diversity and vitality of artistic and cultural expressions as well as avoiding the homogenization of culture. They talk about society in general, but the idea can easily be applied to an arts university. At the moment, the student population of both case universities is notably homogeneous. Departments such as the Global Music Department and popular music departments could be tools for a welcome step towards social sustainability. This idea is in line with music education scholar Lloyd McArton, according to whom including diverse musical practices within music teacher education would disrupt the present system and lead teachers to engage with diverse musics rather than “tokenizing and underrepresenting those that sit outside the bubble of Western art music” (McArton 2020 p. 18). Community music also represents a practice against homogeneity. For example, community music scholar Higgins (2006) considers the very identity of community music to be founded on divergence, self-difference, and resistance against homogeneous gatherings.

Although diversity is important in internationalization as well as social and cultural sustainability, the closeness of diversity does not guarantee the transformative experience described in internationalization at home (Harrison 2015; Weimer et al. 2019). According to music education researcher Ruth Wright (2019), the system goes on within music education, as every generation of socially homogenous students reproduce the same values and pedagogies without questioning them. Music institutions and faculty members also reinforce the system as described previously in section 5.1.2. Fostering diversity is an essential ingredient in both cultural sustainability (Burford et al. 2013; Throsby 2017) and social sustainability (McKenzie 2004; Messer & Kecskes 2008). David Throsby, a researcher of cultural sustainability, suggests that cultural diversity, which he compares to biodiversity, has intrinsic value and that intercultural dialogue stimulates creativity (Throsby 2017). This is in line with my finding that an increase of cultural diversity would lead arts universities in a more socially sustainable direction.

5.2 Relationship to society

5.2.1 Social responsibility of the university

Universities today are considered to have three main missions: education, research, and contribution to society, the latter often being called *the third mission*. Arts universities conform to this set of missions but on the side, they also have a third core function: creative output or arts. Arts is perhaps the key element that distinguishes arts universities from other universities in their potential to fulfill their third mission. According to my research data, arts connected to social/societal impact can contribute to social sustainability, which as a

sustainability dimension should complement environmental sustainability and not be an alternative to it. The engagement of higher music education institutions with societal issues is grounded on their responsibility to society and what will be required of their graduates in their future working life (e.g. Gande & Kruse-Weber 2017).

According to the research data, one of the reasons arts universities reach out to society is to promote intercultural dialogue, which is a topic that intersects the theoretical framework of this research. Intercultural competence is a vital skill in an international and intercultural environment, when social sustainability is understood to include “compatible cohabitation of culturally and socially diverse people” (Polèse & Stren 2000 pp. 15–16) and social integration is encouraged. Intercultural competence is also one of the aims of the curriculum through internationalization at home (e.g. E. Jones 2020). Furthermore, the concept relates to higher music education (e.g. Thapa 2020), artistic citizenship (e.g. Bartleet & Carfoot 2016) as well as cultural sustainability (e.g. Acton et al. 2017). According to higher education scholar Ellen Hazelkorn (2016), universities that follow a social justice model focus on community life and educating students for both civic and social responsibility, which, according to my findings, would represent social sustainability. Higher education institutions traditionally engage with the wider community, but internationalization scholars Elspeth Jones et al. (2021) emphasize that the international and local dimensions are neither completely separate nor overlapping, which is why social responsibility should be specifically addressed in the internationalization strategies of universities. In the same vein, third mission strategies in universities should also have an international, intercultural, and global dimension. According to Elspeth Jones et al., there is little evidence that this really happens, and this can also be witnessed in the case universities.

Based on my research data, the case universities consider the relationship between the university and society important. This is supported by the literature on the internationalization of higher education. For example, Elspeth Jones et al. (2021) encourage universities to look outwards instead of focusing merely on benefits for the institutions and students. Internationalization in higher education for society (IHES) aims “to benefit the wider community, at home or abroad, through international or intercultural education, research, service and engagement” (Brandenburg et al. 2020 p. 28). IHES claims that “instead of focusing on students and how to make them global citizens, IHES makes the citizens outside the HEI the target group. By doing so, students, just like professors or staff members, become actors or agents who, by answering the global needs of citizens, become better global citizens themselves” (Brandenburg et al. 2020 p. 19). However, Uwe Brandenburg (2020) acknowledges that universities cannot be expected to operate merely on an altruistic basis. Sustainable internationalization of higher education

institutions (SIHEI), the conceptual framework of this research, focuses both on the university and on the local community. According to my findings, arts and culture are used as a tool to achieve social sustainability. Within this community engagement practiced by higher music education institutions, the interface between the musicians and the audience is not clear-cut, which potentially makes the musicians and audience simultaneously actors, targets, and beneficiaries.

5.2.2 *Community engagement and participatory music*

The third mission of arts universities in the domestic intercultural context is connected to local and regional communities. Based on this study, community engagement is a central means for arts universities to practice their third mission. Research in diverse fields confirms the importance of engagement, which takes place within the campus as well as between the university and communities. According to my findings, arts universities form a unique context that differs from that of other universities through their potential for using art as a means for engagement. Community engagement within higher music education institutions in arts universities can take several forms, such as festivals and diverse projects with local communities. The theoretical literature supports the benefits related to community engagement and their social sustainability. For example, festivals in general offer participation, opportunities for learning new skills, provide education on social justice, and contribute to social inclusion (Laing & Mair 2015). Multicultural festivals contribute to both social harmony and social integration and they have a positive effect on the development of multiculturalism (Lee et al. 2012) and the social sustainability of their communities (Hassanli et al. 2021). Katja Thomson (2021), who has hands-on experience with collaboration and research with refugees, points out the need for bridging the (exclusive) higher music education institutions with diverse communities (Gande & Kruse-Weber 2017) and the ethical dimensions of the work (Bröske 2017; Karlsen et al. 2016). This is in line with the findings of my research.

Based on my study, community engagement within arts universities can be divided into three distinct approaches, which differ in their level of social sustainability (see Figure 11). The approaches do not necessarily follow a linear path. They are not mutually exclusive, and they can overlap. The level of sustainability refers to the commitment on the institutional level, not to specific individuals, groups, or activities, which are socially sustainable as such if they are reciprocal. It is hard to imagine that there were arts universities that did not reach out into society at all.

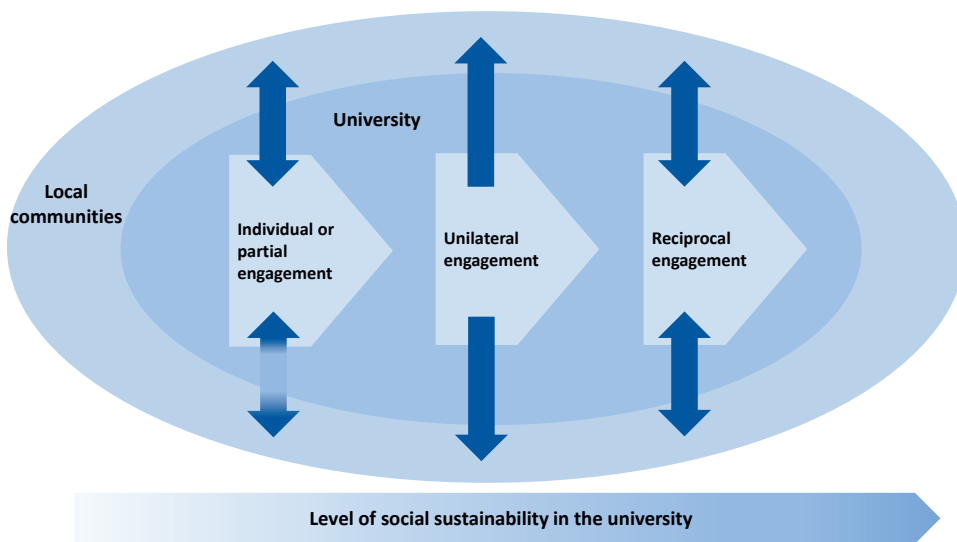


Figure 11. Three approaches to community engagement

The level of social sustainability depends on the nature of the engagement and the involvement of the arts university. In the first approach, the university has not formally expressed its stance towards social sustainability. The awareness of matters related to social sustainability lies with individuals or groups of individuals who voluntarily engage in diverse sustainability-related activities, such as community projects. In other words, the contribution is made by individual students, faculty members, or specific groups, such as departments or faculties. The reciprocal activities benefit both local communities and the individuals or groups involved. The level of social sustainability is high but is related to the university only indirectly through the individuals. Initiatives can also be instigated by senior managers who have a personal agenda to turn the university in a more socially sustainable direction. Sometimes individuals affiliated with the university engage in intercultural community projects of their own outside the university context.

In the second approach, the university instigates initiatives towards the local community, but there is not yet any formal commitment to social sustainability. The university reaches out to society but only to benefit the university or its students. The activities are viewed mainly from the university's own perspective and thus the expected benefits are unilateral. In this approach, the engagement activities are made under the umbrella of the university. There is awareness of the societal dimension, but it does not have a socially sustainable dimension, nor is it widely spread in the university. This unilateral approach is also discussed in theoretical literature. According to artistic citizenship scholar Wayne D. Bowman (2016 p. 76), Western arts have a long tradition of a hierarchical relationship

between “doers” and “done to” or “done for”, which is not universal or even necessary. Community service-learning scholars Lina Dostilio et al. (2012) consider active reciprocity detached from providing or receiving the services of others passively (Bartleet & Carfoot 2016). Bowman (2016) considers direct personal engagement as well as participatory and collaborative practices vital and more inclusive than traditional presentational practices (see also Turino 2008). Wayne D. Bowman (2016) as well as Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Gavin Carfoot (2016) consider active practical engagement the key factor for the social benefits associated with artistic citizenship. However, even though artistic citizenship aims at inclusivity, there is a certain limit to it. For example, Bowman proposes that the concept excludes those who do not want to “protect the internal goods of the artistic practice... those who do not embrace the fundamentally ethical nature of artistic practices... and those whose art-related endeavors are complacently confined to disciplinary or technical concerns” (Bowman 2016 p. 77).

In the third approach, the awareness of social sustainability within the university has reached a level where the university has understood that the engagement should not only benefit the university but reciprocity is needed. When the understanding of social sustainability increases, the university considers the perspective of the target group. Social sustainability has been made a strategic goal of the university and the importance of the topic penetrates the whole organization. These ideas are supported by theoretical literature: participation, community engagement, and social capital are all concepts that are related to social sustainability (Dillard et al. 2013; Hanchett 2016; Magis & Shinn 2009; Nancy Stevenson 2021). According to my research, the key words of socially sustainable engagement are collaboration, co-creation, and reciprocity. In that kind of engagement, intercultural minorities get an opportunity to move from the margins to the center as powerful actors who have a chance to make a difference. The need for reciprocity is also emphasized in the literature on internationalization of higher education (Buckner & Stein 2020; E. Jones et al. 2021), sustainability (Bogedain & Hamm 2020; Wolff & Ehrström 2020) as well as community engagement in general (Benneworth et al. 2018), and when related to music (Bartleet & Carfoot 2016; Elliott 2012). Furthermore, according to artistic citizenship scholars Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Gavin Carfoot (2016), practicing arts should be reciprocal bringing mutual benefit for both the community and the students involved, and the reciprocity should be active instead of passive offering or receiving. In this approach, diverse university actors engage with local and regional intercultural communities so that both parties benefit.

Activities related to the first approach, individual or partial engagement, can be witnessed at both Uniarts Helsinki and KUG. Both universities have reciprocal community initiatives, such as Meet4Music at KUG or the Global Music Department of Uniarts Helsinki, as well as festivals and community-related

projects by individuals.

Many of the activities at KUG seem to represent the second approach, unilateral engagement. KUG encourages its students to make active contact with society. The main incentive for reaching out to society is to gain new audiences, which KUG considers a way of practicing artistic citizenship. The activities can be considered unilateral, as the primary beneficiaries are the students, even if KUG also wants to bring the joy of music to its audiences. In this approach, local international and intercultural communities do not really play a role. Graz is not considered an international melting pot, which is why reaching out to communities has not been felt necessary. Even though KUG has little to no engagement with intercultural communities, it is a positive sign that artistic citizenship is included in the strategy (development plan) of the university. The unilateral projects are good and useful for the students and the university, but they need to be complemented by reciprocal initiatives if KUG wants to transform towards social sustainability.

Both universities have some initiatives related to social sustainability besides individual or partial engagement, such as the participation of Uniarts Helsinki in *Vision 2030 for Finnish Music Education* that brought together all actors at all levels of music education (*Vision* n.d.) and the collaboration of KUG with actors in music education at diverse levels. Neither of the universities, however, has made a full commitment to internationalization or social sustainability as strategic goals.

Participatory music is a central means for the higher music education institutions of arts universities to engage with local communities. According to Sacha Kagan and Volker Kirchberg (2016), participatory music is the most sustainable kind of music. Rohan Nethsinghe (2013) proposes that community music making is an important resource for cultural and social sustainability. According to Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Gavin Carfoot, students are used to working in a competitive and individualistic way, whereas in a community project community members and students have reported benefits related to “technical skills, performance and rehearsal approaches, new ideas, and strong bonds and connections with people and organizations in socially, culturally, and ethically appropriate ways” (Bartleet & Carfoot 2016 p. 349). However, according to Geoffery Baker (2016), increasing the empowerment of students takes its toll on musical excellence, which they relate to the particular understanding of excellence based on professional European classical music discussed in section 5.1.2. Accordingly, it may be assumed that the traditional concept of excellence based on Western classical music and the values of social sustainability are almost mutually exclusive. These theoretical insights are in line with my research findings.

5.2.3 *Artistic citizenship as a form of engagement*

Engagement, a key concept in this research, is discussed widely in theoretical literature. Service-learning related to engagement combines academic studies with service in the community irrespective of the discipline (Deeley 2015) and it is also used within the internationalization of higher education (e.g. Brandenburg et al. 2020; E. Jones 2020; E. Jones et al. 2021). According to internationalization scholar Betty Leask (2015b), the interaction gives students a chance to engage with cultural others and diversity, so that the students can see the effects of globalization, migration, and cultural diversity at their current homebase (E. Jones et al. 2021). Engagement is also acknowledged in sustainability literature. According to sustainability scholars Ali Beynaghi et al. (2016), it is important that universities plan, deliver, and evaluate the engagement activities together with chosen partners such as NGOs, NPOs and municipalities as well as local and regional communities, which will facilitate them in becoming change agents in regional sustainability (Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019).

In the arts field, such as higher music education in this research, service-learning can be practiced as artistic citizenship. Artistic citizenship reflects the obligation of artists to engage in art that fosters social good (Elliott & Silverman 2016). Artistic citizenship resembles global citizenship. The difference is that artistic citizenship does not necessarily have an international and intercultural dimension, whereas global citizenship does not specifically address the arts. Artistic citizenship researchers Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Gavin Carfoot (2016) relate intercultural music making and arts-based service-learning to artistic citizenship. They argue that music education for artistic citizenship has common features with intercultural work. Arts-based service-learning can, according to Bartleet and Carfoot (2016), be a good way to practice artistic citizenship in an intercultural context. Reciprocal participation in the arts gives a face to diverse “others” and their experiences as well as an experience of what it is like to be a minority “other” in another culture. The participants can develop meaningful relationships with diverse others, which can lead to a new perception of their own cultural identity. This kind of service-learning can generate lifelong journeys to intercultural and artistic development.

Although both the terms *other* or *cultural other* are used in the literature of my theoretical framework – internationalization of higher education (Leask 2015b), sustainability (Zapf 2016), and community engagement in music education (Bartleet & Carfoot 2016) – the term is not always considered neutral. According to linguist Sthephanny Moncada Linares (2023), research concerning “othering” and intercultural education has been debated to a great extent. The concept of *otherness* used in postcolonial theories brings to the forefront power hierarchies between those in power and those who are subordinate in the conditions of power

(Thomas-Olalde & Velho 2011; Virkama 2010). Research shows that students and faculty may make biased evaluations of others because of discriminatory and derogatory representations toward external social groups (Linares 2023).

Both case universities stress their connection to society and the dialogue between the university and society. There has been increasing interest in local issues, but Uniarts Helsinki has in particular actively reached out across the borders of Finland as well. The institutions understand that they cannot turn inwards and remain in their own bubbles, a term frequently used by the informants of this research.

5.3 Co-creating social sustainability

5.3.1 *Organization and leadership*

The understanding of and interest in social sustainability varies within arts universities. A patchiness of the understanding and interest is not only visible in both case universities but also recognized in scientific literature. According to internationalization scholars Elspeth Jones et al. (2021), societal activities within universities are primarily in the hands of individuals rather than the institution, causing the application and impact to be patchy. Leasa Weimer et al. (2019) argue that in Finland the implementation of internationalization at home is fragmented in the institutions, faculties, programs, and courses where it is being used; typically only those individuals who are responsible for the internationalization efforts are familiar with the concept. The same fragmentation is recognized in literature related to sustainability. The awareness and understanding of sustainability within universities is limited and little attention is paid to sustainability-related matters (Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019). According to Katrin Kohl (2021), approaches in addressing sustainability within higher education institutions are commonly fragmented (McMillin & Dyball 2009) or taken by individual people (G. Scott et al. 2012). This view is shared by Walter Leal Wilho, Doni et al. (2019). Internationalization is nevertheless understood more profoundly in both case universities, and its importance is recognized.

According to my research data, if an arts university wants to transform towards social sustainability, initiatives should not remain isolated and random incidences. The senior management should understand what social sustainability entails and what it can mean in a university context. This is the first step towards making social sustainability and internationalization strategic goals of the university. Based on my study, the strategy of the university points out the direction, where the university wants to go regarding internationalization and social sustainability, and the community within the university has the agency to implement this direction.

Up to now, the case universities have not prioritized social sustainability and internationalization, neither do they have a separate strategy or plan for internationalization and sustainability that includes social sustainability, nor do they include the topics in the general strategy of the university. Organization members cannot be expected to follow the path towards social sustainability on their own if the direction has not been set. Individual stakeholders cannot influence internationalization by deciding the number of international students or staff. However, their attitudes and actions affect the level of social sustainability in the intercultural context within the university. If the universities want the entire university community to join the effort, internationalization and social sustainability should be clearly addressed in the strategy, governance, and policies of the university in a way that the topics enforce the other. It is also a statement if the topics are left out.

At Uniarts Helsinki, the urgency of environmental sustainability seems to overshadow social sustainability, which I understand considering the sixth mass extinction (e.g. Shivanna 2020) and the triple planetary crisis (e.g. Seck 2022). In contrast, at KUG, the overall understanding of the concept of social sustainability is relatively limited. The variety of sustainability dimensions is present in the strategy of KUG, but concrete actions remain to be seen, at least that is the impression based on the views of the informants. According to my findings, if a university wants to follow the path towards social sustainability, it should be clearly visible in the values and culture of the university.

My study indicates that even though the senior management and strategy are expected to show the direction and take the lead, the participation of students and staff is essential for a shift towards social sustainability. The importance of co-creation and participation is also recognized in higher education literature. Educational scholars Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka et al. argue that the co-creation of the curriculum promotes the engagement of both students and faculty (e.g. Lubicz-Nawrocka 2018, 2023; Lubicz-Nawrocka & Owen 2022). Participation and collaboration on the part of the students is also considered important within internationalization research (Laufer 2021). According to my research data, the curriculum design lies heavily on the faculty. Inviting students to participate in the process would ensure that the internationalized curriculum takes into consideration the diversity of the student body.

From the perspective of the internationalization and social sustainability fields within my research, top-down operations should not be the dominant way of working within the university. Some researchers prefer a top-down approach in implementing sustainability within universities (e.g. Ramos et al. 2015), but it is common to support a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches (e.g. Leal Filho, Skanavis, et al. 2019; Leal Filho, Vargas, et al. 2019; Ramos et al. 2015;

Verhulst & Lambrechts 2015). According to Gisele Mazon et al. (2020), promoting sustainability is usually a top-down activity, but they stress that the bottom-up approach is also important. The hybrid model is supported within socially responsible internationalization by Elspeth Jones et al. (2021). However, according to sustainability researchers Marena Brinkhurst et al. (2011), the juxtaposition of bottom-up and top-down ignores the middle; that is, the faculty and staff, who might not be well-versed in sustainability or might consider it secondary in their work. In the case universities, initiatives come from all directions, and relying on top-down management only would not work. If the faculty were to be considered as the middle level, most of my informants are by no means less versed, neither do they regard sustainability as secondary, quite the contrary, especially at Uniarts Helsinki. At KUG, some informants think that both students and faculty should concentrate on their main task; that is, learning and teaching, and leave “secondary topics”, such as internationalization and social sustainability, to the senior managers. However, the faculty has an influential role at KUG in relation to their attitude towards community music, as discussed in section 5.1.2. Including all stakeholders in the planning process and implementation as equal partners is important for the shift to happen. Based on my research, the best results come through co-creation within the university community in collaboration with local communities and partners. Including communities within and outside the campus in the conversation develops shared ownership and commitment. This is also recommended by internationalization researchers Elspeth Jones et al. (2021). The participation of students and faculty in the governance of the university represents democracy and is therefore considered a key element of social sustainability by many researchers, as well as social equality and inclusion (e.g. Woodcraft 2016).

Internationalization of higher education literature uses the terms *purposeful* and *intentional* in definitions, in phrases such as “intentional process” (de Wit et al. 2015 p. 29) and “purposeful integration” (Beelen & E. Jones 2015a p. 69). The conceptual study of internationalization in higher education for society (IHES) (Brandenburg et al. 2020 p. 15) leaves out “unintended... effects of internationalisation activities which are not directed towards the community as part of the third mission”. It is not clear what activities the authors refer to here. It could be assumed that they are primarily interested in activities officially pursued by the university. The IHES dimension “HEI involvement” (Brandenburg et al. 2020 p. 49), indicates that involvement can be individual or partial (e.g., individual departments or faculties), or holistic so that the whole institution is involved (see Figure 11). In my working life, I have experienced that existing tacit processes often become acknowledged only after they are documented. Therefore, I believe that there are numerous processes within the case universities that are related to socially sustainable internationalization but not officially recognized as processes. According to my research data, individual and partial involvement are also important because the

individuals or departments involved can serve as pioneers or examples of practices that gradually become recognized and potentially find their way into the strategies, governance, and policies of the universities.

5.3.2 *Organizational culture and context*

The university should choose a way towards socially sustainable internationalization that suits its culture and context. The concepts of internationalization and sustainability transform when people engage in a process that is rooted in the specific context, while being sensitive to other contexts. The case universities are located in Finland and Austria in which the cultures differ to a large extent. These arts universities and their strategies also have a specific flavor unique to them. Furthermore, the student populations in both universities are diverse but homogeneous. Yet, each student and staff member brings their own cultural background. The importance of the context is also emphasized in the theoretical literature. According to Peter Corcoran et al. (2004), the evolving concept of sustainability is based on diverse norms and values and is thus context-dependent – it is different in every country and culture. In the fully integrated sustainability model (see Figure 2) by Robert Boyer et al. (2016), sustainability is viewed as a place-centered and process-oriented concept in which the social, environmental, and economic dimensions overlap in local experience and plurality is reconciled and fostered. In this model, it is possible that phenomena have multiple interpretations depending on the viewpoint, and the economic, environmental, and social concerns overlap in both the minds and practices of people. This idea reflects the findings of my study.

The transformational view reappears in the literature concerning cultural sustainability. In a constructionist view, culture can be viewed as a continuously changing global flow of traditions (Hannerz 1992; Siivonen 2008), which is continuously being constructed and negotiated within social interaction (Carter & Bolden 2012). In this view of culture, cultural sustainability refers to the fostering of changing and transforming traditions as well as respecting the diversity of people. In line with my own findings, Katriina Siivonen et al. (Siivonen 2008; Siivonen et al. 2022) argue that even though change is inherent in culture, mere voluntary influencing may not be enough – traditions need to be directed actively in a more sustainable direction.

Organizational culture is a topic discussed in the context of sustainability both in my study and the theoretical literature. Richard Adams (2018) considers culture to be the key in the transformation towards sustainability (see also Bertels et al. 2010). It reflects the idea that groups of people share ideas, norms, values, beliefs, customs, and an understanding that is needed to pursue the goals of the organization in a consistent and systematic way (Adams et al. 2018; Jacobs et al.

2013). The organization may have diverse sub-cultures (Adams et al. 2018; Linnenluecke et al. 2009; Silver 2003), which is why the manifestations may look different. While education scholar Harold Silver (2003) acknowledges that there are sub-cultures within higher education institutions, they deny the existence of a single culture. Cultural influence takes place at diverse levels, such as within departments and between staff and students (Adams et al. 2018). Both case universities comprise diverse departments and Uniarts Helsinki even has three academies, which makes the implementation of university-level policies challenging. Sub-optimization can be sensed, and some departments are more prone towards internationality and social sustainability than others. In regard to the diverse departments in the case universities, classical music instruments are at one end, whereas the Global Music Department of Uniarts Helsinki shows clear interest in social sustainability and internationalization. Terms such as *participation*, *intercultural collaboration*, *co-creation*, *dialogue*, *community engagement*, and *reciprocity* are linked to the Global Music Department on the Uniarts Helsinki website as well as in the descriptions of the informants for this research. These terms reflect integration and diversity, which again, are linked to social sustainability (e.g. Dillard et al. 2013; Hanchett 2016; Magis & Shinn 2009).

In line with my findings, internationalization scholars Jos Beelen and Elspeth Jones (2015b) consider internationalization at home to depend on the context of the discipline, which is why the internationalized curriculum should be implemented at department and program level. One model does not fit all departments. This is also reflected in my research data. Departments should be allowed to be different. Nevertheless, it would be important that all students have intercultural skills and are involved in community engagement in the compulsory part of the curriculum and all graduates should understand their role in society.

5.3.3 Level of internationalization

The case universities ponder what is a good level of international students. Internationality is clearly desirable for both universities, but KUG has a considerably higher number of international students than Uniarts Helsinki. However, the number of international students does not per se mean that the university would be highly internationalized, even though some comments at KUG indicate that the internationalization of the university has been achieved. According to internationalization scholars Jos Beelen and Elspeth Jones, (2015b), internationalization does not even require the presence of international students.

Based on my study, the case universities have understood the importance of their social and societal impact. At the same time, they have ambitions to be internationally recognized for excellence, and international reputation may even be their primary rationale for internationalization. According to my research data,

international top level music students are expected to increase the fame of the arts university and according to some informants, also the quality of the institution as such. The other side of the coin is that a high number of international students may become a barrier to socially sustainable internationalization. According to my study, a high concentration of international students may create a bubble in which students feel comfortable engaging among themselves instead of reaching out to communities outside the university. International people may also wish to concentrate on their core studies, having already paid the price of moving to another country, and are thus reluctant to spend time and effort in reaching out to communities.

While the universities in the EU are encouraged to internationalize, they also need to look after national interests. This is especially important for Uniarts Helsinki, which is the only institution in Finland offering music education at university level. The matrix in Figure 12 based on the case universities visualizes how arts universities can position themselves in relation to an international or national focus, and traditional, perhaps quality-oriented and socially sustainable focus. The vertical axis demonstrates the level of internationality, not internationalization. The reason for this is that the number of international students can be high irrespective of the university's efforts towards internationalization. The dividing lines are not clear-cut, and several approaches can co-exist within one institution. Based on my research data, I consider KUG an international and traditional university and Uniarts Helsinki a national and traditional university with aspirations towards internationality and social sustainability. In addition, Uniarts Helsinki has some pockets with a strong international and socially sustainable focus, such as the Global Music Department.

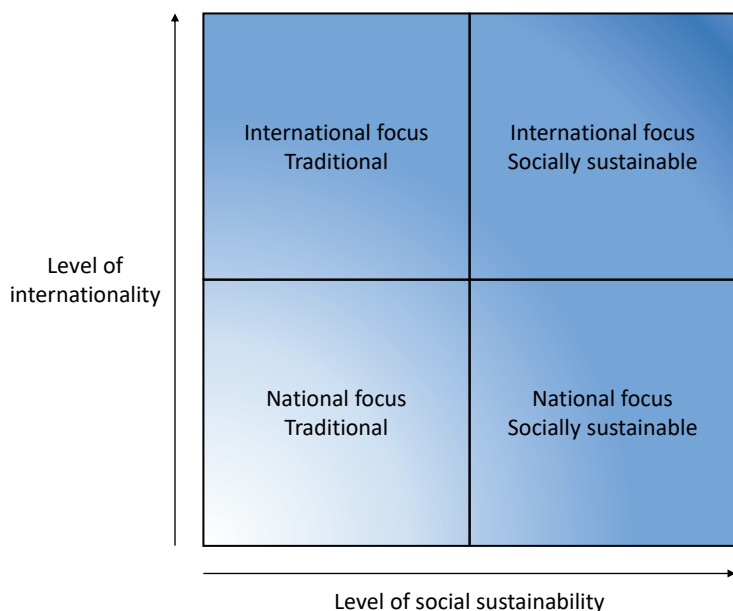


Figure 12. Two-by-two matrix for the levels of internationality and social sustainability

Sustainability scholars Ali Beynaghi et al. (2016) propose that universities could choose an economic, environmental or social/societal orientation, or a combination of these. It would be a natural choice for arts universities to use arts and culture as a means to promote sustainability. In this research, arts and culture are studied as a means towards social sustainability (Duxbury et al. 2017; Soini & Dessein 2016). Remaining passive towards questions related to social sustainability can also be considered a conscious choice. An arts university can also decide to maintain the traditional ethos of excellence, especially if the university is internationally recognized for it. However, it is questionable whether any actor can ignore social sustainability or any other dimension of sustainability. According to my informants, the awareness of students and the surrounding world is increasing all the time.

5.4 Socially sustainable internationalization of arts universities

This PhD study is founded on the conceptual framework of SIHEI, which integrates the concepts of internationalization, sustainability, and community engagement within the higher music education institutions of arts universities. The assumption was that social sustainability within SIHEI could be promoted through culture. My research started with the interpretation of culture as arts and culture. However,

along the process, it has become clear that several interpretations of culture apply to the sustainability discourse in an intercultural context. Depending on the interpretation of culture and the treatment of internationalization, social sustainability, community engagement, and sustainable internationalization can take three distinct forms, as can be seen in Figure 13 below:

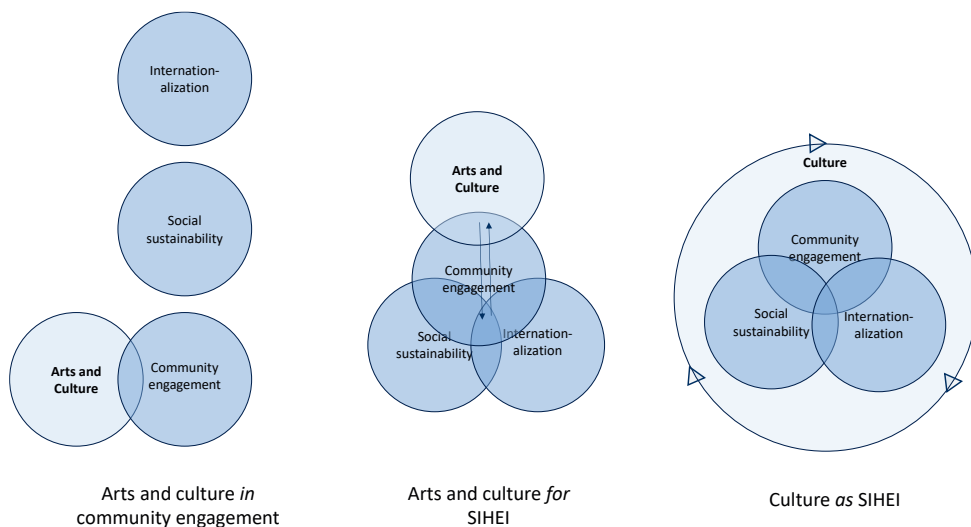


Figure 13. Culture in SIHEI

Source: Inspired by Soini & Dessein (2016 p. 4).

Based on my research data, I argue that the use of arts and culture within the higher music education institutions of arts universities in the context of internationalization and social sustainability can be described as three distinct approaches: arts and culture *in* community engagement, arts and culture *for* SIHEI, and culture *as* SIHEI.

In the first approach, arts and culture *in* community engagement, arts universities treat internationalization, social sustainability, and community engagement as individual topics. Arts and culture are used as a means to practice community engagement without necessarily having a deeper goal.

In the second approach, arts and culture *for* SIHEI, arts universities acknowledge the common ground between internationalization, social sustainability, and community engagement, and understand and foster them with a common agenda under SIHEI. Arts and culture are used as a means to promote intercultural dialogue and understanding within the university community as well as in local communities.

In the third approach, culture as SIHEI, arts universities acknowledge the common ground between internationalization, social sustainability, and community engagement, and understand and foster them with a common agenda under SIHEI in the same way as in arts and culture for SIHEI. However, in addition to culture being considered as arts and culture, it is understood as a more comprehensive concept. The constructionist view of culture matching the paradigmatic position of this dissertation considers culture to be a continuously changing flow of traditions (Hannerz 1992; Siivonen 2008). In that context, cultural sustainability denotes nurturing the change and transformation of traditions and respecting the diversity of people. According to Katriina Siivonen (2008), cultural sustainability primarily refers to an equal right to define one's cultural existence as well as participation in the definition of both local and global cultural change. Siivonen proposes that culture is being sustained when traditions interact and transform, and when people interact through participation and collaboration. According to my findings, that is exactly what happens during reciprocal intercultural engagement when making music. Reciprocal community engagement is not only socially sustainable but also culturally sustainable.

In this dissertation I have researched how internationalization within the higher music education institutions of arts universities meet social sustainability in a domestic context, as perceived by the stakeholders of the case universities. Arts universities need to address their perceived elitism, widen their offering beyond Western music traditions as well as reimagine the concept of excellence based on Western music standards. Both strategic and practical measures are needed to widen access to higher music education and diversify the student population. Community engagement can provide a means for creating a meaningful dialogue between people with diverse cultural backgrounds. Arts universities can use participatory music in different forms to engage people both within and outside the campus. The management seems to be aware of the barriers and challenges related to socially sustainable internationalization. Nevertheless, there is still plenty to do. In the meantime, diligent individuals and departments continue their valuable collaboration with communities through music.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Contributions

The theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions of my research on socially sustainable internationalization of arts universities are intertwined, but I will describe them separately below.

6.1.1 *Theoretical contributions*

My research on socially sustainable internationalization within arts universities can be considered interdisciplinary, drawing on the theories of internationalization of higher education, social sustainability, and community engagement within higher music education. Being an arts manager by education, it is natural for me to combine different theoretical views, which is an intrinsic characteristic of arts management. It is also typical for organizational and management research that takes an interpretive or critical standpoint (Vilén 2010).

My research has contributed to the theoretical discussions of internationalization of higher education and sustainability in two ways. First, while there is abundant research in both fields and increasing research on environmentally sustainable internationalization, interdisciplinary research combining internationalization of higher education and social sustainability is virtually non-existent. To cover this gap, I have created a new 3-dimensional concept I call SIHEI (sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions). The theoretical positioning of the concept is visualized below:



Figure 14. Sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions (SIHEI)

Source: Adapted from Brandenburg et al. (2020 p. 19).

Although SIHEI has been used for social sustainability in this research, it is also applicable to other sustainability dimensions.

The second theoretical contribution of my research is to bring arts universities and their higher music education institutions into the theoretical discussions of the internationalization of higher education and social sustainability, from which they have been missing. My research has explored how the internationalization of higher music education institutions contributes to social sustainability, based on the assumption that arts and culture can be used to advance social sustainability (Duxbury et al. 2017). The research data is limited to two case universities, but the results open a promising new theoretical field for research in understanding the potential of arts and culture in advancing both internationalization and social sustainability within higher education institutions.

The third theoretical contribution can be found in the interdisciplinary approach of my research. My study throws light on the similarity of goals towards intercultural skills within the theoretical discussions on the internationalization of higher education, social and cultural sustainability, community engagement, and higher music education. During the research project I have also become aware of other fields that complement the aforesaid theoretical disciplines. However, even though they are briefly touched upon in my study, they are not in the theoretical focus of my research.

6.1.2 Methodological contributions

Higher music education institutions within arts universities are unexplored territory within the chosen interdisciplinary theoretical framework of the internationalization of higher education institutions, social sustainability, and community engagement. Therefore, I had no previous research with an interdisciplinary approach to lean on when starting my research. The abductive approach enabled me to understand the theoretical background and sensitized me to details in the research data. An increased understanding of the topic encouraged me to revise the theory, methodology and analysis as a continuous process. It also led me on the right path to contribute to existing theories.

The qualitative case study strategy provided me with rich data on two arts universities on an international level. The research data is versatile, and the data collection methods proved useful. As primary data I used individual interviews with senior managers and faculty members, and focus group discussions with students, who may not have been as experienced in talking about the topics of my research and thus received support from their peers. The data was then both verified and complemented by documentation.

I used modern technology to help me methodologically in my research project. Otter helped me with the English language transliterations and allowed more time to focus on the analysis, whereas Maxqda proved an excellent help in the analysis of the research data. I argue that a proper relational database program, such as Maxqda, enables a researcher to make more insights when categorizing and especially connecting topics than more traditional analysis methods.

6.1.3 Empirical contributions

Arts universities and their higher music education institutions have hardly been researched within the internationalization of higher education and social sustainability. My research provides insights into what kinds of opportunities music-related activities provide for engaging with local communities in an intercultural context that distinguish arts universities from science-oriented universities or other public institutions. Making music is a low-threshold activity in which people can participate without a common language. The research material contains concrete examples, such as the Global Fest and projects with children and refugees at Uniarts Helsinki, and the Meet4Music project at KUG.

My research also reveals two interesting dichotomies, quality and social sustainability, and the number of international students and social sustainability.

First, it appears that striving for excellence in a traditional way can become a barrier to social sustainability. This is especially apparent in the research data

concerning KUG and classical music instrument studies, but the idea is also present at Uniarts Helsinki. Classical music instrument studies require extensive practicing, which is naturally also encouraged by the teachers and professors. Socially oriented community engagement would take time from practicing, which may be a reason why traditionally viewed quality does not go hand in hand with striving for social sustainability. From the perspective of social sustainability, arts universities would benefit from re-thinking the concept of quality related to learning outcomes.

The second dichotomy is the number of international students and social sustainability. It appears that too big a proportion of international students within an arts university or a unit within it can become a barrier to social sustainability if the students are not encouraged to actively interact with communities outside the university as a mandatory part of the curriculum, for example. This idea came up at Uniarts Helsinki and appears to apply to KUG as well. If there is a high concentration of international students, they may form a bubble and be reluctant to reach out to engage with communities outside the university. It is also possible that international people may think that they have already moved abroad to study and therefore want to concentrate on what they consider core studies instead of striving for social sustainability by reaching out to society. Universities in the EU are encouraged to internationalize, but they also need to consider national interests. When planning the future, the management should perhaps take these dichotomies into consideration.

6.2 Managerial implications

Combining the benefits of internationalization and social sustainability requires concrete actions from arts universities. Here are some suggestions based on the analysis of the research data:

First, if the case universities want to make a social and societal impact through internationalization and social sustainability, they should clearly identify both internationalization and social sustainability as strategic goals. The goals should be explicitly addressed in the strategy and not be implicit notions between the lines. In addition, there should be separate strategies or preferably even a combined plan for internationalization and sustainability that addresses social sustainability as well. These measures would facilitate the management in steering the organization towards these goals as well as in allocating appropriate resources and rewards. Activities related to internationalization and social sustainability aspirations should become a process instead of ad-hoc projects. The topics of internationalization and social sustainability and values connected to them should

be kept alive through regular communication within and outside the university community.

Second, language is one of the means universities can use to make the path towards social sustainability smoother. There are specific national requirements that the universities must follow, but there are some details that would increase the social sustainability of the organizations. KUG should make a short version of the 86-page German language development plan both in German and English. The missing short version could be a barrier for the community within the university to participate in engaging and fostering the goals that are important for KUG. If the application pattern shifts from students following a specific teacher towards a more socially sustainable direction in the future, the lack of an English version may influence who applies to the university. Younger generations are increasingly aware of social sustainability. KUG would also become more inclusive and thus more socially sustainable if there were a path for English-speaking applicants in addition to in the Jazz Department. The neo-liberal trend in which universities are increasingly expected to find external funding also necessitates English language communication – otherwise potential international funders will be excluded from the game. Unnecessary language tests should be removed. If the applicant appears suitable and an interview is included in the application round, a sufficient command of English can be evaluated by the examiners, as in the admissions processes for Global Music studies at Uniarts Helsinki, for example. Uniarts Helsinki should make sure that the graduates who have completed their studies in English will have a sufficient command of Finnish. Otherwise, the graduates will have challenges finding employment in Finland.

Third, for students to learn socially sustainable attitudes and intercultural competencies, these topics should be built into all curricula. The universities can choose whether they are integrated throughout the curricula or included as separate courses. Community engagement should be compulsory for all students, not merely included in the electives or compulsory activities in some selected departments.

Fourth, the case universities should take into consideration the values of social sustainability and ensure the accessibility of those in a disadvantaged or more vulnerable position because of their intercultural background. Some of the barriers include the requirements related to language skills, music making from an early age onwards, and Western music background. Inclusiveness does not mean opening the whole university, but there should always be some paths that lead to the university without qualifications based on Western music traditions. This does not happen automatically, but structural barriers must be identified and removed, and community engagement must be practiced actively. Intercultural communities

and partners, such as municipalities, NGOs and NPOs, kindergartens, schools and music schools, should be closely involved in the process.

Fifth, both case universities have good models for socially sustainable internationalization: the Global Music Department of Uniarts Helsinki and the Meet4Music project at KUG. These ventures should be developed further when focusing consciously on internationality and social sustainability. Proper visibility both inside and outside the university would facilitate the ventures in becoming forerunners and examples towards a cultural transformation for the rest of the university.

6.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research

Exploring internationalization and social sustainability has been an eye-opening journey in many respects. I still consider globalization an inevitable process and believe that it necessitates an understanding of diverse cultures and a tolerance of difference. Environmental sustainability limits our possibilities for traveling and unlimited international live face-to-face contacts. That is one of the reasons why universities should utilize the opportunity to embrace the international contacts near us to advance social sustainability through intercultural understanding.

During my research process I have become aware of some limitations, which can also be turned into opportunities. First, my original plan was to conduct a multiple case study with three arts universities. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I decided to limit my study to two universities. While the two universities show interesting variety in their approaches to internationalization and social sustainability, a third case university would have provided richer data on the topic – especially as my third case university would potentially have had disciplines missing from my case universities, such as popular music. The primary purpose of my research is not to compare the case universities or produce generalizable data; the phenomena can best be understood in their own context. Nevertheless, I feel that my results based on limited data have value for other arts universities, especially within the European context.

The second limitation concerns the limited perception within arts universities. The target of my research is the higher music education institutions within arts universities, even though there are many other disciplines represented by arts universities, such as performing arts, fine arts, and writing. Again, the purpose of my research is not to produce generalizable results, but I believe that the results can be applied to the context of a higher music education institution. The voices of partners and local communities would have contributed positively to the view on social sustainable internationalization at the case universities presented in this

dissertation. Due to the scope of my research, I decided to focus on the internal stakeholders within the universities.

I also see interesting opportunities for further research. First, diversity is one of the elements widening our understanding of internationalization (e.g. E. Jones 2022). While there may be considerable ethnic diversity within the universities, my research data indicates that arts universities have a considerably homogenous student population. The research data suggests that new offerings, such as popular music, might be one of the tools to make the student body more heterogeneous. A study on higher music education offering popular music might demonstrate whether offering new genres could help arts universities in a more socially sustainable direction.

Second, the Global Music Department of Uniarts Helsinki appears to be relatively advanced in terms of socially sustainable internationalization. However, the research data gives a limited view of the department. Therefore, it is possible that there are underlying challenges that have either been overcome or are yet to be faced. An in-depth multiple case study on Global Music Departments in diverse universities would provide an interesting opportunity to find out how these naturally intercultural departments navigate towards a socially more sustainable future.

Third, community engagement is a central element of socially sustainable internationalization. My research data confirms that it is important for all stakeholders to participate in planning and decision-making. Whereas my research strives for a multifaceted view of internationalization and social sustainability within arts universities, it would also be an interesting opportunity for further research to go deeper in this topic, including exploring the perceptions of the local communities and partners involved in community engagement.

6.4 Final words

At the beginning of this research, the world looked quite different from today. Little did we know about the vast changes that we have all had to face in the past few years. First, there was the Covid-19 pandemic, which forced us to isolate ourselves for an extended period. Then, the war in Ukraine and later political explosions in various parts of the world have caused massive migration movements, economic and political reactions and counter-reactions as well as increasing concern among nations and individuals of a magnitude that is not familiar to people living in Europe. Vast environmental concerns, such as the triple planetary crisis comprising climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss as well as the sixth mass extinction have entered into our lives. Global warming makes it necessary for us to travel less. Despite these challenges, internationalization should not stop. On

the contrary, it is even more important than before that intercultural dialogue continues and that people learn to accept, or at least to tolerate difference, which can also take place in the domestic context. Artificial intelligence (AI) has been the hot topic of the year. It will offer new opportunities for internationalization. However, it cannot replace face-to-face encounters in which music making is at its best. Internationalization at home is a good place to learn how to engage with the intercultural communities within and outside the university and make the university more equitable and inclusive. Can a university afford not to be socially sustainable today?

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: EXAMPLE OF AN INVITATION FOR AN INTERVIEW

Hi,

My name is Outi Niemensivu and I am a PhD student at the Sibelius Academy. I am conducting a study on the internationalization of arts universities under the supervision of Tanja Johansson. As Uniarts is one of my cases, I would appreciate having an interview with you to hear your views on the topic.

Would you be available in any of the following time slots⁴¹:

The interview should last a good hour. Due to the Corona situation, the interview should probably take place in Teams.

Please find below a description of my project

Best regards,

Outi Niemensivu
Contact information⁴²

⁴¹ Time slots deleted.

⁴² Contact information deleted.

Appendix 2: EXAMPLE OF AN INVITATION TO A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Hi

I am contacting you concerning a focus group discussion for my PhD research in the Sibelius Academy. I got your contact information from: Contact person⁴³

My PhD research topic is *socially sustainable internationalization of arts universities*. I have already interviewed our management and teachers and now planning a focus group discussion for students.

I am trying to locate suitable students for a 1 – 1.5 hour focus group discussion in Teams or Zoom. Originally, I thought one of the four-person groups would be held in Finnish and the other one in English. After some consideration, I think I would prefer to have mixed groups (in English).

The preliminary schedule for the groups is on the week starting on 21.3. and/or 28.3. Would you be interested in participating? If you are, could we perhaps have a short Teams meeting next week? You could then ask any questions you may have and I could get acquainted to you before the real event.

Please find a short abstract of my project below.

Outi Niemensivu
Contact information⁴⁴

⁴³ Contact person deleted.

⁴⁴ Contact information deleted.

Socially sustainable internationalization of arts universities

The doctoral thesis will be a qualitative case study on socially sustainable internationalization of higher education institutions (HEIs). The study draws on the idea that culture can be used as a mediator in advancing social sustainability. The study will explore, how this idea is related the internationalization of arts universities and the roles diverse stakeholders take in the process.

The research will be a case study on two European arts universities, one of which will be the University of the Arts Helsinki. The focus will be in the music academies of the universities. The primary research data will be semi-structured interviews with various stakeholders involved with the internationalization, such as the management, academic staff and students in the universities. The interviews will be pseudonymized, but the names of the universities are planned to be revealed. The thesis will be in the domain of Arts Management.

The interdisciplinary research draws on two theoretical discussions: internationalization of higher education and sustainability. The focus will be on the intersection of internationalization, community engagement and sustainability, for which I will introduce a new conceptual framework *Sustainable Internationalization in Higher Education Institutions (SIHEI)* (see the figure below).



Sustainable Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions (SIHEI)

Internationalization in my research refers to the integration of international, intercultural and global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of a university, with a goal to improve the quality of education and research and to contribute to society.

Social sustainability refers to development that fosters an environment which leads towards a compatible cohabitation of culturally and socially diverse people and encourages social integration, improving the quality of life of everybody.

Appendix 4: EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Internationalization

1. What does internationalization mean to Uniarts / Sibelius Academy / your education in your view?
2. How can internationalization, in your view, be seen in Uniarts?
3. What is the aim or goal of internationalization in Uniarts in your view?
4. What kinds of social and societal meanings do you think the internationalization of Uniarts have?
5. How do local students benefit from the internationalization of Uniarts in your view?
6. Does Uniarts engage people with diverse cultural backgrounds outside the university in Finland in your view? If so, how?
7. How does the internationalization of an arts university and a science university potentially differ from each other in your view?
8. What kinds of roles do the management, academic staff and students take in internationalizing Uniarts in your view?

Social sustainability

9. What does social sustainability mean to Uniarts in your view?
10. What kinds of goals does Uniarts have towards social sustainability in your view?
11. How can the promotion of social sustainability be seen in Uniarts in your view?
12. Does the promotion of social sustainability in Uniarts have an international perspective in your view? If it does, what is it like?
13. What kinds of roles do the management, academic staff and students take in the implementation of social sustainability in Uniarts?

Internationalization and social sustainability

14. Please describe how you perceive the relationship between internationalization and social sustainability in Uniarts.
15. What kinds of means do Uniarts and especially Sibelius Academy use in promoting intercultural dialogue in Finland in your view?
16. Please describe one or more examples where you think internationalization and social sustainability have been combined successfully in Uniarts.
17. Does the internationalization program in Uniarts (Talent Boost, Finland scholarships and Global pilot networks) relate to socially sustainable internationalization in your view? If so, how.
18. How has the Covid-19 pandemic affected the internationalization and social sustainability in Uniarts in your view?
19. How do you vision the future of socially sustainable internationalization in Uniarts?

General

Is there anything you would like to add or comment concerning this interview?

Appendix 5: EXAMPLE OF FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Internationalization

1. How can internationalization and international and intercultural aspirations be seen in Uniarts and Siba?
2. What kinds of benefits do the students, within Siba, in other words you, get from internationalization?

Social sustainability / social responsibility / social and societal impact

3. How can the advancement of social sustainability be seen in the Sibelius Academy, from an international point of view.
4. How do you perceive social sustainability and social as well as social responsibility within the university context?

Internationalization and social sustainability

5. What kinds of means does Sibelius Academy use to encourage intercultural dialogue within Finland. By intercultural dialogue I mean the interaction between people coming from diverse linguistic and cultural background – both within university and also with the local community?
6. Do you have any examples, where internationalization and social sustainability would have been combined successfully.
7. What is the students' role in socially sustainable internationalization within the Sibelius Academy? What do you feel your own role has been?
 - What about the teachers?
 - And what about the top management
8. How has the Corona pandemic affected the socially sustainable internationalization in Uniarts?
9. How do you see the future of socially sustainable internationalization in Uniarts?

General

Do you still want to comment something related to this interview and the topic?

Appendix 6: EXAMPLE OF CODING

Code System	Count
Code System	2743
IMPORTANT	44
Roles in pursuing socially sustainable internationalization	1
Strategic management	0
Application and recruitment (+)	0
Engaging students	1
Inclusion	2
Reasons for choosing the university	13
Life-long	2
Quality	6
Contexts	197
Alumni	2
National - international	11
Kilpailu	1
Difficulties in considering applicable	7
Suomeen jääminen - ilmainen opiskelu	1
Diversiteetti	10
Covid and application	3
Geographic areas in application	4
Language policy and application	5
Style - western music etc.	10
Global music application	11
Recruitment of staff	15
Financial constraints in application	3
Migrants' difficulties in finding their way to Uniarts	5
Research	1
Quality	4
Miscellaneous	2
Teaching and research	8
University	21
Academic staff	10
Students	23
Departments	3
Strategy	53
Allocation of resources	3
Values	9
Structure and system	0
Structure	18
Traditional, hierarchical, conservative	26
Selects.: dpts, networks, regions	1
People	6
Stakeholders	1
Regions + national-international	22
Departments	13
Global music	54
Rationales for internationalization	32
People's roles within achieving SSI	0
University	19
All people	52
Admin	5
Academic staff	63



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