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# **How social innovations can enable socially just spatial politics and collaborative professionalism in music education**

## **The case of AÏCO at the *Conservatoire de Lyon***

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### **Introduction**

A traditional music conservatory can be seen as the exemplar *par excellence* of the problems that long-established arts institutions face in late modern societies. Etymologically, “conservatory” refers to a “preserver” or “defender” – a place devoted to “carefully keeping” something (*Online Etymology Dictionary*, n.d.). Paradoxically, whilst the first “conserving places” for orphans in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Naples provided music education and later served “as models for the training of musicians in many other countries” (Gjerdingen, 2020, p. 10), the contemporary publically funded places of music instruction – music schools, conservatories, and higher music education too – have been widely criticised for having shown themselves to be elitist and highly excluding social contexts. Hence, if the Naples conservatories were found not just to protect children but also to subsume them as servants that “could be rented out or leased to various churches or ensembles, thus bringing in income to support the institution” (p. 11), the modern view of the conservatory also conceals a layer of meaning where its walls, both physical and societal, can both preserve and exclude by literally marking the limits of the public’s access to its practices.

In the current urban context, marked by rapid change and haunted by increasing inequality and social polarisation, conservatories need to constantly rethink their boundaries, accessibility, and purposes and position themselves in a more extensive societal frame of reference wherein they are problematised as providers of public services. In this light, it may then be necessary to ask whether conservatories are unintentionally producing inequality and social injustice, as suggested by the observations that their student population mainly consists of students from upper- or middle-class

families living in the wealthy parts of urban communities (Perkins, 2013; Tregear et al., 2016). Like other institutions coping with rapid changes in late modern society, conservatories are facing societal and cultural turbulence that forces them to rethink their public responsibilities. It no longer suffices to say that society needs conservatories; conservatories also need to reflect on the questions of who benefits from them, who is excluded from their services, and how rethinking their public responsibility might change their institutional practices. In this chapter, through a case study of the AÏCO programme at the Lyon *Conservatoire* in France, we will examine how this rethinking of conservatories' public responsibility can be enacted via increased consciousness of *local spatial politics* that produce differences in the social–urban context and by initiating collaboration between institutions and professionals.

The French system of extracurricular<sup>1</sup> music education is mainly composed of local (public) conservatories, music schools, and other structures such as MJs.<sup>2</sup> There are two conservatories in Lyon: a national higher conservatory (*Conservatoire National Supérieur de Lyon*) and a CRR (regional conservatory, or *Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional*, usually also called *Conservatoire de Lyon*). This chapter focuses on the latter. French CRRs provide extracurricular<sup>3</sup> arts education (generally music, dance, and theatre) from the elementary educational level (six-year-old children) to the pre-professional level (for teenagers aiming to enter the higher conservatory). Therefore, they have a broad mission that ranges from arts education for all to high-level technical training. The *Conservatoire de Lyon*, with its 240 teachers providing education for about 2,700 students in 40 disciplines of music, dance, and theatre, is one of the largest CRRs in France. Its stated purpose is to “give everyone the artistic and technical means to best achieve their personal goals, whether those goals are to master their performance at amateur level or to prepare a professional career”<sup>4</sup> (*Conservatoire de Lyon*, 2019).

In this chapter, we will explore AÏCO (Instrument Learning and Collective Invention, or *Apprentissage Instrumental et Invention Collective*) as a socially just programme which emerged from the collaboration between the *Conservatoire de Lyon* and a primary school situated in an underprivileged area within the Lyon Metropolis. The purpose of AÏCO is to improve the accessibility of instrumental tuition for children living in this particular area.<sup>5</sup> AÏCO is connected to the *Charte de Coopération Culturelle*, the so-called “Lyon model”,<sup>6</sup> which commits the cultural actors of the city to foster the development of culture in underprivileged areas. For the *Conservatoire de Lyon*, a consciousness of how space matters when aiming for equal opportunities for music education and the use of “spatial imagination” (e.g., Dikeç, 2015) when responding to socially unjust spatial politics are especially crucial; the city is subject to strong social

heterogeneities and most of the underprivileged areas are situated far away from the city centre where the main *Conservatoire de Lyon* premises are located. Through AĪCO, the use of such spatial imagination and new professional collaboration aims to reorganise the institutional distribution of social space within the conservatory context in Lyon, thereby enhancing socially just spatial politics in music education.

### **Theoretical starting points**

*“Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology and politics; it has always been political and strategic” (Lefebvre, 1976).*

We will draw from the theoretical perspectives of urban studies and the sociology of space, which make a distinction between physical space and socially produced space, or “the created space of social organization and production” (Soja, 1989, p. 79). The urban theorist Edward Soja’s approach to socially produced space has its roots mainly in the concepts of “the right to the city” and “the production of space” developed by Henri Lefebvre (1967, 1974). Unlike physical space, socially produced space is a purpose-created structure comparable to other social constructions. It is not neutral but is politically organised, “expressing social relationships and reacting back upon them” (Soja, 1989, p. 81). Space, understood in this social sense, can thus produce equality or inequality. Briefly, as social injustice becomes visible in a space, analysis of the interactions between space and society is necessary to understand it and to formulate territorial policies aimed at tackling it (Soja, 1996). In the end, as the French philosopher Jacques Ranci re argues, “everything in politics turns on the distribution of spaces” (Ranci re, 2003, p. 201).

We will conceptualise AĪCO as a *social innovation* (Moulaert, 2009), a political construct that potentially transforms spatial relations (V kev  et al., 2017; Westerlund et al., 2019). Social innovations can be seen to have four key elements (Portales, 2019): “satisfaction of a need, innovation of the solution, change of social structures and relationships, and the increase of society’s capacity to act” (p. 4). According to Bouchard et al. (2015), social innovation always implies intervention towards *social transformation*. Thus, the concept also suggests a change in how we conceive social space – or the transformative power of AĪCO in terms of the boundaries of the *Conservatoire de Lyon* when conservatories are understood as social systems that create social space. The link between social innovation and social transformation can be “explained either as a pattern supported by inter-organisational relations ... or by the capacity to connect to societal challenges and dynamics ... suggesting new institutional frameworks or development paradigms” (p. 76). Considering social innovations as new ways to address social needs, they can also be understood as *spatialised processes* that transform the ways in which space is socially distributed

(van Dyck & van den Broeck, 2013, p. 131). Fulfilling this spatialising function, social innovations “articulate” a coherent spatial logic, are constructed with local knowledge, informed by the particular circumstances on the ground, and delivered through multi-sectoral, horizontal networks crossing functional boundaries (p. 133). In other words, social innovations not only address given spatial contexts, but also the view that “the outcomes of social processes differ from place to place, and that space impacts on these very processes” (p. 133). In this sense, social innovations both point towards and create new lived spaces where social challenges can be worked upon in new ways. Social innovations are thus driven by an ethical commitment to provide practical solutions to such problems as spatial injustice.

As Dikeç (2015) suggests,

[s]patial imagination – seeing connections that cannot always be deduced rationally from the givens, establishing new relations and gatherings, envisaging new forms and configurations – is ... an important part of political thinking.

(p. 4)

By engaging with the ideas of socially produced space, spatial injustice, and social innovations, we will argue that conservatories in late modern society can be developed through such spatial imagination, leading to multiple collaborations that may help with envisioning their new roles in urban contexts where a wealth of issues and societal problems need to be tackled. Through our case study, we will show how institutional and professional collaboration in social innovations can pave the way for the emergence of *collaborative professionalism* in which people who have similar concerns actively share work, inquiry, challenges, and dialogue in a culture of mutual trust, with the aim of co-creating better professional practices (Hargreaves & O’Connor, 2018, p. 3). Such co-created, improved professional practices in a conservatory context can be taken as instances of spatial politics evidencing readiness to see arts education “in the context of broader debates about social and civic purposes” (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2015, p. 71). From these starting points, we will ask in our analysis: *How is AÏCO, as a social innovation, tackling spatial injustice and paving the way for collaborative professionalism in a conservatory context?*

### **The spatial organisation of music education at the *Conservatoire de Lyon***

Located on the prestigious and luxurious Fourvière hill in Lyon old town, the main building of the *Conservatoire de Lyon* is rather difficult to access by persons burdened with social, financial, cultural, transportation-related or

psychological restrictions. As a solution to this problem, the *Conservatoire* has created five “annexes” in other city districts, most of which are located in primary school buildings (see Figure 9.1). Thus, the *Conservatoire* can also be seen as a network that is expected to provide inclusive *spaces of opportunities* for musical learning outside the immediate geographic location of its main building. However, the question is how each annex can create a connection to its surrounding area while taking account of its social profile, cultural environment, and location and also of how the tuition is organised locally.

In addition to extracurricular education, the *Conservatoire* is engaged in curricular education by employing more than 30 *musiciens intervenants* who collaborate with primary school teachers in Lyon. *Musiciens intervenants* (hereafter MIs) are trained at CFMIs (*Centres de Formation des Musiciens Intervenants*), which have been in operation since 1984.<sup>7</sup> The

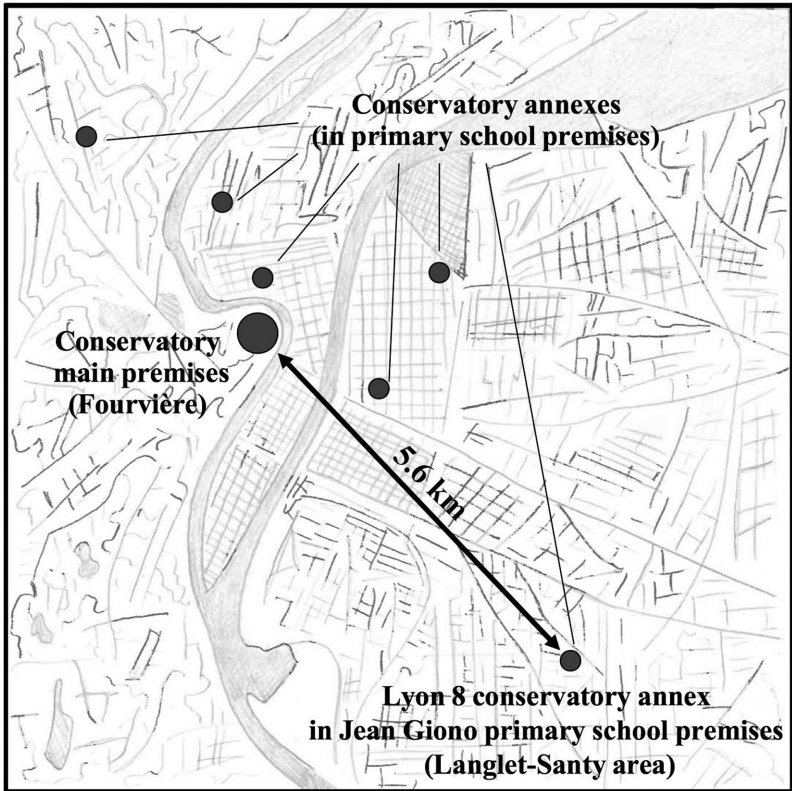


Figure 9.1 The geographical locations of the *Conservatoire de Lyon* main premises and annexes (sketched by Martin Galmiche).

(full-time) two-year training puts the emphasis on designing creative musical projects with the class as a whole, during school time, together with the schoolteachers (see Galmiche, 2013; Stumpfögger, 2017). MIs work mainly in primary schools but also in other environments such as extracurricular workshops, hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, and prisons. Therefore, although this title is usually translated as “musicians-in-schools” in English, we will use the French term in the present discussion.

The role of MIs is crucial, as there are no permanent music teachers in French primary schools. Rather, primary school teachers are supposed to handle music education in cooperation with MIs whenever possible. In order to do so, primary school teachers have to submit plans for a musical project each year. This procedure (and the probability of the project being accepted) varies from city to city, as MIs may be employed either by municipalities, music schools, or conservatories, which makes their availability dependent on local policy. In Lyon, the MIs are employed by the *Conservatoire* thanks to a subsidy granted by the city, which makes their service extensively available.<sup>8</sup>

### **Identifying spatial injustice in the *Conservatoire*'s annex in Lyon 8**

The *Conservatoire*'s annex in the 8<sup>ème</sup> *arrondissement de Lyon* (hereafter Lyon 8) is situated in the Jean Giono primary school in the Langlet-Santy area, a low-income part of Lyon 8, far away from the city centre and Fourvière Hill (see Figure 9.1). In Langlet-Santy, most of the children are first-generation or second-generation immigrants, mainly originating from North Africa. Like many other big French cities, Lyon has not managed to integrate this population, resulting in social, cultural, and spatial isolation. This isolation has generated a vicious circle, perpetuating the underprivileged status of its inhabitants and leading to inherited cultural exclusion that is very difficult to break (see Dikeç, 2009). Therefore, the situation of this *Conservatoire* annex is of particular importance to the pursuit of both spatial justice and social justice.

The first author of this chapter, having worked as an MI at the Jean Giono primary school, struggled with the paradoxical situation of the *Conservatoire*'s annex before the creation of AÏCO, namely *none of the children following the Conservatoire courses in the annex were from the Jean Giono school (i.e. from the surrounding area)*.<sup>9</sup>

This situation at the *Conservatoire*'s annex demonstrated that in order for such institutions to engage in socially just spatial politics, their operations need to be reviewed through the theoretical lenses of socially produced space and spatial injustice. In Lyon, this is supported by spatial policy; in the city's *Charte de Coopération Culturelle* (Charter for Cultural Cooperation, the so-called “Lyon model”), all the signatory institutions, including the *Conservatoire*, are expected to “engage creativity, know-how

and skills to jointly build a Balanced City, committed in all territories ... a learning city, inside and outside school, that is strongly committed to artistic education ... a City of Equality” (see box).

***Preliminary statement of the city of Lyon’s  
Charte de coopération Culturelle (translation  
from French by Martin Galmiche)***

The City of Lyon, mainly through the Delegations for Culture, Major Events, and Citizens’ Rights, and the City’s Housing and Housing Policy, the State, the Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs and the Prefecture of Rhône, regarding Equal Opportunities:

Support the common will to boost cultural, creative, and heritage policies that participate in the human, urban, and responsible development of the city and all its territories.

Share the ambition to place culture at the heart of the city’s development project through actions linked to all public policies, with the aim of developing a creative, sustainable, and balanced city.

The making of “Lyon Ville Durable” (“Sustainable City”) with the women and men who live there, mobilises in Lyon a cooperative community in which cultural players engage creativity, know-how, and skills to jointly build:

- A Balanced City, committed in all territories and in particular the City’s Political Quarters, Active Watch Quarters, and those undergoing urban renewal;
- A Learning City inside and outside school, strongly committed to artistic education and to the place of culture in school, which shares information and knowledge with everyone;
- A City of Solidarity and Inclusivity working alongside the most vulnerable people for socio-economic integration of our young people as well as our seniors;
- A Participatory City, in conjunction with Citizen Councils and Neighbourhood Councils, reaching out to all generations, from children to seniors, and engaging in intergenerational projects;
- A City of Equality, accessible, committed to taking into account diversity, the fight against discrimination, equality between women and men, intercultural dialogue;
- A City of Heritage, which recognises values and brings together heritage and memories;
- A Pleasant, Green, and Eco-friendly City;
- A Creative and Innovative City, prioritising experimentation, promoting the place of art in public spaces, hybridisation with digital

technology and opening up to new cooperation by forging links between culture and sport.

In the name of the public service missions, the cultural establishments, events, and services, strongly supported by the City of Lyon and the State, are committed to making Lyon a Sustainable City

They do so while respecting their primary missions, which can be the development of public reading, the teaching of artistic disciplines, support for artistic creation and the dissemination of works, artistic education and art mediation, the organisation of events, or the conservation and promotion of elements of historical and contemporary common heritage.

In several paragraphs of the *Charte de Coopération Culturelle*, an implied reference to Lefebvre's "*droit à la ville*" (right to the city) is perceptible (Lefebvre, 1967). This should encourage spatial imagination when pursuing the declared goals. However, a choice has to be made between *being aware of* the spatial paradoxes and *interrogating* the spatial logic. We argue that mere awareness of such paradoxes is not enough: by interrogating the spatial logic and using spatial imagination, publicly funded cultural and educational institutions, such as conservatories, can develop the capacity to rethink their role in late modern societies. The *Charte de Coopération Culturelle* clearly aims to pave the way for such imagination and encourages collaboration (or "cooperation") between the policies pursued by the city's institutions with the aim of increasing spatial justice.

In the case of the *Conservatoire's* annex in Lyon 8, the paradox of not having any children from the surrounding area was clearly problematic from the perspective of the charter. This paradox was rooted in the organisation of the courses before the creation of AÏCO (see Figure 9.2). As typical in other annexes and Fourvière, the children were supposed to follow a "discovery programme" in music and dance before choosing an instrument (or dance) and starting a four-year cycle of instrumental tuition. However, the discovery programme was not only composed of a weekly music lesson held in the annex but also included "discovery sessions" (e.g., educational concerts, the discovery of various instruments and dance) organised on an irregular schedule and not locally (generally in Fourvière). In addition, the tuition fees, though lower than in private music schools, were still too high for most of the families living in Langlet-Santy. Moreover, at the end of the discovery programme, the children could not follow instrumental tuition with a *Conservatoire* instrument teacher in the annex because the lessons took place in Fourvière (see Figure 9.2).

Consequently, not only was the *Conservatoire* physically inaccessible for most of the children living in the Langlet-Santy area, but it also ignored

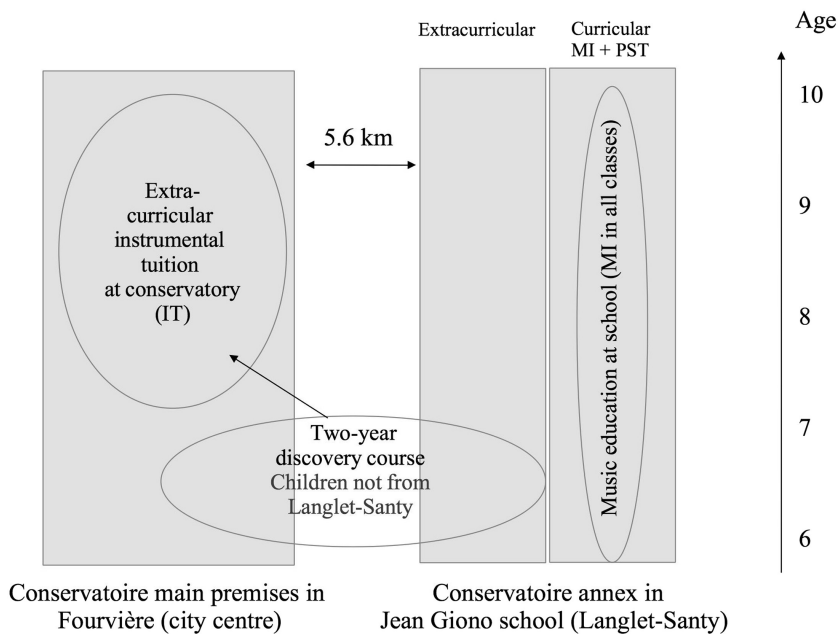


Figure 9.2 Organisation of music education by the *Conservatoire de Lyon* in *Langlet-Santy* (Lyon 8) before the creation of AICO (MI = musicien intervenant, IT = instrumental teacher, PST = primary school teacher).

other crucial issues related to the access and participation of these children such as family schedules and transportation possibilities, and failed to adjust the tuition fees to their economic situation. These issues can be considered in terms of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1970) by asking: To what degree are the children and families aware of the *Conservatoire* and the existence of its annex on their school premises and to what degree do they feel allowed to access the system? As Ruth Wright (2015) argues:

Education plays a trick on the less advantaged members of society. By wrapping education within a cultural code familiar to those from dominant sectors of society, the children of these dominant social groups are predisposed to understand and benefit from education before their less advantaged peers.

(p. 345)

In the case of the Langlet-Santy area, this mechanism was amplified by the unfair spatial distribution of the *Conservatoire's* activities, which increased even more dramatically the experienced reality of isolation and

the way space was *produced* (Lefebvre, 1974) by the intertwining realities of the *Conservatoire* and the inhabitants of Langlet-Santy.

### **The creation of AÏCO as a response to spatial injustice**

The *Conservatoire* has a special commitment to the Jean Giono primary school where it has several MIs working on musical projects with all the primary school teachers and the children during school hours. This is seen as a way of enacting the *Charte de Coopération Culturelle* in this under-privileged area. The Jean Giono school was (and still is) the only primary school in Lyon where the MIs are present in all the classes, fostering a strong commitment to music education. Before the creation of AÏCO, the commitment of the *Conservatoire* in the physical space of Jean Giono primary school was therefore particularly paradoxical: on the one hand, there was a lack of accessibility to the extracurricular tuition, while on the other there was a strong commitment to music education during school time thanks to the MIs.

AÏCO was designed to address this issue and to improve the *Conservatoire's* accessibility through heightened spatial thinking and imagination. The birth of AÏCO was underpinned by the idea that collaboration between instrumental teachers and MIs should play a crucial role in solving the difficulty facing the annex. In agreement with the *Conservatoire* board, a reflection group was formed in Fourvière with several instrumental teachers and the first author of this article (both as an MI working in the Jean Giono school and as a coordinator of the reflection group). These discussions yielded the idea of a new system devoted to promoting accessible extracurricular instrumental tuition in the annex for the children from the Jean Giono school by relying on the existing commitment to music education during normal school hours. The following main elements of AÏCO became central to its design: collaboration between the MIs and instrumental teachers; access to multiple instruments; low tuition fees; and the integration of time and space.

It was decided that a two-year discovery programme would be organised *for all children* aged six to eight during school time on the school premises as an alternative to the discovery programme organised outside school hours and partly in Fourvière. This was facilitated by the fact that the MIs were already engaged in music education for the school classes. The music education programme was enriched by instrumental sessions that allowed the children to explore various instruments with the instrumental teachers. Following these trial sessions, children who wished to learn an instrument could register for an extracurricular programme that took place in the *Conservatoire* annex, given by the *Conservatoire* instrumental teachers in collaboration with the MIs (who taught the children during school time). Thus, the MIs acted as intermediaries between the primary school

and this extracurricular programme. In addition, a social coordinator was employed by the *Conservatoire* as an intermediary between the teaching team (MIs and instrument teachers) and the children's families.

The collaboratively initiated plan to organise the AĪCO programme was based on a principle that may be described as *unity of time and unity of place*. This point is of crucial importance. Conventional conservatory programmes usually consist of several courses per week (face-to-face instrument tuition, solfège and collective ensemble or orchestra practice) that may take place in various locations. In AĪCO, the *unity of time and unity of place* principle means that the extracurricular programme is organised once a week at the same time at the school premises. This principle has two important implications. First, a fixed schedule and location make participation easier for the children and their families. Second, the instrumental teachers and MIs can work collaboratively and develop a unique artistic pedagogy based on their combined professional skills. In particular, the MIs have skills in collective practice, singing, body percussion, and music-and-movement. The instrumental teachers have skills in individual tuition in technique on a given instrument. In AĪCO, the teachers and MIs do not intend to remain isolated in their own professional practices; rather, they are open to learning from each other and combining their skills in order to foster a dynamic, reciprocal relationship between the children's individual and collective practices. This shared pedagogical strategy also fosters a positive feedback loop between technical learning and creativity.

The following main pedagogical principles of AĪCO were jointly developed by instrumental teachers and MIs:

- Instead of one-to-one academic courses, the children learn to play through joint work on a collective, inventive project (including improvisation, composition, arrangement and staging) and develop the necessary human and musical skills, organised in a four-year cycle.
- The studies are organised in a single, weekly, long session (2 hours 15 min.) including solfège, collective practice, instrumental training (in small groups), and collective work on the joint artistic project (the group that is considered an ensemble includes the children, MIs, instrumental teachers, and the social coordinator). The collective practice includes collective improvisation sessions, arrangement and interpretation of songs or inventions involving the whole group or within several (mixed) subgroups, as well as technical learning sessions in instrumental tuition groups.
- The whole group gives concerts every year in which the parents are also sometimes involved.
- The children learn musical concepts in an experimental, sensitive way and write or read music with a connection to their own creativity (for

instance, in order to represent and remember the music they compose themselves).

This last principle and, more generally, the central role of creation in the programme, explain the “AÏCO” title, which means “Instrument Learning and Collective Invention” (*Apprentissage Instrumental et Invention Collective*). The “collective” aspect encompasses both collaborative teaching between instrumental teachers and MIs and collaborative learning between the children. This emerging and developing collaboration is supported by the 45-minute session the MIs and instrumental teachers can spend every week discussing, playing and preparing the lessons, as well as by learning from each other during the lessons while co-teaching.

When AÏCO was initiated, 17 children participated in harp, transverse flute and violin lessons (the choice of instruments was made according to both the musical coherence and the teachers’ motivation to be part of AÏCO). In the second year, joint discussions emerged on how to manage the growth of the group following the admission of new beginners. One more MI and three more instrumental teachers of flute, oboe, and cello were integrated into the programme and a new group was created, separate from the first group of second-year children. In the third year, new beginners were again integrated, as was one more MI. Importantly, it was decided that the different groups would be merged, so that AÏCO became a single multi-age, multilevel group jointly taught by six instrumental teachers and three MIs. In the fourth year, a guitar teacher also joined and the children’s group doubled its initial size.

The decisions concerning the organisation of AÏCO are carried out in order to ensure time continuity, i.e. to allow new beginners to integrate into the multilevel group each year. This time continuity makes it possible to construct a lived space where children with various levels of proficiency can collaborate, the youngest can follow in the footsteps of the older children, and the teaching team can collaborate on and continuously improve its pedagogy together. Moreover, from the perspective of *conceived space* (Lefebvre, 1974), AÏCO is part of the *Conservatoire*, not outside it, as the participating children are registered at the *Conservatoire* and the instrumental teachers and MIs responsible for the AÏCO courses are hired from within it. Thus, AÏCO should not be seen as a bridge that may *lead to* the *Conservatoire*, but a new conception of music teaching *growing within* it, thus changing the *Conservatoire*’s structure through innovative solutions and increasing society’s capacity to act (Portales, 2019). As a social innovation, AÏCO is a political construct that addresses societal challenges and tests a “new institutional framework” (Bouchard et al., 2015) that potentially transforms spatial relations (Moulaert, 2009, p. 12) not only within the *Conservatoire* but also between the *Conservatoire* and the children and

their families in the area to whom the music tuition was initially inaccessible. In other words, AĪCO helps to bridge the “opportunity gap” (Putnam, 2015) of previously excluded children in the district of Langlet-Santy.

### **Towards collaborative professionalism and rethinking public responsibility**

Above, we have described how AĪCO, as a social innovation and an initiative of the *Conservatoire de Lyon* in an underprivileged area, not only reorganises extracurricular instrumental teaching and music education during normal school hours but also enables and experiments with a pedagogical music learning approach in which collective invention has a central role. AĪCO forms a new socially produced space in which multiple collaborations are oriented towards a shared goal, namely tackling spatial injustice, and providing better access to *Conservatoire* tuition in the urban context of Lyon. One of the crucial enablers for the success of the initiative is that in contrast to the usual challenge of finding resources for temporarily funded projects, AĪCO is built on a sustainable idea of long-term investment in collaborative professionalism in music.<sup>10</sup> Hence, AĪCO also makes a case for the success of a collective effort towards social innovation.

Most importantly, the emergence of this new socially produced space not only tackles local injustice and spatial exclusion but may also generate wider change within the *Conservatoire* itself (see Figure 9.3). For instance, as the AĪCO instrumental teachers also teach other courses in Fourvière or other annexes, it may be possible to combine the teachers’ new collaborative approaches in both teaching contexts and bring the AĪCO students and Fourvière students together. Moreover, the MIs and instrumental teachers, by sharing skills and teaching together on the AĪCO weekly course, are developing an applied pedagogy in which musical creation is central. This may be seen as a double nesting of artistic invention within pedagogical innovation, and of pedagogical innovation within social innovation, which has the potential to produce long-term social change and to transform social systems (Baker & Mehmood, 2015). Furthermore, AĪCO has prompted the creation of *Le Cluster* within the *Conservatoire*, a group of teachers committed to a collective inquiry on pedagogical topics, also including teachers who *do not teach in AĪCO* (see Figure 9.3). *Le Cluster* currently works on three main topics: (1) new course formats and innovative artistic pedagogies, (2) equality in access to arts education, and (3) strategies involved in the learning and teaching of conventional musical notation.

Given that the protagonists have similar concerns and share work, inquiry, challenges and dialogue (Hargreaves & O’Connor, 2018, p. 3), social innovations such as AĪCO may function as generators for wider collaborative professionalism in the conservatory context. In collaborative

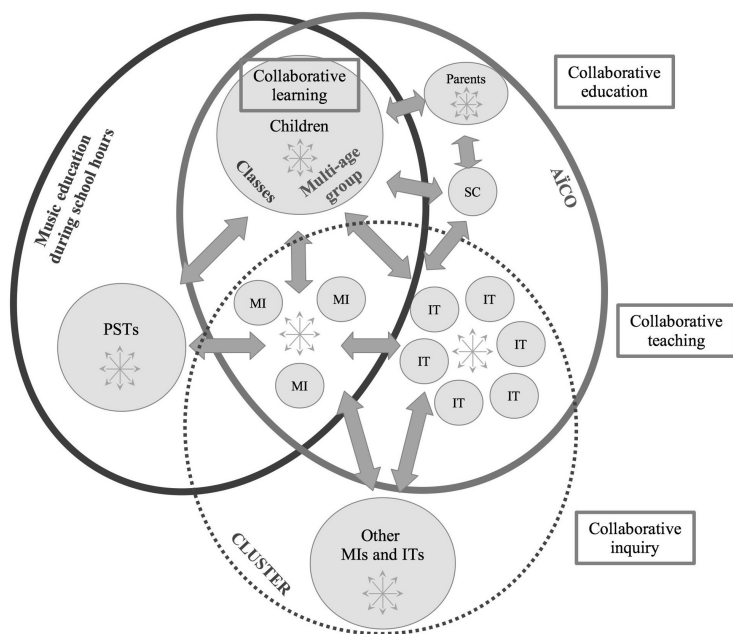


Figure 9.3 Professional collaboration and the emergence of collaborative professionalism in AICO. The involved professionals are the primary school teachers (PST), the *musiciens intervenants* (MI), the instrumental teachers (IT), and the social coordinator (SC). The arrows and stars symbolise various types of professional, pedagogical, and other collaborations between and among the actors.

professionalism, the joint work becomes “embedded in the culture and life of the school” (p. 5) and the teachers “actively care for and have solidarity with each other as fellow professionals as they pursue their challenging work together” (p. 5). In such conditions, the instrumental teachers can work collaboratively “in ways that are responsive to and inclusive of the cultures of their students, themselves, the community, and the society” (p. 5) (see Figure 9.3).

Above, we have illustrated how social innovations such as AICO can reveal new possibilities of spatial imagination with important implications for urban educational planning. AICO helps us to see that within the larger system of a society, a conservatory not only occupies a predefined space but can also be understood as a potential *generator of new social and territorial spaces*. In this way, AICO has enacted the French policy for public services based on three fundamental principles:<sup>11</sup> the *continuity* principle, the *equality* principle, and the *adaptability* principle.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the local, territorial public services (*Fonction Publique Territoriale*), within

which the *Conservatoires Régionaux* operate, are committed to adapting their organisation in order to ensure accessibility for all. In the case of the *Conservatoire de Lyon*, it is clear that neither the equality nor the adaptability principle can be taken into account without considering the spatial heterogeneity of sociocultural and economic capital distribution in the city. In order to follow the equality principle, AICO has placed spatial concerns at the centre of its organisation in order to improve the accessibility of the *Conservatoire* tuition as well as to develop new transformative perspectives by enhancing multilevel collaboration and creative pedagogical practices. Hence, as a social innovation, AICO should not be seen as responding to a new mission but rather as an initiative that follows the declared equality and adaptability principles of all public services in France. Moreover, that AICO holds the potential to generate wider collaborative professionalism in the *Conservatoire* demonstrates that the social challenges facing public services can also be taken as opportunities for positive changes, rather than constraints requiring increased funding and/or sacrifices. Following the educational philosopher Gert Biesta (2014), such changes may be seen as never-ending, ongoing processes relying on the opening of “those places and spaces where the experiment of democracy can be conducted” (p. 11).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have argued that a contemporary conservatory can foster social justice by redistributing social space through social innovations. This distribution of social space not only concerns places where citizens live; it also concerns the way urban geography is represented as a space of possibilities, either for participation or exclusion. From this standpoint, a conservatory can either accept its own territorial role in supporting difference as a platform of injustice or resist injustice by exercising spatial imagination to open up new possibilities for social service in the public space. Theoretically, this can be understood as a way of grasping the full potential of public space as a lived space that transcends how that public space is perceived and conceptualised through political praxis. We suggest that this is precisely what can take place within social innovations: they influence the fair distribution of space and provide new possibilities for students to claim cultural and socio-territorial capital. At their best, social innovations can lead us to consider how spatial politics redistributes urban space and helps us to reconsider the political role that a conservatory can play in such endeavours.

The chapter has highlighted that one of the key elements of publicly responsible music education is to reflect how spatial injustice can be tackled by means of collaborative professionalism. AICO, an initiative of the *Conservatoire de Lyon* in an underprivileged area, was created in order to involve the children in this area in “Instrument Learning and Collective

Invention” (*Apprentissage Instrumental et Invention Collective*). This initiative is an example of a social innovation that can enhance spatial justice by redistributing pedagogical resources within an urban educational system through co-created practices. Our analysis suggests new ways of envisioning collaborative professionalism in music education institutions in the urban context, exemplified by the *Charte de Coopération Culturelle* or “Lyon model”. We suggest that through such social innovations, today’s conservatories can present themselves to society as a public service embodying spatial imagination and a sense of social justice. They can appear as a combination of physical and socially produced spaces that provide room for continuous spatial politics in heterogeneous urban contexts and strive towards more equal educational possibilities for all citizens. In this way, spatial politics of music education can provide new loci for social justice outside the concrete material, geographical and social boundaries that mark the limits of the public’s access to what music education sets out to conserve.

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### **Notes**

- 1 “Extracurricular” here refers to education provided outside the school curriculum, even if such education might be based on a curriculum of its own.
- 2 *Maisons des Jeunes et de la Culture*.
- 3 The question of the *Classes à Horaires Aménagés* (instrumental tuition organised during school time) is not addressed in the present discussion.
- 4 Translated from French by Martin Galmiche: *donner à chacun les moyens artistiques et techniques de réaliser au mieux son projet personnel, qu’il s’agisse d’une pratique amateur de qualité ou de se préparer à une orientation professionnelle (Conservatoire de Lyon, 2019)*.
- 5 The first author of the present chapter is a *musicien intervenant* and founded AICO in 2017. He is in charge of its artistic and pedagogical coordination.
- 6 <https://www.lyon.fr/culture/cooperation-culturelle>
- 7 The students have to pass a musical entrance exam to attend the CFMI programme but do not necessarily have to be professional musicians before the training.
- 8 Approximately three-quarters of the projects submitted by primary school teachers are accepted.

- 9 The French state education system follows the so-called *carte scolaire*, which stipulates that the children living in a particular area are supposed to attend the primary school located in that area.
- 10 A subsidy from the *Metropole de Lyon* allows for provision of instruments.
- 11 See the official site of the French Republic <https://www.vie-publique.fr/fiches/20223-la-notion-de-service-public>
- 12 The *adaptability* (or *mutability*) principle means that “the public service must not stand still in the face of changes in society” (“*Le service public ne doit pas demeurer immobile face aux changements de la société*”, translated by Martin Galmiche).

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