



NEW DIRECTIONS IN MUSIC EDUCATION

New Directions in Music Education Conference: *Cultivating Creativity*

September 26–27, 2025

Michigan State University // East Lansing, MI

Call for Proposals

Cultivating creativity is, or should be, a central concern for music education. The 1999 Housewright Declaration included composing and improvising, alongside performing, listening, and interpreting notation, among the activities that broadly define “music making.” “Create” is one of the core artistic processes in the most recent set of National Standards. Numerous books and resources about teaching music composition, arranging, and improvisation have emerged in recent decades, pointing toward a music education praxis that centers students’ ability to create their own musical ideas. It is becoming a cliché to observe that, with the growth in smartphone technology, individuals have a world of music and media creation tools at their fingertips. The dawn of artificial intelligence tools has raised new questions about the nature of knowledge, generativity, and authorship—and arguably compels artists to defend creativity as a fundamentally human capacity and need.

Music education scholar Randall Everett Allsup, in his book *Remixing the Classroom: Toward an Open Philosophy of Music Education* (2016), pointed to a “vision of music education” that “permits endless permutations” of composition and creativity: “composing new music with our students; composing contingent standards of performance; composing in heterogeneous groups or collectives; taking as a right the freedom to link with others, in queer combinations...composing new ways of cherishing the old...new ways of making traditions come alive, and living in counterpoint with past achievements. We will compose new forms of teaching and learning, too” (Allsup, 2016, p. 34).

The 2025 New Directions in Music Education Conference focuses on “compos[ing] new forms of teaching and learning,” especially through the cultivation of creativity, in all the ways Allsup imagined and more. We seek presentations that explore creativity in music education across age levels and settings. We invite submissions from across the spectrum of inquiry that pursue questions including, but not limited to,

- What role does creativity play in what it means to be musically educated in our time?
- What does research tell us about creativity and the creative process, and how can those insights inform classroom practice?
- How can an emphasis on creativity, and the curricular possibilities that entails, open the doors of music education to more musics and musicians?
- How can music education environments traditionally focused on performance, such as large ensembles, become richer sites for the development of student creativity?
- What new curricular possibilities exist for centering creativity in the music classroom, and how can teachers bring these possibilities to life in their schools or other settings?

- What role do music teacher educators play in fostering creativity among preservice teachers and their future students?
- How can teachers, administrators, and policymakers be creative in imagining and implementing new, contemporary visions of music education?

Submissions may include, but are not limited to:

- Paper presentations: Individual paper presentations will be organized into sessions, related by topic area and assigned a discussant. (20 min.)
- Panels: Panels may be pre-constituted and include 3–4 individuals including a moderator, plus a possible discussant. (40 min.)
- Poster: Posters will display ongoing research, service, advocacy, or activism.
- Workshop: A facilitated activity involving one or more presenters. (50 min.)
- Facilitated discussion: Discussion with a set topic and a moderator. (50 min.)
- Musicking: Experiences/facilitations/performances that address the conference theme through a range of media, which may be live or pre-recorded. (50 min.)
- We also encourage participants to propose alternative presentation formats to those mentioned above.

Please submit your conference proposal, using the form at tinyurl.com/newdirections25, by **May 15, 2025**. All proposals should include an abstract of no more than 250 words. Panel proposals require an abstract describing both the panel and the individual papers. For discussions, describe how the time will be utilized and the topic facilitated. Workshop presenters should address methodology, pedagogy, and desired learning outcomes in their submission. Musicking proposals must connect their work to the conference theme and briefly describe the optimal setting for their work. We aim to send conference notifications by early July 2025.

All are welcome! Please contact Stuart Chapman Hill at hillstua@msu.edu for information on accessibility or to discuss any questions or concerns. We look forward to seeing you in East Lansing, MI in September 2025!



Michigan State Music Education Faculty

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