



**L-Università ta' Malta**  
**School of Performing Arts**

**11th Annual Conference of the School of Performing Arts, University of Malta**

***Participation, Engagement and Creativity in the Performing Arts***

**Dates: 5th, 6th & 7th March 2025**

**Venue: Valletta Campus, University of Malta**

**Submit proposals by: 1st November 2024**

The performing arts serve as a powerful medium for participation and engagement, and play an important role in social and everyday life, despite the challenges facing them. Meanwhile, such values have informed recent cultural policy, such as in the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (published 2022) which noted the role of cultural institutions in 'strengthening integration and community engagement'. And yet, how we understand participation in performance in the present and historically, and what it means for the performing arts to 'engage' a diverse demographic in inclusive ways, are pressing and complex issues that are currently being (re)considered and evaluated.

This conference seeks to bring together contributions - theoretical and practical, historical and current, in the performing arts (dance, theatre, music) and in related fields - in an interdisciplinary dialogue broadly themed around participatory practices in the performing arts, spectatorship and audience, and the dynamics of 'engagement' with communities, in education and in various civic and social spaces. Additionally, the conference will explore the challenges and opportunities that arise when various sectors of the performing arts meet in collaborative processes. We are particularly interested in discussions on how such broad participation can be further leveraged to deepen audience engagement and to enhance the overall impact of the performance.

Topics of interest include (but are not limited to):

- The value and role of participation in the performing arts
- The impact of audience/spectator engagement on performance creation
- Participation in community engagement projects involving the performing arts
- Participation in interdisciplinary performance collaborations
- The role of institutions in mediating, shaping, controlling participation
- Innovative methods of fostering participation and engagement in the performing arts
- Cultural policies of participation and engagement and their political and institutional dynamics

- Historical perspectives on participation and performance
- Pedagogical issues of participation and engagement in performing arts training and education
- Performing arts and participation in virtual and online media
- Concepts and modes of participation in world performing arts

Building on the success of previous SPA Annual Conferences that have featured both conventional papers and practical sessions, the 2025 Conference invites a range of presentation formats:

- Individual paper presentation (15-20 mins + Q&A)
- Pre-organised panel (3 to 4 participants, 90 mins)
- Practice-based presentation/ Workshop (30 mins/ 60 mins/ 90 mins)
- Short film/ documentary/ screendance

We also welcome and encourage proposals from Masters students and Doctoral candidates.

There is a strong possibility of a publication linked to the conference.

Please submit your presentation proposal to the conference e-mail address

<[spaconference@um.edu.mt](mailto:spaconference@um.edu.mt)> \*by Friday 1st November 2024\* in a single document (preferably in PDF) including the following information:

- First name and surname (for each presenter)
- Institutional affiliation(s) (if any)
- Contact e-mail address (for each presenter)
- Title of presentation
- Type/format of presentation (one of the above options)
- Abstract (250-300 words)
- Brief biography (100 words per presenter)

For a film submission, please also include a link via Google Doc, WeTransfer, Vimeo, or YouTube.

Please submit your proposals, and any inquiries, to the conference e-mail address:

<[spaconference@um.edu.mt](mailto:spaconference@um.edu.mt)>

Conference conveners:

Prof. Philip Ciantar

Dr. Jeremy Coleman