

Heliosfero Policy Plan 2025-2027

Stichting Heliosfero

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Stichting Heliosfero is a Cultural ANBI

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Introduction

Heliosfero is an experimental ensemble and academy. Comprised of a diverse range of professional musicians, Heliosfero offers historically informed performance practice and applies this to the entire canon of classical music repertoire. The musicians of Heliosfero also research and perform each work as closely as possible to how it would have been originally performed, at times using historical instruments or custom-made and entirely new instruments, depending on each composition. All members are renowned professional performers and teachers. What unites them is a passion for performing in ways that connect with new audiences and share the love of the music they perform.

The name Heliosfero comes from the word 'heliosphere', the sun sphere of our solar system. It is also the furthest distance that music has travelled from Earth. Both Voyager probes have transported several world-famous terrestrial pieces of music, which are also part of Heliosfero's repertoire, through space. The name reflects Heliosfero's ambition to travel as far as possible to bring the beauty of Western classical music to everyone. The ensemble also curates fully interactive performances that incorporate visual art, historical performance practices, and scientific and theoretical concepts.

The driving force of Heliosfero is finding new and historical ways to expand the reach, inclusivity, popularity, and accessibility of Western classical music from the 16th to the 21st century to diverse audiences. Heliosfero carries out research and performances but also offers masterclasses, lectures, and publications. Whether Heliosfero is performing in a café or at the Royal Concertgebouw, giving face-to-face private lessons, or introducing a group of interested young people on another continent to the Baroque violin via Zoom, our musicians approach every performance and every lesson with the same passion while consistently meeting the highest musical standards.

Mission

The mission of the foundation is to support Heliosfero in its efforts to share European classical music with broad audiences of all ages while pushing musical standards of Western classical music in the 21st century. This includes (but is not restricted to) organizing concerts, residencies, workshops and funding applications.

Foundation and board

Legal form: Stichting Heliosfero, based in The Hague, the Netherlands.

Board: W.F. (Willem) Korthals Altes (chair) [senior judge emeritus], K. (Kate) Huber (secretary) [Assistant Professor of Digital Art, Ecology, and Communication, Department of

Culture Studies, Tilburg University], M.S. (Menno) Polak (treasurer) [former curator of book history collections University of Amsterdam].

Governance: The board applies the Governance Code Cultuur, the Fair Practice Code, and the Diversity & Inclusion Code; compliance is reviewed annually.

Remuneration policy: Board members are unpaid and may claim expenses only. Artists and teachers are paid in line with Fair Practice principles and sectoral reference rates.

ANBI: The foundation holds Cultural ANBI status. On our website we publish the mission, activities, fundraising and reserves policy, remuneration policy, current activities, and annual financial statements.

Ensemble and Music Academy

Heliosfero functions as a musical workshop with a combination of an ensemble and an academy, under the artistic direction of violinist Rebecca Huber. Based in The Netherlands, Heliosfero strives for 'universal' reach by utilizing historical methods and repertoire and applying this today by embracing new technology and musical compositions. It also gives students all over the world the opportunity to study with the ensemble's musicians and focus on a performance practice-based methodology.

Heliosfero looks towards the past to reimagine classical music in the 21st century. Rebecca Huber is currently researching 19th century miscellaneous curation techniques which were used to democratize classical music for the appeal of broader audiences at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. Research by ensemble members (e.g., 19th-century creation techniques) informs project design, instrumentation choices, and contextual framing. Visual materials by the composer/visual artist accompany selected programs where artistically relevant.

Composer Janco Verduin is currently designing new visual artwork to go along with every concert program, connecting music to immersive visuals. With each program, Janco and Rebecca will curate a cohesive program that highlights various genres of music and highlight abstract concepts like string theory or deep time to demonstrate the way that music can expand the sense of space and time.

Ensemble

The ensemble performs for audiences in both traditional concert halls and more intimate settings such as public galleries, cafés, and private homes. To reach people who might not otherwise encounter our music, the ensemble also performs in unique locations such as asylum seeker centers, hospitals, schools, prisons, and industrial spaces.

Musicians

The following musicians are part of the Heliosfero core group. All of them play multiple historical variants of their main instrument:

- Rebecca Huber (artistic director)
- Orlando Aguilar Velazquez (percussion)
- Takako Kunugi (bassoon)
- Janco Verduin (composition)
- David Wish (violin, viola)
- Pietro Paganini (harpsichord, organ, piano)

Music Academy

Heliosfero also is an international academy for aspiring classical musicians. The academy aims to make the active practice of classical music accessible worldwide. The academy aims to support aspiring professional musicians in preparation for admission to a conservatory as well as semi-professionals, professionals and amateurs.

In addition to traditional on-site lessons, Heliosfero uses digital techniques where these can help to reach more people; for example, remote private lessons, masterclasses, lectures, and live-streamed performances. Taking advantage of digital technologies for remote teaching allows Heliosfero's academy to overcome obstacles such as limited mobility or distance.

The musicians teach lessons in various languages, including Dutch, English, and Spanish. If lessons in another language are desired, our network can usually provide a solution.

If tuition fees are an issue, we support students in finding suitable scholarships and/or our own funds.

Digital and Media integration

Another important component of the ensemble is its social media presence and ability to make its performances accessible to audiences all over the world. The ensemble is currently working on several recording projects and regularly releases content on *YouTube* and *Spotify* to allow international audiences to enjoy the music the ensemble performs.

Target groups

We distinguish between our main target groups:

- concert audiences at ensemble performances
- students and listeners at the academy

Within these two groups, we focus further on the following target audiences:

Concerts

- C1. Existing, paying classical audience in traditional concert venues
- C2. Existing, paying audience in small, (semi)private venues
- C3. New, often 'accidental' and non-paying audience in 'outreach venues'

Academy

A1. Students preparing for admission to conservatories in the Netherlands or elsewhere under the guidance of local teachers

A2. Students preparing for admission to conservatories who are relying on online lessons

A3. Other amateur or semi-professional students with serious ambitions (paying)

Planning 2025-2027

Heliosfero connects audiences and musicians by reimagining the traditional concert experience and exploring new ways of connecting with 21st century audiences.

2025

- Restructure the ensemble and the board
- several members will perform duo concerts around the Netherlands in small venues
- August: string trio concert by Rebecca in a collaboration between Tisseurs de Sons
- October: residency and a short academy in Letigny, France
- Autumn: start of posting regular content to attract new students on social media

2026

- Organize online workshops run by members of Heliosfero
- Spring: application for funding tour in The Netherlands
- Several concerts in the US and Mexico
- Two summer academies in France: one week with amateur musicians and the other with conservatory students
- Restart performances at Domus Valuas locations

Key Performance Indicators:

- To carry out three projects per year, with more than two concerts per project (not including outreach and educational workshops)
- Perform each project/program at least twice at an outreach location, such as an asylum seekers' center or community center
- The concerts offer at least five different musicians a stage each year for an acceptable fee
- Starting in 2025, the academy will organize individual lessons for at least ten students per year and will help at least ten other students find a suitable teacher for live or online lessons
- From 2026 the academy will offer at least five lectures or webinars per year, followed by a masterclass for musicians interested in the instrument or subject in question.
- The academy offers teachers a reasonable payment for at least 10 lessons

Retrospect 2022-2025

Heliosfero spent the past few years forging new relationships with collaborators, including Stichting Vrolijkheid, Domus Valuas, Huismuziek, Tisseurs de Sons, Huis Midwoud, Modelo62 and several composers including new resident composer, Janco Verduin. During this time, the ensemble redefined its goals and branding, specifically by featuring new music on all of their concerts and introducing regular video art in all of their performances. The academy also started advertising for new students, holding the first Heliosfero Summer Academy in France, and offering workshops at AZC Amersfoort, at the AMA Academy in Mexico City and with Huismuziek in The Netherlands. The ensemble also hosted the Virtual Stage collaborators for the joint Erasmus grant in Rotterdam and finalized the collaboration in a concert and workshop in Florence, Italy.

Domus Valuas

Heliosfero worked with Domus Valuas in a series of concerts for solo instruments and duets throughout 2023 and 2024. This was a collaboration where the musicians of Heliosfero could try out new repertoire, and the audiences were able to hear music performed at an extremely high level. Unfortunately, the collaboration was put on hold in 2024 due to financial restraints from Domus Valuas, but the ensemble hopes to start performing in the nursing homes again in 2026.

Dag in de Branding

In 2024, Heliosfero collaborated with Modelo 62 and Guzman Calzada Llorente on two new works for baroque instruments mixed with modern instruments and electronics. In the first performance in February 2024 at Amare Den Haag, three musicians from Heliosfero performed with electronics. In the second performance, modern instruments and a visual display were integrated at a performance in the Regentes Theater, The Hague.

Mexican concerts with AMA

In 2024, two Heliosfero musicians traveled to Mexico to give a series of workshops and performances. Orlando Aguilar Velazquez gave a workshop on polyrhythms to the percussion students in the national university. Rebecca Huber performed a solo recital, taught private lessons to students from the National University of Mexico, and conducted an all-Handel program with orchestra and choir in three different venues in Mexico City.

Summer Academy

In June 2024, Heliosfero hosted its first summer academy for six students in Letigny, France. This was the first collaboration with Jean-Marie Gardette, who has an artist residency through his association Tisseurs de Sons. For one week, the students worked on a program of dances by Praetorius, a string quartet by Phillip Glass, and several classical works. There were two performances at the end of the week in a wood factory and a 13th century church. Plans are currently being developed for the next academy.

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Time Travelers

In October 2024, Heliosfero performed in Helmond as part of the Lambertus concert series. This was the first performance that Heliosfero used to try out miscellaneous programming ideas from the 19th century with a program featuring an eclectic amount of repertoire on a combination of old and new instruments. Janco Verduin also collaborated with Orlando Aguilar Velazquez on both a new instrument and a video synced to the composition for solo percussion.

Palindromes and Polyrhythms

In July 2025, Heliosfero performed at the formal music night at the Bridges math conference at the Eindhoven University of Technology. This program was a combination of Renaissance canons and repertoire with irregular meters mixed with complex rhythmical works from the 20th and 21st centuries. In this performance, Heliosfero's resident composer Janco Verduin designed video art to go with the entire program and created a moving painting with use of AI.

Digital & Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategy in this Policy Plan focuses on Heliosfero as a whole. Separate communication plans will be drawn up for the planned projects, including the Academy.

Objectives & cadence

- Publish high-quality documentation that extends access and supports audience development and education.
- Cadence: ≥ 1 release per quarter (performance video, short clip, or livestream); project-based campaigns tied to premieres and outreach.

Outputs & technical standards

- Formats: video 1080p/4K, 25 fps; audio 48 kHz; online loudness -14 LUFS (music: platform-appropriate).
- Deliverables: performance videos, selected livestreams, session recordings for the Academy, short social excerpts, stills.
- Accessibility: 100% captioned videos; readable subtitles (.srt), clear thumbnails/titles; ALT text for images.

Rights, privacy & consent

- Permissions: composer/publisher, neighboring rights, venue agreements; no third-party recordings reused.
- AVG/GDPR: privacy notice; consent signage at filmed events.

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Distribution & community

- Channels: website hub; *YouTube* primary; mailing list.
- Editorial: plain-language descriptions; consistent tags; cards/end screens to related content.
- Community: moderated comments; simple participation prompts; cross-posting with partners.

Measurement & reporting

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): ≥8 published videos/year; ≥4 livestreams/year (rights permitting); 100% caption rate; average view-through ≥30%; mailing-list growth ≥15% YoY; outreach view counts reported separately.
- Review: quarterly analytics summary to board; lessons fed back into programming.

Workflow & roles

- Roles: producer (planning/clearances), technical lead (capture/edit), accessibility lead (captions/ALT), privacy lead (consents/retention).
- Pipeline: pre-clearance → capture → edit/QC → captions/metadata → rights check → publish → archive.

Archiving & IP

- Masters: lossless audio + ProRes/PNG sequences where relevant; metadata (BUMA, credits).

Risk & contingency

- Livestream fallback to record-and-upload; backup audio recorder; alternate assets for venues without projection.

Budget & resourcing

- Line items per project: filming/edit, captions, graphics/thumbnails, rights admin, storage. *fair practice* rates apply.

Finances

The current situation of the Heliosfero foundation is healthy and self-sustaining to cover operational and administration cost for five years. However, we are dependent on external subsidies to finance new projects.

In conclusion

Heliosfero is currently in a phase in which its strengths and weaknesses can be summarized as follows:

- Strengths: keep HIP-across-centuries; digital capability; international network.
- Weaknesses: capacity constraints; travel/logistics; admin load.
- Opportunities: partnerships (AZC's, schools, Higher Education Institutions), cross-disciplinary programming, band-like brand.
- Threats: funding volatility; rights/licensing for streams; illness/absence; venue availability.

November 2025