

VOICE (Vision On Innovation for Choral Music in Europe)

Press release by Sonja Greiner, European Choral Association

We are happy to report that the European Union has decided to support the multiannual cooperation project 'VOICE – Vision On Innovation for Choral music in Europe' under its Culture Programme. VOICE is a European project for the sustainable development and innovation of choral singing, a first-time major cooperation between choral operators, music educators and researchers, coordinated by the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat (Germany) in cooperation with Chorverband Österreich (Austria), Expertisecentrum Stem (Belgium), Koor&Stem (Belgium), Epilogi (Cyprus), UCPS (Czech Republic), A Coeur Joie (France), Polyfollia (France), Moviment Coral Català and the Mediterranean Office for Choral Singing (Spain), KÓTA and the Central-Eastern European Centre (Hungary), the Pécs Cultural Centre (Hungary), FENIARCO (Italy), Länsmusiken with the Swedish International Choral Centre Örebro (Sweden) and the University of York (UK), as well as many other associate partners.

VOICE is one of 14 multiannual cooperation projects selected by the European Union among 54 applications submitted in October 2011. It will run from June 2012 to May 2015 and has a total budget of almost 2.4 million EUR, with a subsidy from the European Union of almost 1.2 million EUR.

The aims of VOICE are to encourage new events and methods and the creation of innovative repertoire, promote the voice as universal instrument, improve the quality of vocal music, enable transnational mobility and circulation of (young) musicians and choral works, enhance the dialogue between

cultures and generations as well as the exchange of expertise and develop new tools for the promotion of singing in music education. VOICE will invest in research on the voice in partnership with universities and collect data on choral life in Europe. The 14 partners will spread the results to develop a new vision on choral singing in Europe.

Activities of VOICE from 2012 to 2014 through which these aims shall be reached include a major

choral festival in Italy, an urban youth choir festival in Sweden, singing as a tool for reconciliation in

Cyprus, two sessions of the Eurochoir for young singers in Czech Republic and Hungary, training

courses and seminars for conductors and managers in France, Italy and Sweden, a conference on

Mediterranean Music in Spain, a symposium on singing and music education in Hungary, a vocal training

programme for teachers and a cooperation programme with the world of education in Belgium, research

programmes on the growth of young people in relation to their singing voice and on vocal health of

amateur singers, coordinated from Belgium and the United Kingdom, an international collection of lullabies and databases on choral life, and voice-training and conductors' training in Europe.

More information can be found on:

www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/voice and in the following issues of *ECmagazine*.