

Proposal for the Future Organization of MEI

The current MEI Council has been extremely important to the success of MEI, and we gratefully thank the current Council for its dedication and support over the last years. However, the Council currently acts as an advisory board, and governs MEI only very loosely. With the recent denial of funding by the NEH and DFG, which financed all Council meetings, it is necessary to rethink the current organizational structure of MEI. The intention behind this is not to discourage participation in MEI, but to clarify structures and increase efficiency. MEI's success to this point is based on the community behind it, and the community shall always define the scope, shape and structure of MEI. As we propose a new organization, we trust that this basic principle will be perpetuated.

MEI Council – Community Leadership and Governance

We propose a new MEI Council consisting of six representatives from the MEI Community. The members will represent various sub-communities (librarians, editors, publishers, etc.) and should include a mix of "technicians" and "non-technicians". It is the Council's responsibility to

- select a venue for an annual meeting,
- organize MEI conferences and other events,
- act as a contact point for all things related to MEI, and
- budget the financial resources of the MEI Association.

The Council will hold a meeting every three months and will meet in person at least once annually. Depending on the availability of funding, Council members may be refunded for their travel costs for this meeting. The Council sets the general direction for the future development of MEI and works with the Technical Team to achieve the desired goals. The MEI Council is responsible for the preparation and publication of MEI releases, but it may delegate this work to the Technical Team. It also prepares and runs the annual Council elections. The decision-making process of the Council should rely on consensus rather than majority rule whenever possible. For every Council meeting, an agenda shall be published online prior to the meeting and minutes of the meeting shall be provided in a timely manner following the meeting.

Council Elections

After initial elections (discussed below), each of the six Council members will be elected for a term of three years, and two Council members will be re-elected every year. Elections shall be announced on MEI-L three months prior to the annual meeting of the community and the election will be conducted during the two-week period immediately preceding the annual meeting. Anyone who is a member of the MEI community (that is, anyone subscribed to MEI-L) may vote. Preparation for and execution of elections is the responsibility of the Council Members with a continuing term.

Candidates for election may be nominated by others or may self-nominate. Each candidate must provide a letter of intent containing a personal introduction and description of his/her qualifications for the office. These statements will be made available online two months prior to the annual meeting.

For the initial elections, we suggest elections for two seats with a two-year term, two with a three-year term, and two with a four-year term. This procedure will provide stability during the setup of this structure.

Technical Team

Reporting to the Council, the Technical Team is an informal, volunteer group responsible for all the technical details of MEI development. When necessary, the members of the Team may solicit additional technical assistance from outside the Team without prior approval from the Council. Team members may also serve elected roles in the Council.

MEI Meetings and Conferences

Each year there will be one official meeting open to the entire MEI community. This may take place in conjunction with a conference of another organization (DH, TEI, IMS, MLA, etc.) or during a conference created and run by the MEI Council. The Council will decide on the venue and announce it at least six months in advance. When feasible, the venues for the annual meeting should alternate between Europe, North America, and other appropriate locations. In case of meetings held at existing conferences, the Council will organize a session during the official program which acts as an official assembly of the community.

MEI Membership

There will be no membership fees for individual members of the MEI Community. Membership is expressed by subscribing to the MEI-L mailing list. However, in order to generate an income for MEI that helps to finance Council meetings and other travel costs, an institutional membership is available. Any institution that grants MEI an annual fee of \$5000 will be designated an "MEI sponsor". The logos of sponsoring organizations will appear on the first page of every MEI publication and on the starting page at <http://music-encoding.org>. Other forms of commitment, such as staff time or administrative support, may substitute for a monetary contribution.

MEI Association

Instead of or in addition to administrative support provided by sponsoring organizations, it may be desirable to create a separate MEI Association to address the financial and legal concerns of the MEI Council and Technical Team. This association should only take care of the book-keeping, it should not decide on the budget. Membership in the Association should neither be required nor beneficial for anyone. The details of setting up this part of the organization are not yet clear, so any advice regarding suitable international legal forms etc. is greatly appreciated.