



UAX Memorandum of Understanding

Between:

Party one

European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), legally represented by Executive Director Maria Hansen, hereinafter referred to as 'ELIA',

and

Party two

Luhansk State Academy of Culture and Arts, represented by Mykola Yudov, Interim Rector, hereinafter referred to as 'LDAKM',

all parties collectively hereinafter referred to as the 'Parties'.

Objective:

The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish a framework for cooperation between the Parties under the umbrella of ELIA's UAX Platform 2.0 (UAX 2.0) in the period 2026–2028.

UAX 2.0 builds on the initial emergency response phase of the UAX Platform (2022–2025) and moves toward long-term resilience, capacity development, and equitable international partnerships between Ukrainian and international higher arts education institutions, as well as stronger links with the wider cultural and creative sectors.

This MOU sets out the intentions of the Parties to collaborate in good faith in support of the aims of UAX 2.0, and to contribute to the strengthening of peer-to-peer relationships, knowledge exchange, mentoring, community-development, and other activities relevant to the UAX 2.0 and its related initiatives during the period 2026–2028.

Background:

The UAX Platform was launched by ELIA in 2022 with support from the Abakanowicz Arts and Culture Charitable Foundation (AACCF) to respond to the urgent needs of Ukrainian higher arts education during wartime. Since its establishment, the UAX Platform has evolved into an international network of cooperation, connecting Ukrainian institutions with European and other international partners through solidarity, exchange, advocacy, and institutional collaboration.

For the period 2026–2028, the UAX 2.0 enters a new phase, referred to as UAX 2.0. This new phase continues core UAX community activities and introduces a broader framework of capacity-building

and networking. UAx 2.0 is supported through continued AACCF funding and complemented by UAxEU, a related project financed by the European Union's Creative Europe programme.

UAx 2.0 is built around the understanding that arts and culture education are key drivers of societal recovery, resilience, and democratic renewal in Ukraine. It therefore seeks to contribute to the strengthening of Ukrainian higher arts education and the wider cultural ecosystem by addressing urgent and future skills needs, creating sustainable opportunities for students and professionals, and fostering long-term collaboration between Ukrainian and European institutions.

UAx 2.0 focuses on two overarching objectives and related sub-objectives:

Capacity Building Objective 1: Expand Cross-Sectoral Capacity-Building Programmes for Ukrainian Higher Arts Education and Cultural Sector

This objective includes, among others:

- addressing urgent and future skills needs in the Ukrainian cultural sector;
- benchmarking Ukrainian standards for art and cultural education with European standards;
- embedding social cohesion and conflict sensitivity in cultural practices;
- enhancing transversal capacities in Ukrainian cultural institutions, including in areas such as cultural leadership, fundraising, digitalisation, and trauma-informed practice;
- providing opportunities for emerging and established cultural professionals and artists through mentorships, fellowships, internships, and student projects;
- strengthening professional frameworks and building expertise in cultural heritage protection, restoration, and museum-related professions.

Networking Objective 2: Strengthen Peer-to-Peer Collaboration and International Networking

This objective includes, among others:

- continuing to facilitate Ukraine's integration into European cultural and educational networks;
- strengthening sustainable partnerships between Ukrainian and European cultural and educational actors;
- supporting peer-learning, exchange, and collaborative reflection among institutions;
- encouraging dissemination, advocacy, and visibility of outcomes generated through the UAx 2.0 and related activities.

The Parties acknowledge that UAx 2.0 includes both the continuation of earlier UAx activities, such as the sister school network, mentorship, fellowships, ELIA event participation, and community meetings, as well as newly introduced activities under UAxEU, including training programmes, internships, consultations, certificate programmes, policy engagement, and thematic cooperation across sectors.

Considering that:

The Parties recognise that

1. ELIA is an international membership network of nearly 300 higher arts education institutions, dedicated to promoting higher arts education, international exchange, knowledge-sharing, and solidarity among arts institutions;
2. the UAx Platform was initiated by ELIA in response to the urgent needs of Ukrainian higher arts education institutions following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and has grown into a broader platform for international institutional cooperation, exchange, and advocacy;
3. the current phase of the UAx 2.0 for 2026–2028 builds on earlier work, relationships, and lessons developed since 2022, while moving from emergency response toward longer-term resilience and sustainable partnership-building;
4. the LDKM is participating in the UAx 2.0 as part of the wider network of Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian institutions, and wishes to contribute actively to the aims of UAx 2.0 through engagement in community, mentoring, student fellowships, exchange, and other relevant activities;
5. ELIA has received support from the AACCF to continue sustaining core elements of the UAx community, including student fellowships, mentoring, and the Sister School network, and that additional support from Creative Europe through UAxEU enables expanded activities in the field of capacity-building and international networking;
6. the UAx Sister School model is based on the principle of reciprocal exchange, mutual institutional learning, solidarity, and the creation of sustainable professional relationships between Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian partner institutions;
7. ELIA values the commitment demonstrated by participating institutions in strengthening the UAx 2.0 community and in contributing to the development of long-term partnerships that support Ukrainian higher arts education and its wider ecosystem;
8. the Parties recognise the mutual benefits of participating in the UAx 2.0 and wish to formalise their collaboration regarding participation in UAx 2.0 through this MOU.

It is agreed that:

General frameworks of cooperation

1. ELIA, with support from the AACCF and in complementarity with the Creative Europe-funded UAxEU project, will coordinate the UAx 2.0 through designated team and governance structures, including the UAx 2.0 management and relevant advisory and steering bodies.
2. ELIA will remain responsible for the overall strategic coordination, communication, facilitation, and implementation support of the UAx 2.0, including the continuation of the UAx Sister School network and associated community activities.
3. ELIA will facilitate communication and collaboration between itself and participating LDKM, and will support coordination through regular updates, invitations, information-sharing, and where relevant, consultation on planned activities.
4. ELIA will maintain and further develop the digital and organisational infrastructure of the UAx 2.0 to enable exchange and participation by the wider UAx community. This may include

- online meeting formats, communication channels, dissemination tools, and other mechanisms necessary for community engagement.
5. ELIA will continue to communicate about the UAx 2.0 and its activities through its online presence, institutional channels, events, publications, and other public-facing formats, while respecting the visibility preferences and capacities of participating institutions.
 6. Under ELIA's leadership, the UAx 2.0 will continue to benefit from advisory and strategic input from relevant governance structures and partners, including those linked to UAxEU, in order to strengthen its implementation, visibility, and sustainability.
 7. LDKM agrees to contribute to the overall aims of the UAx 2.0 through active participation, exchange of knowledge and expertise, and engagement in agreed activities, within the scope of its institutional capacities and in line with the voluntary and collaborative nature of this MOU.
 8. The Parties acknowledge that participation in activities related to UAxEU is optional and based on relevance, interest, timing, and institutional capacity, while a set of core activities related to the Sister School model and wider UAx community require a basic level of commitment.
 9. ELIA will monitor and evaluate UAx 2.0 activities during the 2026–2028 period for the purposes of reporting, learning, reflection, advocacy, and future legacy planning. The Parties agree to support such monitoring and evaluation through feedback, exchange, and institutional reflection where appropriate.
 10. The working language of the UAx 2.0 and the UAx community is primarily English, with translations available in Ukrainian for the Ukrainian audience.

Regarding Sister School Commitments and Community Participation

1. The Parties reaffirm that the Sister School model remains a core component of UAx 2.0 and that the participation of the LDKM is intended to foster sustained peer-to-peer exchange, mutual support, and long-term institutional cooperation.
2. LDKM commits to maintaining communication with its European sister school and to supporting reciprocal exchange between the institutions throughout the period 2026–2028.
3. LDKM commits to participating, to a reasonable extent, in the bi-monthly UAx community meetings organised by ELIA in order to remain connected to the wider UAx community and to support ongoing cooperation.
4. LDKM commits to participating in four UAx Days during the 2026–2028 period, where feasible, and to engaging in these events as an opportunity for reflection, knowledge exchange, collaborative planning, and visibility of the Sister School partnership.
5. LDKM commits to contributing together with European and international partners where relevant for UAx Days, knowledge exchange events, trainings, peer-learning activities, or other relevant programme components.
6. The Parties acknowledge that the exact format, intensity, and thematic focus of the Sister School collaboration may evolve over time in response to needs, capacities, and opportunities, and may be further shaped through direct communication between the paired institutions in coordination with ELIA.

7. ELIA may invite LDKM to contribute to broader consultations, roadmaps, and thematic discussions relevant to UAxEU, including but not limited to skills development, benchmarking, social cohesion, arts and health, and professional standards. Participation in such activities is optional but encouraged where relevant and feasible.

Regarding the Student Fellowship and Mentoring Programme

1. Through the AACCF grant, ELIA will coordinate and announce the annual cycles of the UAx Student Fellowship and Mentorship Programme for the period 2026–2028.
2. The UAx Student Fellowship and Mentorship Programme will include three interconnected components: UAx bursaries, UAx mentoring and participation of students in relevant UAx community activities and events.
3. The bursaries will be awarded annually, typically during the summer period, to selected students enrolled in Ukrainian higher arts education institutions participating in the UAx 2.0. The purpose of the bursaries is to provide limited financial support to help students continue their studies in Ukraine.
4. Students selected under the fellowship programme from LDKM will be referred to as Abakanowicz Fellows.
5. LDKM commits to disseminating the student open call within its institution and provide students with the relevant information supplied by the UAx Bureau, in the framework of its participation in the UAx 2.0.
6. The selection of fellows will be coordinated by ELIA through transparent procedures and criteria developed for the programme, in consultation with relevant Ukrainian institutions and in accordance with the available funding framework.
7. The Parties acknowledge that the goal of the mentoring programme is to support reciprocal exchange of knowledge and experience, international exposure, reflection, encouragement, and professional development opportunities for participants.
8. The mentoring programme will renew each year, with new 30 fellows selected or confirmed for each annual cycle.
9. The specific modalities of mentoring, including matching procedures, frequency of meetings, thematic focus, duration, responsibilities, and preferred communication formats, may be further determined in coordination between ELIA, the participating mentors, and the relevant institutions.

Regarding Participation in ELIA UAx Events

1. UAx will organise and facilitate a range of events and exchange opportunities during the period 2026–2028, including but not limited to:
 - a. bi-monthly UAx community meetings;
 - b. at least four UAx Days;
 - c. participation in ELIA signature events;
 - d. peer-learning and consultation activities;
 - e. selected UAxEU trainings, workshops, and thematic meetings.

2. The planning of physical UAx Days will, where possible, be aligned with larger ELIA signature events to maximise opportunities for exchange and reduce duplication of travel and organisational efforts.
3. The UAx Bureau, with the support of the UAx community Working Group, will organise meetings of UAx community members every two months and the UAx Days;
4. UAx Day is a one-day community event that takes place one day prior to the start of ELIA signature conference. ELIA signature events during the 2026–2028 period will include, among others:
 - a. ELIA Biennial Conference, Zwolle, the Netherlands, November 2026;
 - b. ELIA Academy, Norwich, United Kingdom, spring 2027;
 - c. ELIA Leadership Symposium, TBD, 2027
 - d. ELIA Biennial Conference, TBD, 2028
 - e. and, where relevant, events organised in collaboration with UAxEU partners.
5. LDKM is encouraged to facilitate the participation of at least one representative in the UAx bi-monthly online meetings and four UAx Days aligned with the above-mentioned ELIA signature events.

Regarding Resources and Funding

1. ELIA will make an in-kind contribution to the UAx 2.0 through the allocation of staff time, expertise, infrastructure, communication support, and organisational resources.
2. LDKM acknowledges and agrees to contribute its expertise, staff time, and institutional engagement as an in-kind contribution to the UAx 2.0 over the period 2026–2028. This may include academic, artistic, administrative, and coordination person-hours dedicated to agreed UAx-related activities.
3. LDKM commits, where possible, to enabling relevant staff members, including institutional contact persons, to take part in online and physical UAx activities as part of the institution's contribution to the partnership.
4. LDKM is encouraged to support one staff member to travel internationally for selected UAx Days between 2026–2028.
5. UAx 2.0 will provide financial support for the international travel and participation of one representative from LDKM to attend UAx Day and ELIA signature event during the period 2026–2028.
6. The use of additional local, national, institutional, or international funding sources outside the framework of the UAx 2.0 is encouraged where appropriate to support the collaboration of between sister schools.

Regarding Monitoring, Reflection, and Dissemination

1. The Parties acknowledge the importance of institutional reflection, documentation, and learning as part of UAx 2.0.
2. LDKM agrees, where feasible, to share feedback, institutional insights, and reflections that may support project monitoring, evaluation, dissemination, and the further development of the UAx model.

3. LDKM may also support dissemination of relevant project outcomes, reports, guidelines, or reflections through its own institutional communication channels and professional networks, particularly where such dissemination contributes to visibility and policy learning at the European and Ukrainian level.
4. ELIA may use anonymised or attributed examples, testimonials, reflections, and institutional experiences generated through UAx activities for the purposes of communication, evaluation, advocacy, reporting, and legacy planning, subject to prior consultation where appropriate.

Regarding the Period of Agreement and Practical Arrangements

1. This MOU will come into effect on the date of its signing and will remain in force until 31 December 2028, unless extended, replaced, or terminated earlier by mutual understanding or written notice.
2. Any extension or substantial revision of this MOU shall be subject to written agreement by the Parties.
3. Any disputes arising from or in connection with this MOU shall be resolved amicably through dialogue, negotiation, and consultation between the Parties.
4. LDKM commits to appointing at least one institutional contact person for communication and coordination within the UAx 2.0.
5. Either Party may terminate this MOU by providing written notice to the other Party if circumstances arise that make it impossible, impractical, or no longer appropriate to continue the cooperative activities outlined in this MOU.
6. This MOU does not create legally binding obligations between the Parties. It is intended to serve as a framework for collaboration, mutual commitment, and partnership within the context of the UAx 2.0.

Signatures

European League of Institutes of the Arts
Maria Hansen, Executive Director

Date: 9 June 2026

Signature _____

Luhansk State Academy of Culture and Arts
Mykola Yudov, Interim Rector

Date: 13.04.2026

Signature _____

