



**2022 - 2023
ANNUAL REPORT**

25th anniversary

LEGATO
European Association of LGBTQ+ Choirs

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Dear Singers and LGBTQ+ / Queer Choirs of Europe

As the excitement and music of the Bologna Various Voices Festival still resonates in our hearts we want to express our thanks to Nicola, Team Bologna, all the volunteers and people of Bologna for their warm welcome and immensely memorable festival experience. Your board remains committed to serve, support you all, along with all LGBTQ+ queer people across Europe. As the war continues in Ukraine, the needs of queer refugees, those fleeing the war and all affected by Russian oppression are ever present. We have continued to promote donations to Munich Kiev Queer through our website, meeting the direct needs of our family directly on the ground in Ukraine and those dispersed across Europe.

We are increasingly concerned that our human rights and hard-won queer rights remain under attack in many countries across the world. We need to be vigilant, to take action to protect and promote equal rights for all.

The Board wants to expand the diversity of our membership, to better reflect our communities and to build our ability to deliver our **Singing for Equality** programmes and projects. The Legato Leadership College to "Be the Best that you can be", will take place in Brussels in 2024. The college will be a unique opportunity for LGBTQ+ choir leaders, the music directors, managers and aspiring leaders to learn, network and acquire knowledge together.

We invite you to consider board service and assist the board by volunteering to join **Team Legato**. We need your energy and enthusiasm to build a better tomorrow for all.

Email us today to share how we can build a stronger vision for Legato in Europe.

This Annual Report outlines our work, achievements and challenges. Our Various Voices experts have continued to support the Various Voices Team Bologna and Team Brussels with their planning for Festival 2026, The "Rendezvous Brussels" will be on the 14th to 16th June 2024 in Brussel to get a glimpse of the festival plan. We have launched the bid to find a host for the **2030 Various Voices Festival**, having reviewed all the bid documents and support guidance for bidders.

We continue to welcome new choirs to our family and cooperate with our partner LGBTQ+ choirs associations, through the Global Alliance of Queer Choirs. Having a worldwide perspective offers opportunities to learn and cooperate to support singers in Africa, South America and Asia as well as in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe. We continue to foster cooperation and partnerships with Europe based groups and organisations like ILGA (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association) and ECA (European Choral Association)

Thank you for continuing to place your trust in us and we invite you to become more engaged and volunteer to join the Board or Team Legato. Our visionary plan for the next 20 years Singing for Equality is ambitious and we invite you to join Team Legato to help us, working with your board on our exciting and challenging future together to bring a Queer / LGBTQ+ choir opportunity to every city and town across Europe within 20 years.

Your president

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Brophy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Martin Brophy MBE (he/him)

LEGATO Board



Martin Brophy
President
London



Martin Gerrits
Secretary
Munich



Alice Simone
Member
Turin



Olha Rubtsova
Member
Munich/Odessa



Misza Czerniak
Member
Warsaw



Hsien Chew
Member
London



Juancho Almenara Robles
Member
Madrid

Team LEGATO

Dominik K. Jakob
Treasurer
Düsseldorf

Martin Kaufman
Fundraising Advisor
London

Richard Mohr
Auditor
Hamburg

Francesco Gallio
Team Membership
London

Theo Wieldraaijer
Team Membership
Groningen

Financial Report 2022

Asset report

Income		EUR	Current Assets		EUR
	MEMBERSHIP	4.110,00		BANK ACCOUNT	22.189,22
	OTHER INCOME	0,63		ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	30.000,00
	TOTAL INCOME	4.110,63		TOTAL ASSETS	52.189,22
Expenses			Liabilities		
	BANK FEES	10,20		LIABILITIES	0,00
	PAYPAL FEES	26,18		TOTAL LIABILITIES	0,00
	NOTARY	32,13			
	INTERNET	280,80			
	TRAVEL	1.644,28			
	MEETINGS	4,107,28			
	OTHER COSTS	113,70			
	TOTAL EXPENSES	6.214,57			
Income minus expenses		-2.103,94			

Auditor's Report

**Statement of the auditor for the Legato General Membership Meeting
on October 7th, 2023**

As auditor I have checked the documents of the Legato accounts. The documents show Legato`s correct status of the financial situation with a total balance of 52.189,22 EUR on December 31st, 2022. The Amount of 30.000,00 EUR was given as a loan for the next Various Voices 2026 to the organizers in Brussels. So the bank account balance on December 31st, 2022 was 22.189,22 EUR.

I have seen all documents for the year 2022 and checked their correct assignment.

I am convinced that the accounts of Legato are reliable managed by Dominik Jacob and do recommend the discharge of the board for the year 2022.

Hamburg, September 28th, 2023

Richard Mohr

Legato-Auditor

Budget for coming year 2024

Income		EUR
	MEMBERSHIP	3.500,00
	OTHER INCOME	1.250,00
	TOTAL INCOME	4.750,00
Expenses		
	BANK FEES	10,00
	PAYPAL FEES	30,00
	NOTARY	100,00
	INTERNET	400,00
	TRAVEL	800,00
	TRAINING / SUPPORT	3.000,00
	TOTAL EXPENSES	4.340,00
Income minus expenses		410,00

Our work, achievements and challenges

Member services - supporting you to grow in numbers, and effectiveness

We are always building out our learning and sharing website resources with articles and submissions for you and inviting experts or professional contributions.

During the Bologna Festival we created the Legato Lounge and organised a series of getting to know you events:

Legato Welcome Reception - Over 100 Music & Artistic Directors, Choir Presidents & Chairs, Managers & choirs Leadership Teams from across Europe and beyond, to meet the Legato Board and members of Team Legato.

Legato Choirs Speed Dating - "see where the sparks fly" a room full of wonderful people seeking their perfect choral match. In these moments, they exchange contact information, and a promise to continue their musical journey together beyond the event.

Choral Rush - "There's gold in them thar hills!" A virtual expedition of Europe to discover more about the situation of choirs in different countries. The Choral Rush game, to learn new skills and share your expertise through fun scenarios.

Team Legato - "Enjoying the Festival Vibe and want more?" - Legato Choirs are more than just Various Voices, and we are more than the sum of our individual choirs. We want more people to have the same chance to know how great joining our family of singers can be. Meeting new friends to talk about potential skills sharing, attending future events and simply connecting with like-minded individuals: an opportunity to find your place in the Legato family.

Our first **Legato Leadership College** will be a full day on Friday 14th June 2024, 9am to 5pm in Brussels. The Brussels Rendezvous kicks off on the evening of Friday 14th to Sunday 16 June 2024. The motto of the college is "Be the best that you can be", reflecting our commitment to excellence, diversity, and inclusion in choral music. Whether you are a conductor, a board member, a vocal coach or a choir manager, you will find something valuable and inspiring in our program.

We will invite session submissions from renowned experts and practitioners to share their insights and experiences with you. You will also have the chance to meet and exchange ideas with fellow choir leaders from across Europe. We aim to empower you with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to lead your choir to new heights of artistic and social impact.

Join us for this exciting and enriching journey and discover how you can be the best that you can!

Membership Team - staying in touch with you

We continue to reach out to welcome our new choirs to offer support and share the experience and value of Legato Choirs membership, sharing our online resources. Keeping our records up to date and communicating to ensure your membership donation is current.

Connecting with members that we do not connect with so regularly. Introducing choirs to our services and offering support through our members' services and website resources.

We are proud about our new members since the last AGM in October 2022:

- Queer Chor Hannover, Germany
- 4 Non Straights, Warsaw, Poland
- Amsterdam Gay Men's Chorus, The Netherlands
- Spreediven, Berlin, Germany
- SinCoro, Rome, Italy
- Proud Mary, Chester, UK
- Steel City Men's Chorus, Birmingham, Alabama, USA

We've lost the following choirs:

- Zuckerschnitten, Münster, Germany
- Aqueerious, Gießen/Marburg, Germany
- HERRENmitDAMEN, Cologne, Germany
- DonnAcappella, Frankfurt am Main, Germany
- Leineperlen, Hannover, Germany

We currently have 140 regular and supporting members from 21 countries with 142 choirs and sub ensembles, 3 music ensembles (2 orchestras, 1 big band), 1 regional choir association (Cromatica Italy). 5,500 singers and musicians are represented in our choirs and ensembles. 49 are tenor/bass ensembles, 22 are soprano/alto and 71 soprano/alto/tenor/bass. Check our website for more.

Various Voices Team - creating singing opportunities for you

We supported Team Bologna with offers of help and guidance. Promoting the Legato Choirs' Support policy to enable all of our members to have the opportunity to benefit from the life-changing experience of our festivals, which validates us as people, enjoying music and having fun together. Making memories and creating unforgettable unique experiences that touch many hearts, change minds and challenge perceptions through the power of singing, music and performance.

We are encouraging Team Bologna to build their festival legacy with festival assessments with data from the feedback from choirs and attendees to continue to listen, learn and grow.

We hope the festival was a financial success and we can use the second payment of the Various Voices License Fee to support projects like the Leadership College in Brussels next June.

Our focus will now be on the next festival in 3 years, supporting Team Brussels to deliver the 2026 Various Voices Festival. "Rendezvous Brussels" to have a taster of the Festival experience that is in store for us will be on the 14th to 16th June 2024, looking at the venues and to have a glimpse of what Team Brussels are planning for us.

We have refreshed the Various Voices Festival bidding process and the support documents to ensure we get the best host for the 2030 Festival. To create a festival in a sustainable and equitable manner, that is fair, transparent and supportive for all stakeholders. Merit based decision-making that offers the best experience for hosts, their partners, our members, allies, supporters and all stakeholders. Learning from each experience, listening to you to improve as we grow. We have developed Access and Inclusion Guidance, which could be a useful tool for all choirs, event and concert organisers.

Communications - Listening, sharing and engaging

Your comms team shares our work and engages with you to share your work, ideas and creativity. Through our website blog, social media and regular newsletters and updates. To share our exciting news, to console when things are not so good and continue to build awareness of who we are and what we do. We aim to connect directly to singers as well as choirs by offering individual newsletter sign-up. We have been improving our members records with an annual review of contact data by you as part of the membership dues payment process. This will ensure we connect with the current leadership team for your choir.

You can still view "Winter Melody - Our Virtual Choir Celebration of the Season". We are always looking for exciting and creative ways to engage and showcase what you do, building our audiences and sharing our performance across the globe. Be a part of the new virtual world with Legato Choirs making our planet beautiful with song.

Governance / Finance - accountability and transparency

The revised Articles of Association have made us ready to meet the challenges of a virtually connected world, so we remain relevant and ready to service you better.

We look after your money to fund our services to you and the board reviews the budget and accounts carefully to protect the investment of your subscriptions. Preparing accounts and arranging an audit as well as dealing with the regulatory authorities to make sure we remain legal and compliant.

Fundraising - "Singing for Equality"

Your board has been working with Martin Kaufman, Principal of 'Martin Kaufman Philanthropy', a highly respected fundraising consultant and Board Advisor to initiate and facilitate a collective process to develop our fundraising Case for Support.

The board has engaged in several fundraising workshops in order to develop our Case for Support- a working document that explains why we all deserve funding and what we will do with those funds. The result - the "Singing for Equality" Campaign. It will form the basis not just of a future Fundraising Strategy, but also of our marketing materials for fundraising.

You can read the document on our website and we are keen to engage with you, your contacts to help us to begin our fundraising challenge to fund our vision for the future

Please come to your **General Meeting 2023**

This year's annual Legato delegates meeting will be online so more of our members can join us.

Saturday, 7 October 2023, at 1 pm CET (Central European Time)

- by **Zoom** → for video-/audio-presentation
(please install the application on your device)
- and simultaneously **VotesUP** → for secured online voting
(browser-based and no additional application needed)

The access data for the two online systems will be sent to the registered persons three days before the event.

Important note: only registered persons can attend the meeting. So we kindly ask **all members** to register the voting delegate (one per member choir) and unlimited additional non-voting persons from regular, supporting members or further guests before midnight (CET) on **Monday, 2 October 2023**. If you need any advice please email:

board@legato-choirs.com.

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Formalities
 - a. Annual report of the board
 - b. Report of the auditor
 - c. Discussion and voting on the reports and discharge of the board
3. Various Voices Festivals
 - a. Details of the Feedback plan for Bologna 2023
 - b. Preview Brussels 2026: Report from and questions to team Brussels
 - c. Information about bidding for the festival 2030
4. Legato Leadership College Brussels on Friday 14 June 2024
5. Team Legato overview, who they are, what they do and how to join
6. Singing for Equality update
7. Board election: replacement is to be elected for one vacant position for the rest of the position term.
8. Any other business

After the General Meeting, there will be an open forum to talk and share.

Please note the board election:

unfortunately Misza Czerniak is resigning and we would like to thank him for this service and contribution to Legato, the Board and the Queer communities of Europe. A replacement is to be elected for the vacant position for the rest of the position term (2022-2024). We call on all interested persons from the member choirs to stand for election and to apply via the email address board@legato-choirs.com. The Board will also be happy to assist with any queries.

Information about the board's tasks can be found on our website:
<https://www.legato-choirs.com/board-job-outline>

Our future together

The Board would like to have conversations about our plans and hear your ideas and feedback about Singing for Equality and how you can help us to realise our vision. The Full Case for Support is available on our website. Have a read and get involved today. The programme is bold and ambitious but is full of great ideas that we will develop over the next 20 years, but first we need to focus on the next five years.

The fundraising is a challenge but with your help and support we are committed to giving you what you deserve and need. We want this work to make our community stronger, walking hand in hand into a future with song, dance and exciting music available to all.

We remain committed to our respect agenda with diversity, inclusion and equality as the foundation of all our work. We acknowledge that we can always do better and we recognise the world is an unequal place, but we will continue to strive for our rights and equality for all. Legato is your organisation and we have to reflect you in everything we do. Safe spaces for all, where all voices have equality, where difference is celebrated and where we welcome everyone into our world of music, growth and celebration. We support you telling your stories and building a fairer world for all.

Take our hands and join us as we step into the exciting reality of "Singing for Equality"

Your Legato Board



LGBTQ+ SINGING TOGETHER

