EL SISTEMA USA: What We Did

1. We Grew Together
   - We grew our member base by 83% in 2017-2018! We started with 60 members and we now have over 110+ El Sistema USA Members across 34 different states. Those 110+ members serve close to 20,000 students around the United States.
   - We created PRESTO (Program for Rising El Sistema Organizations) thanks to a 3-year $1 million investment in El Sistema USA from the Paul M. Angell Foundation. After a competitive application process, 13 El Sistema-inspired organizations were selected to be a part of the first PRESTO Cohort. Through consistent professional development and mentorship from leaders of El Sistema organizations, cohort members will receive support to make their programs strong and sustainable.
     - The PRESTO Cohort Members are:
       - Accent Pontiac – Bloomfield Hills, MI
       - Buffalo String Works – Buffalo, NY
       - Trenton Music Makers – Trenton, NJ
       - Charlotte Symphony Orchestra – Charlotte, NC
       - ComMUSIcation – St. Paul, MN
       - Empire State Youth Orchestra – Schenectady, NY
       - Harmony Project KC – Kansas City, MO
       - Harmony Project Tulsa – Tulsa, OK
       - Make Music NOLA – New Orleans, LA
       - Project Music – Stamford, CT
       - Riverside Arts Academy – Riverside, CA
       - Salty Cricket Composers Collective – Salt Lake City, UT
       - WHIN Music Community Charter School – New York, NY

2. We Made Music Together
   - Hundreds of students came together at Regional Seminarios, supported and coordinated by El Sistema USA. In total, the Stamford Seminario (Stamford, CT), Great Lakes El Sistema Seminario (Goshen, IN), The Archipelago Project: Music Leadership Academy & Performance Series (Traverse City, MI), and The Kennedy Citizen Artist Fellow Retreat (Washington, DC) gathered students from 8 different states and 16 different organizations to make music together.
   - In celebration of Leonard Bernstein’s 100th birthday, El Sistema USA members participated in the “Somewhere” project. Through an arrangement of “Somewhere”, gifted to El Sistema USA by Jamie Bernstein and supported by the Leonard Bernstein Office, over 15 El Sistema-inspired organizations across the nation performed this moving and unifying work with their students.

3. We Learned Together
   - Over 180+ Attendees from 60+ Member Organizations connected at the First Annual El Sistema USA National Symposium at Duke University in January 2018. Through over 20 different sessions, local site-visits, and discussions, attendees learned best practices, shared new ideas, and connected with their peers in the field.
   - Through our monthly webinar series, members interacted virtually to continue to learn more about topics ranging from Teaching Approaches, to Youth Learning & Leadership, to Diversity, Cultural Competency & Access. Webinars were presented by both El Sistema leaders and arts education professionals.
Mission

To support and grow a nationwide movement of programs inspired by Venezuela’s “El Sistema” to effect social change through music for children with the fewest resources and the greatest need.

Vision 2027

El Sistema USA supports El Sistema-inspired organizations to provide music education to underserved youth, developing the essential life skills and habits of mind they need to lead successful lives.

In 2027, El Sistema USA is...

✓ Driving El Sistema as a nationally recognized intervention for youth empowerment and development through music education in all settings that serve under-resourced youth, including schools, juvenile justice systems, foster care, and early-childhood programs.

✓ An alliance of 200 member organizations (up from 60), reflective of many music disciplines led by a majority of leaders representative of their communities.

✓ Serving 100,000 underserved children in El Sistema-inspired programs represented in every state, in rural and urban areas.

✓ A national advocate of music education as a tool for youth empowerment.

✓ A strong ally among local and national public education systems, public and private funders, and connected to political supporters of music education for all.

✓ Strongly connected to the broader global movement of El Sistema.

Core Values

✓ Equity – we believe all young people have the right to reach their full potential

✓ Empowerment – we are committed to helping member organizations fulfill their goals

✓ Excellence – we hold ourselves, our member organizations and our educational values to the highest standards; we strive for excellence in music and in our services to members

✓ Impact – we measure the impact of our work and constantly strive to improve

✓ Sustainability – we are committed to furthering our mission, to strengthening our movement and our member organizations

✓ Joy – we believe in strengthening the spirit in all that we do

✓ Community – we encourage collaboration and community building at all levels of organization

El Sistema USA Member Benefits

1. Annual National Learning and Research Events
2. Monthly Webinar Series
3. Quarterly Regional Workshops
4. Advocacy for Music Organizations through Partnerships
5. Technical Grants for Reinvestment in the Field and Future Programming
6. Evaluation and Research
7. Awareness Building and Online Resources
2019 El Sistema USA National Symposium, “360 Degrees of Excellence”

- From January 30-31, 2019, El Sistema educators, administrators, parents, and students will gather in Detroit, MI for the 2019 El Sistema USA National Symposium, “360 Degrees of Excellence”. Through presentations, discussions, site-visits, and more, the symposium will explore three main areas of focus:
  1. Teaching Excellence
  2. Connecting With and Engaging Your El Sistema Community
  3. Telling Your Story - Sustaining Your Program

- In partnership with the Sphinx Organization, attendees will have the chance to stay in Detroit and attend Sphinx Connect 2019 from January 31 - February 2.

The Canales Project

- We are partnering with The Canales Project, an organization dedicated to giving voice to issues of identity and culture through music. Through our partnership, El Sistema USA Members will have access to an arrangement of the composition “Hear Our Song”, designed for El Sistema USA members across the country.

Growing Our Member Base

- Continuing our growth from 2017-2018, we are growing our member base with El Sistema-inspired organizations from around the country. Through start-up kits and network development, we will support the growth of new programs, with a focus on communities in rural America.

Continued National Research

- In partnership with the Social Science Research Institute at Duke University, we will continue to engage in national research on behalf of El Sistema-inspired organizations. In addition to sharing our national impact as depicted by our Census, we will begin to look at the impact that family involvement has on student outcomes in organizations around the United States.

Monthly Webinar Series

- Our Monthly Webinar Series grows its audience each month. In 2018-2019, we are expanding to include leaders outside of the El Sistema community, while also growing on the work being done by leaders in the field.
The Results of our 2018 Member Census shows the growth of El Sistema USA!

The figures below are averages - based on 75 respondents from our 2017-2018 member base of 101.

Diversity of Classes Offered
On average, organizations offer 7 different classes with some offering as many as 10-12 offerings. The most common classes are: Instrumental Sectionals, String Ensemble, Orchestra, Individual Lessons, Choir, Wind Ensemble, and Leadership.

Growing Importance
Close to 60% of member organizations report that they serve students from school districts with no musical offerings.

Operating Budget Growth
In 2017-2018, the average operating budget for El Sistema USA member organizations grew from $250,000 to $440,000 and, on average, organizations invest more than half of their budget on program staff and teachers.

Here is a breakdown of different tiers of organizations within the membership:

**Tier A - $0 - $400,000**
72% of Respondents (50 organizations)
- Avg Budget - $149,000
- Avg Students Served - 120
- Avg Cost Per Student - $1,241

**Tier B - $400,001 - $1,000,000**
14% of Respondents (10 organizations)
- Avg Budget - $514,300
- Avg Students Served - 266
- Avg Cost Per Student - $1,933

**Tier C - $1,000,001 +**
14% of Respondents (10 respondents)
- Avg Budget - $2 million
- Avg Students Served - 1,000
- Avg Cost Per Student - $2,000
Words From Our Team

Katie Wyatt, Executive Director

The spirit of “Tocar y Luchar” is flourishing at El Sistema USA! We are thrilled by the surge and unification of the movement in the United States, and to be supporting and sustaining thriving, passionate communities. Through music, we are making great strides in closing the opportunity gap for children and their families, ensuring that all people have the opportunity to shine. By coming together for fellowship, networking and learning, we as a field of El Sistema inspired programs are nourishing our hearts and minds, all the while establishing best practices for the advancement of our students. The contributions of your ideas, energy, and precious time make this possible, and lifts all boats in a rising tide. Thank you for your service and support, and “tocar y luchar!”

Christine Taylor, El Sistema USA Board Chair & Director of Reach*Teach*Play Education Programs, Ravinia

What a phenomenal year of growth and development for El Sistema USA! In-depth research outcomes, a webinar series, our national symposium and PRESTO, are examples of the many resources we offered to our constituents. We are proud of these initiatives and even more thrilled with the many inspiring and creative projects emerging from our member organizations around the country. The children in all of our programs nationwide deserve the highest levels of artistic and social support. I’m honored to serve on the board with my colleagues who share this view and are passionate about supporting the 20,000 kids now benefiting from El Sistema in the United States. As board members, we are stewards of ESUSA and understand the tremendous responsibility we have to the El Sistema-inspired community. I am excited for the future of El Sistema-inspired programs all across the United States!

Josh deVries, Director of Membership & Communications

I am beyond thrilled to join the wonderful movement of El Sistema USA. My experience working with El Sistema-inspired programs as both a teacher and an administrator inspires me to do the best we can to support all of the amazing organizations in our membership. Each and every day I think about the excitement in a student’s eyes when they make their first sound, the feeling of family that exists in our programs, and the joy a student feels knowing they have improved on their instrument. Whether it’s bringing our members together for our National Symposium in Detroit, sharing an inspiring video from one of our members, or connecting members with each other, I look forward to what 2018-2019 brings for both our members and their 20,000+ students across the country!

Nikki Kirk, PRESTO Program Manager

As a strong proponent of the intersection of arts education and social change, I have been awed by the passion and enthusiasm with which El Sistema-inspired organizations address this in their programming. My work as the Program Manager for PRESTO has allowed me to witness first-hand the dedication El Sistema USA members and organizational leaders have to their students and their programs. PRESTO is comprised of early-stage member organizations that have displayed exemplary work, and I can attest that each of them is a true champion for the devotion and spirit they bring to this work! I am excited to see those organizations grow over the next 3 years of PRESTO, and hope they will inspire others interested in developing their own El Sistema-inspired programs!

Thank you for your support of El Sistema USA! Your support makes our movement possible!