**Input to inform** the Special Rapporteur’s 2023 report to the General Assembly

From Eric Booth, Co-Founder of [ITAC](https://www.itac-collaborative.com/). The International Teaching Artist Collaborative. [https://www.itac-collaborative.com/] Eric Booth: eeebbb@aol.com

**Main questions** (for all stakeholders)

1. *How are human rights generally integrated in your policies and programmes? Please indicate if human rights are mandatory considerations, at what stage of the programme they are integrated and if any, what kind of impact assessment and monitoring is done of their implementation.*

I respond as the Co-Founder of ITAC, the International Teaching Artist Collaborative, the world’s first network of artists who work in communities and schools. ITAC networks the extremely active global field, and funds projects and convenings.

Human rights are high value in the work of teaching artists. ITAC as an institution has official safeguarding, diversity and inclusion, anti-racism, and wellness policies, but the real human rights influence in our work is in the fierce belief that teaching artist work is human rights work. Empowering all people to activate and apply their birthright creativity and to guide it to address their needs and visions is the service work of this global community. We recently published an online curriculum, 20-25 hours, asynchronous, on [Teaching Artistry for Social Impact.](https://www.itac-collaborative.com/projects/teaching-artistry-for-social-impact) This course teaches best practices from leaders around the world, and has the participant design a social impact project of their own passion, using all the tools, to design a rich, grounded in good ethical practice and bold ambition for change. It is free for all to take. Hundreds registered in its first six months.

1. *Please provide examples of any programmes that contribute to the respect, protection and implementation of cultural rights, in particular:*
	* *The right to access and transmit creative expressions and knowledge, and to access the creativity and knowledge of others.* All ITAC commissioned projects lead with this right at their core. We have developed a network of teaching artists across Asia who have special expertise in creative work with people who have disabilities—this network is dedicated to advancing such practices across all Asian countries and building capacity and visibility across the region.
	* We have a working group gathering and sharing the best cultural/and racial equity practices in creative engagement around the world.
	* *The right to access to the benefits of science and its applications, including scientific knowledge, technology, and opportunities to contribute to the scientific enterprise;*
	* ITAC has commissioned teaching artists around the world to work with communities on creative engagement projects that address local [climate crisis](https://www.itac-collaborative.com/projects/itac-impact-climate) challenges—a few case studies [here](https://www.itac-collaborative.com/projects/teaching-artistry-for-social-impact-case-studies). We work with local scientists, and with these creative projects we change understandings, build hope that people can effectively make a difference, and build toward local policy changes. We have a Climate Collective of teaching artists who meet regularly to share best practice.
	* ITAC has also partnered with global opera superstar Joyce DiDonato on [EDEN Engagement](https://www.itac-collaborative.com/projects/eden-engagement). She has a world tour of top opera houses with her environmentally-themed EDEN, and ITAC commissions a teaching artist in every tour city to work with a local underserved youth population in creative workshops that address a local climate issue. They learn the science, they create their public response, and they practice as a chorus and perform with Joyce on the opera house stage. We are demonstrating that every “high art” tour could have a community component that benefits local communities that could never afford an expensive ticket.

**C. Additional questions for international, national and local civil society actors, including those involved in development programmes**

1. Does your organisation have a general commitment, strategy or policy on human rights?

ITAC’s very identity is our commitment to the creative birthright of all people. The identity of “the arts” tends to be associated with elite institutions, with celebrated masters, and traditions of excellence held by gatekeepers of elite values. ITAC, and the global workforce of teaching artists, is dedicated to activating the artistry of all people, and then guiding that human power toward positive impacts of many kinds. Creative expression is a human right, and teaching artists are its front line experts, defenders, advocates and champions—the one workforce who knows how to activate this potential in all people in all settings.

Teaching artist programs are almost invisible in the public consciousness and are badly underfunded, but work marvels in every country, even under this scarcity. Teaching artists are the sleeping giant of social change.

In every school where teaching artists are brought in, student engagement and achievement, including academic achievement, rises. In every refugee camp where teaching artists are able to build programs, morale of those living there and those in administrative roles rises. In every facility for older people where teaching artists can develop creative aging programs, prescription drug intake drops, hospital stays shorten, longevity and quality of life measures rise, staff morale and retention rises, and joy appears. The research on these claims is spotty, because no one funds serious research on these positive impacts that are unmistakable in anecdotal and correlative studies.