

Minutes NEMO Annual General Meeting 2025

Date: 7 October 2025 | **Time:** 11:00 – 12:15 CET

Format: Online

Number of participants: Representatives from 84 members and member organisations, including

17 Full members

16 Network members

27 individual members

3 Business members

1. Welcome and Annual Update

Petra Havu, NEMO Chair, welcomes the participants and introduces the Executive Board and explains the housekeeping rules. Petra then welcomes the other members of the Executive Board:

- Vice-Chair Vera Carasso, Dutch Museums Association
- Treasurer Paulina Florjanowicz, Polish National Institute for Museums
- Sylvia Willkomm, director of the German Museums Association
- Sergio Servellón, ICOM Belgium Flanders
- Zane Grīnvalde, Latvian Museums Association
- Sandro Debono, University of Malta

All members of the Executive Board briefly introduce themselves to the assembly.

Petra Havu presents **NEMO' updated [policy document](#) with a paragraph on the professional independence of museums**, included in the preamble as a fundamental precondition for museums' professional functioning and overall work.

She reports that NEMO has observed that pressure on museums has increased in the past year, particularly in increasingly polarized societies. In some cases, governments attempt to steer museums toward political agendas. In response, museums must strengthen their resilience against political influence. NEMO wanted to create a reference in its' policy to refer to in case of requests from members, external stakeholders, or media with regard to political interference in museums. The reference is based on existing and acknowledged professional standards and ethics, and international and European law.

In June 2025, the executive board agreed on a paragraph which Petra presents to the members:

Museums must operate within a framework of professional independence and responsibility to effectively fulfil their mission and societal role. This independence is protected by the rule of law and supported by publicly accessible policies, ensuring the freedom of cultural access, participation, and pluralism.

The Executive Board has also included a reference framework anchored in the following international and European instruments and documents:

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
- Treaty on European Union
- European Convention on Human Rights – Council of Europe
- Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) – Council of Europe
- Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society – UNESCO
- Museum Definition and Code of Ethics – ICOM

This updated policy aligns with other ongoing actions in the field. NEMO initiates dialogue across the sector to better understand the evolving landscape and mechanisms of political influence. NEMO is mapping developments across Europe and working closely with colleagues in member organisations to identify trends and risks. These efforts are also reflected in NEMO's analysis through the [NEMO Barometer on political influence on museums in Europe](#), and an associated scientific article, where NEMO takes a closer, data-informed look at how political influence manifests in museums.

Then, Petra reports about **NEMO's engagement in the SHIFT programme and the new sustainability policy that NEMO has adopted**: Since 2025, NEMO participates in the [SHIFT Eco-Guidelines for Environmental Sustainability](#), a framework developed by and for European cultural networks to help reduce the sector's carbon emissions. This strategic step reflects NEMO's commitment to environmental responsibility and aligns our operations with different SDGs.

Petra presents the [sustainability policy for NEMO](#), that outlines NEMO's commitment to reducing its environmental impact. It defines how NEMO will measure and improve our practices in travel, events, office operations, and communications. The policy will be reviewed annually and guides both NEMO's internal work and our collaborations. The policy is overseen by the Secretary General and Executive Board, implemented by a Green Team, and reviewed annually. All staff and members are responsible for upholding it. For NEMO, this means leading by example, empowering museums, and making sustainability a core part of our strategy and daily activities.

Petra Havu informs the members that the NEMO now has 173 [members](#) in 39 countries.

Petra hands over to Julia Pagel, NEMO Secretary General, who gives an update about NEMO's main activities in 2025, including ongoing projects.

Julia points out that members have received the AGM information pack in advance, that includes NEMO's activities 2025 and budget. All details about budget and activities are available on the AGM page www.ne-mo.org/agm2025.

Julia reports on highlights from the year, including an **annual update on NEMO's activities in 2025**

Julia announces that NEMO has secured new EU network funding through the Creative Europe Programme for the period 2025–2028, amounting to €300,000 per year.

Furthermore, Julia reports that in response to growing concerns about political pressures on museums, NEMO has launched a Barometer on political influence on museums, accompanied by a series of related activities:

- NEMO has been continuously engaging with European institutions and other stakeholders about the topic of political pressure.
- NEMO has raised concerns about the issue in conversations with the European Parliament and the European Commission, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and ICOM. These dialogues are essential to ensuring that the issue is recognised at the policy level.
- NEMO has joined forces with colleagues from other cultural fields—opera, theatre, visual arts—to build a stronger voice for culture in Europe, among others under the umbrella of Culture Action Europe- which has just delivered the issue together with recommendation to the EU Culture Commissioner Micallef this month.
- NEMO has conducted some research into existing legal instruments and professional standards to provide museums with a reference point when defending their independence.
- NEMO has also launched a dedicated page on its website, offering resources, information, guidance, and practical support for museums operating in politically challenging contexts. This will serve as a central hub for those seeking peer advice, legal references, and best practices. It's a living page, members are welcome to contribute with good practices, toolkits or anything in that matter.

Another highlight of NEMO's political engagement was the internship hosted at the BELvue Museum in Brussels with European Parliament CULTURE committee Chair Nela Riehl.

Julia then reports about the **capacity building activities** in 2025: NEMO has continued the 1-2-1 mentoring scheme for museum professionals, and NEMO has organised 2 trainings and 2 webinars, this year with a focus on mental health in well-being, and sustainability.

NEMO's 3 working groups have continued their work throughout the year, met for study visits, and will meet again for a dedicated workshop in Horsens during the European Museum Conference

Julia takes the opportunity to thank all working group leaders, Margherita Sani from Italy for the LEM working group, Elīna Vikmane from Latvia for the Digital Transformation working group, and Chryssa Bourbou from Greece for the Sustainability and Climate Action working group for their dedication as working groups leaders in the last year.

Julia points out NEMO's current involvement in two **EU funded projects** (EU Horizon Europe, the research and innovation programme of the EU):

The [ECHOES](#) project, which is establishing a European cultural heritage collaborative cloud, to bring digital cultural heritage into the cloud and make it usable for the heritage sector.

The [Towched](#) project aims to support heritage and cultural collections to drive inclusive lifelong learning, grounded in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. As a partner, NEMO contributes by mobilising museums and museum professionals across Europe to help develop practical tools and capacity-building to bring education for sustainable development into heritage practices

The **overview of the 2025 budget and the forecast for the 2026 budget** is presented by Treasurer Paulina Florjanowicz, who highlights key income sources and expenditures of NEMO. The budget is available on this page www.ne-mo.org/agm2025

Petra Havu asks the members if they have questions concerning the budget and/or NEMO activities. There are no questions from the members.

2. Presentation of candidate and elections to the NEMO Executive Board

Petra introduces Margherita Sani, who leads the elections. She explains that one seat is open, as Petra Havu is ending her first term on the NEMO executive board and that she is standing for re-election to a second term.

As she is the only candidate for this election, NEMO proposes to have a simplified election (voting "yes", "no", or with an "abstention"). Members agree with the suggested procedure.

Margherita asks Petra to present herself and the candidacy to the members.

Rebecca Thonander explains the voting procedure. Then, members are invited to vote.

Eligible for voting are representatives of:

- 17 Full members (10 votes per member)
- 16 Network members (3 votes per member)
- 27 individual members (1 vote per member)

Members vote. The election results are: **Petra Havu is re-elected with 244 “yes” votes and 1 abstention.**

Petra Havu thanks everyone for their confidence and looks forward to continuing the work on the NEMO Executive Board and as a chair.

3. Sneak Peek at NEMO’s European Museum Conference 2025 and Member’s Forum

Julia Pagel gives a brief preview of the European Museum Conference 2025 titled “Who cares? Museums, wellbeing, and resilience,” that takes place 26–28 October 2025 in Horsens, Denmark. Over three days NEMO explores how museums can actively support mental health, social connection, healing, and community resilience — with inspiring case studies, cross-sector partnerships, and sessions on youth wellbeing, staff self-care, and museum-as-therapeutic-space strategies.

Hanna Belz invites the members to join the on-site Member’s Forum that will take place on Sunday, 26 November 2025. The 90-minute session is about connecting, exchanging ideas, and getting in tune with this year’s conference theme (Mental) Health and Wellbeing.

4. Open Questions and Conclusion

Petra Havu opens the floor for questions and answers. There are no questions from the audience. She thanks the assembly for their time and participation and ends the meeting. The AGM ends at 12:15 CET.

Minutes by Julia Pagel
on behalf of the NEMO Executive Board
Berlin, 22.10.2025