

# SCIENCE AND VOCATION

Online journal of  
Pető András Faculty of  
Semmelweis University

Issue 1  
2025



# Science and Vocation

*Editor*

Renáta Földesi, Andrea Benyovszky  
István Kollega Tarsoly

Issue 1, 2025

Pető András Faculty of  
Semmelweis University

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## Foreword

On behalf of the Editorial Board, welcome to the launch of Science and Vocation 2025/1's special edition!

The inspiration for this issue is the first "International Conductor Day" Zoom conference, which was held on November 29, 2024, with great success.

The meeting aimed to strengthen the ties of the conductive pedagogy community, whether through professional standards, inter-institutional cooperation, current issues affecting our profession, or simply the legitimate need for professional dialogue. Jumping over time-zone barriers, the over ten-hour program provided an opportunity to engage in extraordinary discourse from all over the world.

The turnout surpassed all our expectations, with 58% of the more than 200 registrants being colleagues holding a conductive education degree, 20% being students, and 22% comprising allied professionals and staff who support or assist in conductive education. In terms of nationality, 53% of the participants were Hungarian, and 47% were from other nationalities, representing 19 countries. Thirty-seven speakers from 14 countries and four continents shared their experiences, successes, and challenges in implementing conductive pedagogy.

We gained insight into the professional careers and work of conductors working abroad, revisiting common professional foundations and pinpointing areas for potential collaboration.

This abstract volume is one of the first manifestations of the cooperation that has begun, aiming to revive the professional situation outlined by the speakers. It aims to compile information institutions, small professional communities, and individual initiatives, thereby serving as a database to facilitate further contact between participants. We hope that our initiative will become a tradition, providing an opportunity for years to come to exchange ideas, good practices, and experiences in the field of conductive pedagogy and bring new topics into the dialogue.

We hope these abstracts will be helpful and inspire representatives of the conductive world to organize future meetings with the same openness as the first one, characterized by mutual respect, active listening, and a willingness to understand each other.

Andrea Benyovszky and Renáta Földesi  
Editors





## **Welcome Speech**

Dear Conductor Colleagues and Guests,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the International Conductor Day, which we are organizing for the first time in this format. We hope to establish a tradition, and that from now on we can hold this event annually as a companion event to Pető Day.

I believe we are trying to address a long-standing need, as over the past ten years we have received numerous requests from Hungary and other countries around the world. Conductor colleagues expressed a desire to share their daily work experiences, questions, results, and challenges within a professional community of peers.

Given that conductors have established themselves, their careers, and in many cases, their lives in all corners of the world, organizing this event was not easy, especially due to time zone differences. The online format has been a great help, allowing us to come together simultaneously. We have tried to address the time zone issue by creating blocks in the schedule. Participants can join and leave the program at any time, which I believe is a significant advantage for successful participation.

I wish all presenters and participants a fruitful professional day. I hope we can share new information, experiences, and solutions with each other. I now declare the program of the professional day open.

Finally, I would like to draw the attention of all my colleagues with a conductive education diploma to the International Conductor Alumni Conference, which will be held in Budapest on June 21–22, 2025. Registration is now open. Further information is available on the faculty's website, Facebook page, and the dean's LinkedIn profile.

Dr. Andrea Zsebe

Dean of András Pető Faculty

## Opening Speech

Welcome everyone to the International Conductor Day!

As Vice-Rector of Semmelweis University, I represent the foreign language programs of Semmelweis University, which is the leading health education university in Central and Eastern Europe.

Our university offers a wide range of programs in Hungarian, German, and English through our faculties: the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Dentistry, the Faculty of Health Sciences – which offers more than 10 programs in English – the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, and last but not least, the host of today's event, the András Pető Faculty.

All the leaders of our faculties agree that the program of Conductive Education is extraordinary. It's not just a scientific discipline, but also the heart of our university. I am – personally always touched when I visit the András Pető Faculty, as even the faces of the colleagues working there are somewhat different. They have smiles on their faces and an upbeat spirit.

It's no secret that Semmelweis University was very happy when it welcomed the Pető András College as part of our already powerful Central European university in 2017. I also believe that the Pető András Faculty gained new possibilities to extend its program throughout the world.

The International Conductors Day is a great example, as we have participants from many continents, countries, and time zones. This also proves that many countries around the world need the Pető method, as it truly gives motor-disabled children a chance to improve themselves, to integrate into society, and to have a better life. And not just for the affected person, but their whole family. This is why the Pető method always has a big impression on us at the university.

This is one of the reasons why I am curious, along with my colleagues, to learn how Conductive Education has been introduced in different countries and how it has helped people in need.

So, let me wish you a wonderful event today, and I hope we can meet again at similar programs in the future!

Dr. Alán Alpár

Vice-Rector for International Studies

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION AT SAHK IN HONG KONG

**Presenter: Luca Sara Antoni** – Consultant and Lecturer – SAHK, Hong Kong

Luca Antoni is a psychologist and conductor-teacher. She obtained her master's degree in psychology, specializing in clinical and health psychology. After graduating, she lived and worked in Sweden, gaining extensive experience working with children and adults. During the 2022-2023 school year, she worked as a professor assistant at the Pető András Faculty of Semmelweis University, in Budapest. In 2023, she relocated to Hong Kong, where she works as a conductive education consultant and lecturer at SAHK.

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### **Abstract:**

SAHK (formerly the Spastics Association of Hong Kong) is a leading non-governmental organization in Hong Kong, founded in 1963, that provides through training comprehensive rehabilitation, education, employment, and residential services for people with disabilities across their lifespan. Its mission is to promote personal development and community (re)integration of children and adults living with developmental or acquired neurological impairments. SAHK offers a wide range of services, including (1) special preschool and family support; (2) special education; (3) sheltered employment, day activity, and adult residential; and (4) community rehabilitation and support and end-of-life care; enabling individuals to lead fulfilled, engaged, and participative lives.

Conductive education was introduced to SAHK in the 1980s, aiming to provide a person-centered and holistic integrated therapy-and-education approach for individuals with motor and other neurological dysfunctions". Over the years, SAHK has successfully integrated this method into its service model and framework, focusing on children and adults with conditions like cerebral palsy, autism, stroke, spinal cord injuries, etc. Conductive education at SAHK emphasizes the development of the whole person, addressing not only motor but also cognitive, psychological, and social aspects. This holistic approach has empowered countless individuals to enhance their independence, expand their participation in real life, and improve their personally satisfying quality of life.

I am a conductor-teacher and psychologist. I joined SAHK Institute of Rehabilitation Practice about a year ago, where I work as a consultant and instructor in Conductive Education, closely collaborating with the multidisciplinary therapists and preschool teachers of the Jockey Club Marion Fang Conductive Learning Centre of SAHK, and with the Association's leadership to further developing its CE programmes. Our main goal is to deepen the implementation of conductive pedagogy, focusing on task series, goal setting and formulation, as well as daily routine establishment. As an instructor, I'm developing a foundation course series on CE for all SAHK professional grade staff, ranging from teaching, healthcare, to welfare, introducing history, principles, and unique practice of conductive pedagogy. In addition, topical lectures for various focus areas had been given to the core team to further enhance the effectiveness in their programme delivery.

Based on my professional qualifications and experiences, in my speech I will talk about how we can further refine, apply, and extend conductive pedagogy in different settings and clientele of SAHK, with differential focuses, among its 4 core services, on practising goal-directed task-specific training in individual and group formats, goal setting and mapping CE-related goals with WHO's ICF codes, and the formulation of daily routines with bridging-to-home using advanced technology. I will also discuss the topical lecture and practicum series to be developed in the near future for both in-house staff of SAHK and external practitioners in the field, with an ultimate aim to advocate CE outside the Association and to the Greater Bay Area.

## ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

### Representing the UK:

**Dr. Melanie Brown:** Senior Conductor; consultancy and adults – The National Institute of CE (NICE), Birmingham

Mel was one of the first UK teachers to go to Hungary to train as a conductor in 1987. She qualified in January 1992 and has worked at NICE throughout her career. She specialised in adult work and completed her PhD on CE and Parkinson's. She has also been the CEO of NICE. Currently she works part-time and runs sessions for people with Parkinson's.

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<https://conductive-education.org.uk/>

**Dr. Theresa Kinnersley:** Senior Conductor; Training – The Conductive College (NICE), Birmingham

Theresa qualified as a conductor in 2005, remaining at NICE to work with adults until 2012 when she began teaching student conductors on the UG course. In her PhD she explored perceptions of expertise held by conductors. This culminated in the construction of a tool to facilitate professional development. She is now involved only in post-graduate training and the delivery of Continuing Professional Development.

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<https://conductive-education.org.uk/>

**Jules McDonald:** Senior Conductor; Founder of Connections Neuro-Disability Services (private company)

Jules completed her conductor training in 2004 at NICE with Wolverhampton University. She worked for a charity in the Northwest of the UK for 15 years before founding her own Private CE Services – Connections. She works independently with individuals of a wide range of ages and abilities in their homes providing 1:1 CE. She also runs MS and Stroke groups in the community and provides consultancy, advice and hands-on support in a special-educational school setting. Jules has also been part of the undergraduate training team at the Conductive College (NICE) for 3 years.

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<https://connectionsneuroservices.co.uk/>

**Lizzie Bell:** Senior Conductor: Deputy Head teacher: Paces School for Conductive Education, Sheffield.

Lizzie qualified as a Conductor-Teacher in 2002 having trained at Keele University. She then began her career at Ingfield Manor School in West Sussex. Lizzie stayed at Ingfield for 17 years working as a teacher-conductor across the primary and secondary age groups, as well as being a member of SLT. From Ingfield, Lizzie moved to Sheffield to take on the Deputy Head role and to teach in the Early Years department at Paces School for Conductive Education.

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<https://www.pacesschool.org.uk/>

Speakers gave an overview of their centres and services to demonstrate the wide range of CE provision in the UK.

### **Overview of CE in the UK**

CE first moved formally to the UK in the late 1980's (however had been around from the 1960s via a physiotherapist called Esther Cotton who communicated with András Pető). In the 1980's there were collaborative agreements between the Pető Institute and The Spastics Society (now Scope) and The Foundation for Conductive Education (now NICE) in the UK to train British students/teachers in Hungary. This continued until the early 1990's when training moved to Keele University and the University of Wolverhampton. BA Hons training to gain qualified conductor status is now only run in collaboration with NICE and Birmingham City University in the UK.

Initially many of the CE centres set up in the UK were parent driven. Parents who had taken their children to Hungary and on their return set up centres locally to where they lived. At this time there was a large movement of qualified conductors from Hungary to the UK. Since 2001 the UK have also been providing conductors trained in the UK. Currently student conductors are taught and practise alongside a range of conductors across many centres in the UK.

Over the years the UK has worked hard to provide standards of practise and to preserve CE whilst making it accessible to as many families as possible. Currently there are over 30–35 centres/provisions across the country and an estimated 100 qualified conductors.

CE is provided for children and adults. The majority of centres provide only for children but there are a few who also offer adult services. Each centre will have a unique provision in relation to their session length, staffing and funding. These are generally found on their websites.

### **Structure of CE provision**

CE is provided across early years, education, health and private services. Each provider has a slightly different model depending on their funding and the manner in which they were set up.

**Charitable/voluntary sector:** these centres generally receive very little external funding for services and need to fundraise individually to run their services. This is done through grants, community events and individual supporters. Some centres may charge fees to the families for their services but these are usually a small proportion of the full cost. Some charities also include a CE school which will be funded via Local Authority funding. These centres will frequently employ fundraisers to help achieve their financial goals.

**Local Authority funding:** children with disabilities are entitled to an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP). This is used to identify need and also the best provision to meet these needs. Some CE centres also run CE schools which can be funded via the EHCP process. This means that the local authority (government) pay for the provision and the child usually attends fulltime or part-time school. Parents and conductors frequently have to 'fight' for CE provision, and it may even mean a legal case to enable them to access a CE school for their child, as opposed to attending a generic

special or mainstream school. In CE schools conductors have to integrate and teach the National Curriculum (set by the government) as part of their provision. They will also be inspected on how they do this by government officials (OfSTED).

**Private:** conductors work alone or in teams to provide private CE services. Fees are generally charged to the individual to cover the cost. Services may be centre based or take place in an individual's home.

There are ways of larger centres offering services across all funding streams, but the majority have one main income stream from the above.

### **Staffing CE provision in the UK:**

Centres and provisions are staffed differently according to need. There is a huge shortage of qualified conductors in the UK and that is currently challenging many centres who have families wanting services. Centres/provisions often run with a range of professionals within the team.

We have:

Sole conductors working alone

Conductor only teams

Conductor and conductor assistant teams

Conductor and other professionals (physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapist, teachers etc.). We refer collectively to these as multi-disciplinary teams.

Centres may have 1 conductor or up to 17+ depending on the size and type or provision and the set up of the service.

All children and adults attending CE services will have access to a range of other professionals either through the CE service or outside of this via their school or health provision. Conductors work alongside a range of professionals. Equally the profession of 'conductor' is not formally recognised in our education, health and social care systems.

### **Who receives CE in the UK**

Alongside the more traditional diagnosis of cerebral palsy in childhood the UK has an increasing number of children with complex genetical and chromosomal conditions. General feeling is that the complexity of those attending CE has increased over the decades and conductors have had to adapt their provision to accommodate this.

In adulthood typically conductors work with those with cerebral palsy, stroke, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis and acquired head injury although other diagnosis may also be included.

### **Session types:**

This will vary across the country. Some sessions are 45 minutes – 1 hour on an individual basis. The majority of provision however is in groups lasting anything from 1 hour to a full day. Generally young children (pre-school) and adults will typically attend for 1.5 – 2hr sessions.

### **What holds CE together in the UK**

Conductors across the UK have worked hard to ensure that there is collaboration and co-operation between different providers. This resulted in the setting up of **The Pro-**

**Professional Conductor Association UK (PCA).** PCA is a voluntary body where conductors pay an annual membership fee to register. This membership is used to run the website, an annual workshop for conductors and support an annual CE conference.

PCA writes publications to support and guide conductors and is seen as an important part of unifying CE across the UK. Committee members are all qualified conductors who are voted in by members.

<https://pca-ce.org/>

### **Training and formal qualifications in CE in the UK:**

The Conductive College is an integral part of NICE and works closely with other centres nationally and internationally to meet training needs. We have a range of accredited courses delivered by conductors to help promote CE within the UK.

**Level 3 Conductor Assistant** – this is accredited by a national body called AIM. It is taught by conductors across the UK who have completed specific training to deliver and monitored by NICE and AIM.

**Level 4 – Higher Level Conductor Assistant** – this is accredited by a national body called AIM. This is taught by NICE and practice elements take place at the CE centre where the student works. This course is equivalent to year 1 of the BA Hons so on qualification the student is able to lead a CE task series with distant supervision from a conductor.

**BA Hons Conductive Education with Qualified Conductor Status.** This is a dual qualification – academic and professional – and is the main conductor training route. Due to UK regulations and funding it is a 3 year full-time course. The academic material is all taught by the Conductive College conductors and practice may take place at any recognised CE centre. Practiced Tutors (conductors with 5 or more years experience and completed a course) are appointed to support, teach and mentor the student in their practice.

**Multidisciplinary Conductor** – this is a professional qualification awarded by The Conductive College. All practical competencies are equivalent to the BA Hons and enable the person, on qualification, to lead sessions as a qualified conductor. The student must have an existing degree and be a part of a CE centre. They are usually employed by that centre in their original profession and develop their skills to work as a conductor. This has been delivered in Sweden, Finland, Canada, Australia and the USA as well as in the UK. Practice tutors are appointed and the centre is accredited as a training base.

**MA (masters)** – we have had a named MA in CE but currently this forms a part of a wider MA in Education.

There are a number of conductors who have continued with doctorate level studies in the field of Conductive Education and some who also have taken part in wider research projects.

**Continuing Professional Development (CPD).** The Conductive College run CPD sessions (online) for conductors in the UK and wider afield. PCA also host annual workshops and conferences to help promote further development for conductors across the UK. A requirement of joining PCA and becoming a registered conductor is to undertake 25 hrs minimum professional development each year.



**Conductive Education Journal:** The Conductive College also publishes a journal for those working in CE. This helps to promote written work in the field.

### **Summary**

CE in the UK faces many of the same challenges as other countries – funding, recruitment to conductor posts and recognition by other professionals. Equally it has continued to thrive and develop and we now have a strong link between CE providers which has helped us to have a national profile for CE.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

### 1. "WHAT'S UP DOWN UNDER?"

**Presenter: Shona Ballantyne** – Teacher/Conductor – Carson Street School – Perth, Australia

Shona Ballantyne is a passionate educator with 39 years of teaching experience. She gained a Diploma in Primary Education 1985 then worked in the Primary sector before training at the András Pető Institute, Hungary, graduating with a Diploma in Conductive Education in 1993. Shona worked in two Conductive Education establishments in the UK, during which time she undertook a Post Graduate Diploma in Support for Learning.

Shona has shared her expertise through workshops, study days and conferences worldwide as well as providing training for parents, professionals, colleagues and students. She helped develop Conductive Education in Finland and Sweden.

In 2009 Shona began working in the CE programme at Carson Street School, Western Australia. Since then, she has become the Deputy Principal, set up the High School programme, and collaborated with NICE to deliver the first Multi-Disciplinary Conductor training in the southern hemisphere. Her goal is to see CE being available in Western Australia for every student with a physical disability who wishes to access it.

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**Presenter: Eszter Agocs** – Teacher/Conductor, Developmental Educator – Future Footprints – Adelaide, Australia

Eszter Agocs is an experienced Conductor-teacher, having graduated from the Pető Institute in Hungary in 2004. With a passion for working with children, Eszter has gained international experience, including roles in the USA and Kuwait, before settling in Australia. In 2006, she joined the South Australian Education Department, where she contributed to the development & running of Conductive Education programs.

In 2011, Eszter founded Future Footprints, a private centre dedicated to supporting children with special needs. Through her work, she continues to make a meaningful impact on young lives, leading a team of conductors and allied health professionals to provide tailored educational and therapeutic support to help children to thrive. A mother of two, Eszter enjoys playing & coaching table tennis and is an avid coffee lover.

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### Introduction

As professionals, we constantly need to review our practice to keep it relevant to the demands of a modern society and to meet the ever-changing needs of our students.

How can you do this in a country where there are nine different time zones, six different states and territories (all with their own government), and where your closest colleagues are a minimum of three hours away by plane?

In Australia we have faced many challenges over the years when delivering Conductive Education and have had to utilise our skills tirelessly, in order to overcome these challenges.

### **Aims**

Our aim is to share our CE successes in different parts of Australia but also to highlight the many, many challenges that we face due to differing delivery methods and funding models, isolation, lack of collegiate support from larger organisations, lack of recognition as a profession and the day to day issues that we face.

### **Materials and methods**

- Successes
- One size does not fit all
- A network of support – what we have done to address this
- The challenges faced on a daily basis, regardless of where in Australia you live
- Where to next?

### **Results and conclusions**

Our presentation will highlight our successes, what CE looks like in Australia, e.g., touching on the differences between the states, how we are funded and ability to offer employment. We will explore the need for different models, for evidence-based practice, having no governing body overseeing our work to ensure efficacy, the lack of recognition as a profession and the impact these have on the future of CE in far-off countries. We aim to offer some solutions to our issues which we hope will lead to ongoing professional dialogue and some positive changes.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

### 2. NEW INITIATIVES IN THE PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF CONDUCTIVE PEDAGOGY. GROUP WORK

**Presenter: Andrea Kocsi-Thwaites** – Head Teacher Wellbeing – East Hills Girls Technology High School – Sydney, Australia

Andrea graduated in 1990 and started her professional career in Sydney as a conductor.

In 1995, her qualifications were recognized by the NSW Department of Education, acknowledging it as a special education teacher and educational therapist.

Andrea also completed a Post-Graduate Special Education Degree at Macquarie University, which deepened her understanding of the NSW education system and how to support students with diverse needs effectively.

She is a Head Teacher of Wellbeing, overseeing all aspects of students with various disabilities and learning needs, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funding, and government data collections, including National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

Andrea's journey as a conductor in Sydney was a significant learning experience, ensuring that the principles of Conductive Education were taught and integrated into everyday learning. Over time, her teaching career evolved, and support for implementing Conductive Education programs diminished due to staff retirements, school transitions, and leadership changes. However, her passion for education and love for Conductive Education has never wavered. She has always remained committed to being a Conductor at her heart, incorporating the principles of conductive education in every role she held, regardless of her position.

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The aim of this article is to express the benefits of group work as a tool for engaging students with additional learning needs. It was the expectation that group work, would provide a means of reducing cognitive load (Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006) and encouraging on task behaviour (Wentzel & Watkins, 2002). This shows the result in a positive impact on students' engagement. Group work helps to reduce cognitive load and creates the environment where students can build friendships.

Peer observations revealed that when the teacher attempted to engage students with tasks during the lesson time, these students appeared unenthusiastic when the task was given to do independently. It was decided that in order to improve this situation, the traditional teaching mode of introducing information would be replaced with a group project in an attempt to engage students while maintaining the level of understanding of the task achieved through teacher guidance. When the task was given to the group it was motivating for each student to do their best and also encouraged and helped each other. This was happening not just during practical lessons, also various subjects, when students were learning new knowledge and skills.

Active learning requires students to become engaged in the learning task, this approach is said to surpass traditional teaching for retention of material and motivating students to be engaged and participate. By offering an alternative to traditional

teaching which focuses on inviting students to explore the meaning of information opposed to merely receiving this information at a sensory level it is expected that the intervention will enhance both engagement -synonymous with active learning- and maintain and enhance levels of understanding around the topic (synonymous with deep learning).

The importance of social interaction in learning is a significant part of many theories relating to how we learn, for example, social learning theory, social constructionism, and Vygotsky's and Piaget's developmental theories supports the principles of group work in conductive pedagogy, where students will engage and learn in the group environment differently and more effectively.

Motivational perspectives, which state that by creating a situation in which to reach a personal goal a student must work in a group and providing group reward based on individual learning of group members, are the most important parts of a group success. The social cohesion perspective states that within a group students will automatically help one another learn as they care about each other. This perspective disregards individual accountability and group reward, and instead the process of the task itself is seen as being enough to motivate students, emphasising the role of team building in order to enhance group cohesion before commencing the task.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN GERMANY

### GERMAN CONTRIBUTION: CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION, CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION AND INCLUSION

#### Organizers:

**Daniela Fülle** – pedagogue, conductor, lecturer – Phoenix Conductive Institute, Foundation Pfennigparade, Germany,  
BKF board member, member of German Conductors Association

Daniela Fülle is graduate pedagogue (2004, University of Erfurt/GER), Austrian trained conductor (2008, University of Vienna/AT) and certified trainer in further education. She had 15 years of experience working in the field of CE in Austria, at least as head of the conductive department at Therapy Institute Keil in Vienna. She was responsible as program manager for the certified course „Conductive Education“ at the University of Vienna. Since 2020 she is the head of the conductive day care center of Phoenix Conductive Centre in Munich/GER. She is a board member of BKF (German Conductor Association) and member of the Conductors Association. Her first contact with CE has left a lasting impact on her vita by high motivated parents and staff offering CE for people with severe disabilities. Continuous practical work (e.g. during intensive courses) and also strategic work with renowned European experts in CE is important to her. She is experienced as lecturer, mentor, and in hands-on practice. She is also passionate about using digital resources for courses in conductive and inclusive education.

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**Anett Pintér** – conductor, pedagogue, special education teacher – Phoenix Conductive Institute, Foundation Pfennigparade, Germany  
member of German Conductors Association

Anett Pintér is a conductor (1991, Pető Institute at University of Budapest), pedagogue, special education teacher and inclusive sports coach and trainer in inclusive archery. She is member of Conductors Association in Germany. Her motivation to offer CE was the desire to enable people with disabilities to live an equal and independent life. After obtaining her diploma as conductor, she worked with international groups of kindergarten and school-age children. She also led the international conductive residential group at the Pető Institute. She worked in a conductive day care center in Munich with people aged 6 to 20 with disabilities, eventually becoming head of a day care center in Munich. Currently, she is head of school assistance in Phoenix Conductive Centre in Munich. With colleagues she offers conductive programs for adults with multiple disabilities, including intensive courses. She completed a course as a certified housing consultant. This qualification, in combination with her CE experience, allows her to support people in achieving accessible living environments.

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## **ABSTRACT CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN GERMANY – ROUND TABLE**

### **Short description:**

The German contribution for International Conductor Day is divided into 2 sections. First, 7 German institutions/ associations present the highlights of their conductive-curative education or inclusive-conductive work and their professional experience in the conductive setting.

### **Topics:**

- Innovative Conductive Education (CE) and conductive work for children up to 6 years
- “Con-Clusion”: CE and rehabilitation + inclusion
- “KondAktiv”: holistic conductive offers for all age groups
- Living and housing rethought inclusive life for young adults
- “Together under one roof”: living and working for young adults with complex disabilities
- Sports and leisure: fun and movement for everyone

Afterwards, the guests are invited to exchange ideas and there will be a Q+A session with students from the Pető Faculty and other interested parties about internships and practical training as part of their studies, networking and collaboration and offers from German conductive and conductive-inclusive institutions. There will be an invitation to exchange ideas with international institutions and providers of CE: guests will ask their questions live. Guests will get a look at the advantages and requirements for collaboration, internship or cooperation with the institutions. There will be time to talk about conductive future projects.

### **Seven German conductive institutions/associations present their highlights:**

1. Fortschritt Bayern/ Gemering: Inklusives Kinderhaus Gemering: Inclusive Kindergarten (Marina Maytas-Szirtes, Christina Schulze)
2. Fortschritt Bayern/ Rosenheim: Heilpädagogische Tagesstätte Rosenheim: Conductive-Curative Education (Andrea Papné)
3. Fortschritt Düsseldorf: Conductive Education over the lifespan (Szilvia Hegedüs, Ursula Kortas)
4. Pfennigparade Phoenix Schulen und KITAS GmbH, München: Welcome to our conductive centre Phoenix (Daniela Fülle, Anett Pintér)
5. Pető-Schule Oberaudorf-Inntal: Inclusive Pető School (Rita Mechtel, Eszter Nagy, Bettina Brühl)
6. Inklusiv Wohnen Aachen e.V. (Marita Holper, Mridula Srikant)
7. KoMeT GmbH Niebüll (Rebecca Albers; Theresa Dutzi)

### **Keywords:**

Conductive Education, CE and rehabilitation, Pető, KondAktiv, therapy equipment, innovation, inner attitude, motivation, individualization, differentiation, activities of daily living, relevance, complex support, intensive conductive rehabilitation, trans-

disciplinary teamwork, educational partnership, inclusion, cooperation, network, professional association, participation, quality of life, inclusive sports and leisure activities, inclusive living, conductive living and working, all age groups, toddlers, early intervention, kindergarten, education, school, support center, day care, adults, physical and motor disability, complex disability, special needs, theory-practice transfer, competence and knowledge transfer, future planning.

## **1. Fortschritt Bayern: Inklusives Kinderhaus Germering**

**Topic:** Innovative Conductive Education (CE) and conductive work for children up to 6 years

**Presenters:** Marina Matyas-Szirtes (conductor, teacher, special education teacher, assistant manager), Christina Schulze (pedagogue, general manager)

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### **Short description:**

Our inclusive kindergarten 'Märchenland' in Germering cares for around 110 children, both with and without disabilities. In four crèche groups and three kindergarten groups, childcare workers, educators and special education therapists work closely with conductors.

This presentation showcases various conductive learning units, which are carried out with the entire group. More specifically, in daycare, conductive learning elements can be incorporated in various ways into daily routines to promote the children's development in a holistic manner. We demonstrate how conductive pedagogy and its educational components within daycare routine can come together in an inclusive setting.

Lying task series, weekly projects and individual topics are integrated with conductive support elements, ensuring that the whole group benefits. Stimulating nerve cells from head to toe is one of the key objectives in promoting children's movement and sensory perception.

This approach creates a daily routine for both children with and without disabilities, by including conductive support elements into their everyday lives. For the children, this is not perceived as a tense learning situation but rather as familiar activities in a comfortable environment.

The method incorporates various pedagogical approaches, such as Kett Pedagogy, Fröbel Pedagogy and others. The learning outcomes for all participating children are remarkable, thanks to the everyday inclusion of this conductive support.



## 2. FortSchrift Bayern: Heilpädagogische Tagesstätte Rosenheim

**Topic:** FortSchrift Bayern and curative day care center Rosenheim

**Presenter:** Andrea Papné (conductor-teacher, leader)

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### Short description:

The presentation introduces the organization FortSchrift Bayern GmbH and the specific situation of Conductive Education (CE) in Bavaria. One major success is that the CE is now also recognized in Germany. The FortSchrift association was founded by Peter von Quadt in November 1994 by a parents' initiative. In 1995, the first center opened for children with physical disabilities. The FortSchrift association was founded in 2001 and opened several facilities for children (from 0 to 7 years) with various disabilities. Over the years, FortSchrift has grown. The head office is in Niederpöcking. FortSchrift covers a broad spectrum and a colorful variety of facilities. There are a wide range of services and programs aimed primarily at children or people with disabilities and in the field of integration FortSchrift's primary goal is to find the right alternative for people with disabilities in every life situation. The audience are given an overview of facilities and the number of employees. FortSchrift's wide range of services requires a variety of specialized staff. Cooperation between colleagues in a multidisciplinary team ensures the best possible support for children. The more conductive and integrative facilities are available for children, the more children can benefit. This year, almost 2000 children are being cared in the FortSchrift centers.

About funding: In Upper Bavaria, the day care center is recognized as a special educational support center – funding is provided by the government of Upper Bavaria. Children at FortSchrift can receive CE until the end of their school time. Unfortunately, it is not so easy for adults, but with enough patience it is possible to secure funding for the CE in case-by-case decisions.

The summer camps offered for children during the holidays are offered via other support options. Children with various special needs often require a range of aids that enable them to live independently and prevent/ correct deformities. The team make together with parents, doctors and specialists a decision to which aids are to be used; and funding is provided by the health insurance company and co-payment. The target group has changed a lot over the years. Nevertheless, experience shows that CE can still be very effective and successful for many children. FortSchrift is very present on social media – an important factor in raising awareness of CE.

FortSchrift Bayern is also looking to the future. The biggest dream would be an inclusive conductive school. Many people are working to fulfil this dream – employees, donors and supporters. Many activities are being organized, such as charity

running. There is a long way to go with barrier-free remodeling of the old building etc.

FortSchrift Bayern believes that all dreams will come true.

### 3. Fortschritt Düsseldorf

**Topic:** Fortschritt Düsseldorf

**Presenters:** Ursula Kortas (managing director), Szilvia Hegedüs (conductor), Jan-Owe Stammen (presenter)

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#### Short description:

Conductive Education (CE) according to A. Pető is not a new phenomenon. Initially, Fortschritt Düsseldorf had difficulties with funding bodies to secure funding. This made the daily work more difficult. More donations are needed to finance the service; nowadays, unfortunately, the number of donors to non-profit organizations is decreasing, which creates a financial gap.

The aim of the conductive service is to enable all clients to have a quality of life and to participate. Through CE, clients are strengthened for more integration and participation in society, for more independence in all areas of life (such as movement, speech, communication, cognition, emotion and social aspects). The support service is led by experienced conductors.

Also, Fortschritt Düsseldorf wants to achieve the long-awaited nationwide recognition of the profession. This recognition and equal status of the profession is very important in order to avoid difficulties with funding and to achieve financial security.

The outpatient support center offers CE once a week for 1-3 hours, depending on age. There are also intensive support weeks with 3 or 6 hours a day:

- for kindergarten and school children
- for young adults and working people

The holistic conductive training and the intensive conductive weeks take place in the practice rooms in Düsseldorf.

Fortschrift Düsseldorf looks after and supports around 50 clients from toddlers to old age.

The age groups are divided into:

- 0 to 3 years mother-child group
- 3 to 6 years kindergarten group
- 5 to 18 years school children group
- over 18 years to old age: group of young adults and working people

#### 4. Pfennigparade Phoenix Schulen und Kitas GmbH, München

**Topic:** Welcome to Phoenix Conductive Center – Conductive Education, Rehabilitation, Inclusion, Leisure Activities for Everybody

**Presenters:** **Daniela Fülle** (pedagogue, Austrian trained academic conductor, head of conductive day care center, lecturer, BKF board member, member of German Conductors Association), **Anett Pintér** (conductor, pedagogue, special education teacher, manager of school support assistance, member of German Conductors Association)

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##### **Short description:**

Welcome to a short introduction into the area of **Learning and Education** – one of 5 areas of living in foundation Pfennigparade Munich. It offers opportunities of early education, inclusive, curative and conductive education and learning, therapy and rehabilitation for more than 800 children and youngsters. The main goal is to build an inclusive, democratic, open and various society.

##### **Why does Phoenix force inclusive and conductive development?**

The strengths and knowledge of conductors (transdisciplinary pedagogical and medical-therapeutic knowledge, disability-specific competences and the inner attitude are powerful competences for successful work in inclusive settings.

About 100 employees (conductor, pedagogue, physio-, occupational-, speech therapist, child carer, volunteer, school support, teacher) work with 120 children with motoric and complex disabilities and different life experiences in curative early education, conductive center and primary + secondary school, inclusive kindergarten and CE-courses over the life span. On top there are inclusive collaborations with different primary schools.

**Phoenix conductive center offers:** conductive, interlinked learning units, pedagogy, therapy and rehabilitation (e.g. biofeedback, riding, swimming), activities of daily living, therapy-immanent lessons, transdisciplinary team-work. **Further offers of Phoenix center** are inclusive projects with the neighborhood or inclusive sports and leisure activities (at the INSEL – an inclusive, barrier-free outdoor area for creativity and fun), summer intensive courses or workshops.

The Auditorium gets a short insight into **“Conductive Archery for all”** – an inclusive, age-appropriate, varied alternative for implementing learning goals. The Methods of CE and inclusive archery complement each other and enable people to learn self-active movement processes. Important goals are participation and positive experience.

riences, personality strengthening during the holistic training of archers, from the age of 10.

Finally get a short introduction in **diverse options of networking and collaboration** for students, career starter or researchers: internship, full- and part-time-jobs, support for final theses or research projects.

## **5. Pető-Schule Oberaudorf-Inntal - Inclusive Pető School**

**Topic:** The Private Primary School Oberaudorf-Inntal

**Presenters:** **Rita Mechtl** (conductor, primary school teacher, special education teacher, co-founder, manager of the Pető-School, member of the association of conductors working in Germany, board member of the FortSchrift Rosenheim Association, co-author), **Eszter Nagy** (conductor), **Bettina Brühl** (CEO)

**Institution:** **Private Pető Grund- und Mittelschule** der Pető und Inklusion gGmbH  
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### **Short description:**

The Private Primary School Oberaudorf-Inntal was founded at the beginning of the 2013/14 school year by the FortSchrift Rosenheim Association. The school is run by the Pető and Inklusion non-profit GmbH, who is solely controlled by the association. In 2015/16, a secondary school was added, continuing the educational concept of the primary school. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary, both schools were officially renamed "Private Pető School" in a celebratory event. We are a state-recognized primary and secondary school, largely funded by public resources. The approval of our school was based on the first-ever recognition of Conductive Education (CE) in Germany as a special educational interest. During the approval process, we integrated the key elements of CE into a school curriculum, achieving a significant breakthrough for the dissemination and recognition of CE in Germany.

Our holistic approach, which sees learning and developmental potential in every child, is beneficial for all children, including those without disabilities. We enable, encourage, and expect self-initiative from all children. The focus on motor skills in CE runs like a common thread through our daily routine. In daily conductive movement sessions and inclusive sports activities, we strengthen the self-esteem and social competence of all children.

A fundamental goal of our concept is to provide all children and teens with individual, continuous and inclusive education. Up to one-third of our student body has significant special educational needs, and we are open to all areas of special education. Our multidisciplinary team consists of primary, secondary and special education teachers, conductors, educators, therapeutic staff and curative education nurses, all working according to the principles of Conductive Education.

We support local schooling and accept students from the surrounding communities. For many years, all our school places have been filled with waiting lists for children with disabilities extending several years in advance.

The presentation will discuss the general organisation and roles of the conductors and provide a detailed overview of the conductive daily routine and collaborative learning.

## **6. Inklusiv Wohnen Aachen e.V. – inclusive living**

**Topic:** Inklusiv Wohnen Aachen e.V. – inclusive living

**Presenters:** **Marita Holper** (co-founder, chairwoman, board member BKF),  
**Mridula Srikant** (project assistance)

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### **Short description:**

Inklusiv Wohnen Aachen e.V. (IWA) envisions a society where people with individual support needs can live independently and with a lot of joy within the community. The project focuses on inclusive shared housing, bringing together students and individuals with disabilities under the "Living for Help" principle. Inspired by "inklusiv wohnen Köln e.V.", IWA promotes individuality, self-determination, and mutual support in an inclusive community. Personal budget financing empowers residents to choose their service providers, enhancing autonomy. Founded in 2020, IWA established its core values, goals, and structures. In 2021, the project gained momentum with Martin Speicher's patronage and partnerships e.g. with Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband and WOHN:SINN. By 2022, IWA launched the "Living School", organized housing tours, and focused on public awareness. In 2023, residents moved into the new shared housing, marking a significant milestone. Plans for 2024 include additional funding initiatives, public awareness campaigns, and developing a second inclusive housing project. The association also aims to create an "Inclusion HUB" to expand its efforts.

The housing project unites students with residents requiring support. Students assist with daily tasks while sharing their lives with housemates, creating a diverse community of individuals with varying backgrounds and interests. Spontaneity, diversity, and self-determination are central to the project's ethos.

Community life is enriched by shared activities that foster connection and encourage participation. The supportive, dynamic environment respects and accommodates individual needs. The project's pedagogical and therapeutic approach aims to enhance residents' self-confidence, motivation, posture, movement, and independence.

through personalized support combining physical activity and intellectual engagement.

IWA's housing concept brings together:

- Residents with disabilities
- Students providing assistance
- Professional caregivers

This combination creates a unique living environment that promotes inclusion and mutual support. The project not only provides housing but also fosters personal growth and community engagement.

**Key aspects of the IWA project include:**

- Inclusive shared apartments
- "Living for Help" concept
- Personal budget financing
- Focus on self-determination and autonomy
- Community activities and support
- Personalized therapeutic approach

**IWA future plans:**

- Refine services
- Secure additional funding
- Expand public engagement
- Develop more inclusive housing projects in the region

Through these efforts, IWA aims to advance its vision of an inclusive society for all, where individuals with support needs can thrive independently within their communities.

## **7. KoMeT GmbH Niebüll**

**Topic:** Inclusive living, leisure sports activities – a dream comes true: Haus KoMeT in North Frisia

**Presenters:** **Rebecca Albers** (psychologist, Academic Multiple-Therapy-Conductor managing director),  
**Theresa Dutzi** (assistance)

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**Short description:**

"Others give you the wheelchair – I give you the language" a famous quote of András Pető, reinforced by a thought of Helga Keil-Bastendorff, the founder of Conduc-

tive Multitherapeutic Education in Vienna/ Austria “We see it as our task to awaken the joy of life and the desire to learn”.

The founder of Haus KoMeT offers an insight into the development of Conductive Education (CE) in North Frisia/ Northern Germany over 30 years: from parent- and child-groups, conductive and inclusive sports training (trampoline, swimming), workshops, holiday camps and guest stays, team building with intensive internal and international training courses of the employees, workshops for families, staff and professionals. The next step led to conductive day care and support and assisted living. At least in 2022 with a huge effort, the Haus KoMeT – Conductive Education and Training Center was built and opened for young adults with severe supporting needs and supporting staff.

Supported by impressive impressions, the audience will gain a very close insight into the daily work. Get a short introduction into weekly conductive program and learning units, conductive facilitation, inclusive sports projects (e.g. archery, swimming, boccia, trampoline) and the intense work – about “How we move at Haus KoMeT” with daily 3 times mobilization for each resident, fine motor or breathing exercises, activities of daily living and transfers with a very high level of self-activity. The founder talks also about financing and the struggles with this hard and important topic. Get also a short impression about the motivation of the founder, the families, the whole multi-therapeutic team and all supporters.

“Everyone has the right to move” – Rebecca Albers



## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA

**Presenter: Virag Homonnay** – Conductor – Gesellschaft für ganzheitliche Förderung und Therapie OÖ GmbH (GFGF) – Linz, Austria

Virág received her conductor degree at the Semmelweis University András Pető Faculty in 2023. Over the past two years, she has gained valuable personal and professional experience in Austria. During this time, she successfully navigated the challenges of adapting to a new culture and work environment. Through these experiences, she developed practical solutions and learned important lessons that have enhanced her skills and broadened her perspective. In her presentations, she shares insights into her work's practical aspects, highlighting her challenges and the strategies that led her to growth and professional success.

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### **Abstract:**

Working within the Austrian system, one of the most important lessons I have learned is that the role of the conductor requires not only pedagogical knowledge but also cultural sensitivity. In Austria, regional differences, local customs, linguistic variations, and social structures have all posed new challenges for me.

**Diploma Recognition:** The Hungarian conductor diploma can be recognized in Austria according to local regulations, provided it meets Austrian qualification standards. Austrian authorities validate the diploma by comparing the Hungarian training content with Austrian professional requirements. The recognition process is usually evaluated individually; additional studies or exams may be required. In Austria, the diploma is applied in therapeutic pedagogy, developmental pedagogy, and rehabilitation.

**Workplace:** Over the past two years, I have learned a great deal about how to work effectively with other professionals, whether teachers, therapists, or social workers. The developmental center where I work as a conductor is Gesellschaft für Ganzheitliche Förderung und Therapie OÖ GmbH in Linz. Our center provides care for children and adolescents (0–18 years old) and adults who have received therapy before the age of 18.

We assist individuals with various diagnoses according to personalized therapeutic plans, guiding and supporting them with a holistic approach. Diagnoses include brain injuries, brain development disorders, various types of spinal cord injuries, skull and brain injuries, severe psychomotor delays, metabolic disorders, or various syndromes. People needing post-operative treatment for orthopedic and neurological surgeries also receive individualized group care.

Our therapeutic offerings include:

- Pediatric control examinations
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational therapy
- Conductive pedagogy
- Speech therapy
- Special and therapeutic pedagogy
- Social work



Funding: Most costs are covered by the Lower Austrian or Upper Austrian Provincial Government. Parents are required to pay a co-payment, which the relevant district office determines.

I particularly appreciate the close cooperation with speech therapists, occupational therapists, special education teachers, and physiotherapists at my workplace. As part of a multidisciplinary team, we can support the development of children with a shared goal. Dialogue between disciplines helps create personalized development plans and facilitates more effective problem-solving. As a result, we can intervene more quickly and precisely while each professional gains new perspectives, fostering continuous learning and personal development.

Collaboration benefits the children and the families, as considering the home environment and available resources offers more comprehensive support for the children's development.

Throughout my work, we have continuous opportunities for internal and external professional development, such as gaining a deeper understanding of assistive technologies to support children's development better. We also have the opportunity to consult with orthopedics, neurologists, and pediatric specialists about children's development and further assistive devices to better tailor therapy to the individual needs of the children.

Through interdisciplinary work, I have learned about various methods and tools that have helped me bring out the best in the individuals entrusted to me.

In conclusion, the international experience I gained in the Austrian work environment has helped me view and appreciate every aspect of the conductor profession from a broader perspective. At the same time, these experiences raise new questions that inspire me to pursue work in this essential field.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN ILLYEFALVA – TRANSYLVANIA, ROMANIA

**Presenter: Erzsébet Kovács** – Conductor – KIDA Association – Illyefalva, Transylvania, Romania

Erzsébet Kovács was born in Marosvásárhely and currently lives in Illyefalva (Transylvania/Romania). She started working for the Kida Foundation in Illyefalva in 2018. After graduating from the Pető András Faculty of Semmelweis University in 2022, she became the director of the CE program.

Today, along with her conductor responsibilities, she organizes administrative and out-of-school activities.

She also leads recruiting and supporting students enrolled in the Semmelweis University András Pető faculty conductor program in Romania and Transylvania.

She organizes professional days for other related professionals from the co-disciplines to promote the Pető method and the conductor as a professional. She established the first permanent CE program in Transylvania, Romania. She was actively involved in the recognition of the profession of conductor in Romania, including the acquisition of the professional code and the accreditation of conductive education in Romania.

In her private life, she organizes informational meetings and leisure activities for families raising children with disabilities and adults.

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### Abstract

The spread of conductive education, the expanding network of Pető András Faculty, and the unwavering faith and enthusiasm of the committed head of the Kida Foundation in Illyefalva led to the establishment of the current Kida-Pető Development and Training Center.

My goal at this professional forum is to offer insights into how a noble cause, a valuable program, can grow year by year like the crown of a tree and eventually become an institution. I will briefly present our achievements, joys, and celebrations while also addressing the challenges posed by introducing a new concept, conductive education, a new method, the Pető Method, and a new profession, the conductor, within the Romanian institutional and legal framework.

The Pető program began in Illyefalva in 2014 with a three-week interval training program at the Foundation's headquarters, initially for children and later for adults, held several times a year. The sessions initially took place in the conference room. In 2017, a new building unit was completed to house the participants. The same year, a conductor training program began as an external branch of the Pető András Faculty at Semmelweis University. Since then, the eighth-grade students have started their studies. The program integrates concentrated theoretical education with practical training to support student preparation. The developmental activities for children and adults involved in interval training are part of the practical training area for the students.

Children and adults in conductive education engage in symptom-specific individual and group sessions. We also celebrate family days and observe traditional customs

and holidays. In June 2024, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Pető program in Illyefalva.

We face challenges as well. In Romania, the concepts of conductive pedagogy and the Pető Method are unfamiliar, making it challenging to reach potential participants and earn the trust of parents and relatives to bring individuals for counseling and sessions. Efforts have been made to introduce the Pető Method through dialogue with doctors, teachers, physiotherapists, and representatives of related professions. We continuously seek our place among related professions.

A significant difficulty is that employment opportunities for graduates as conductors are nearly non-existent due to the lack of a recognized professional code by the European Labor Commission. This complicates the acquisition of a professional code and diploma recognition in Romania, making it increasingly challenging to attract conductor students to the training program.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN BELGIUM

### « LA CIME - FAMILLE »: CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS AGED 13-21 YEARS

**Presenter: Jennifer Moreau** – director in Conductive Education “La Famille” – Belgium

Mrs. Jennifer Moreau serves as the Pedagogical Director of Conductive Education at “La Famille” in Brussels. The School and Day Center has provided Conductive Education in a transdisciplinary setting since 1982.

Jennifer started as an Occupational Therapist 30 years ago and was trained in Conductive Education by Mr. Yves Bawin, in collaboration with the Pető Institute. She possesses extensive experience working with children aged 6 months to 21 years and specializes in baby and parent guidance.

Currently, she oversees the training center “Le Fil Conducteur” and provides training and practical support in Conductive Education adapted to the contexts in Belgium and France. Additionally, she is an active board member of the Belgium and European Conductive Association and participates in various international programs.

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#### Introduction

The school and center were established in 2019 thanks to an initiative by parents who wanted to provide Conductive Education beyond primary school.

The program aims to develop orthofunction and inclusive activities, focusing on three main areas: Communication, Autonomy, and Socialization.

#### Progress and success

We started with two classes totaling 15 students. Today, we have six groups with a total of 50 students. Ten of the pupils previously received Conductive Education in primary school.

The motivation of the students is amazing. We observe significant progress especially among children with diplegia and quadriplegia. Students who never experienced Conductive education are discovering task series and are eager to learn new strategies for daily activities. The group also provides excellent support at this age, especially for those who previously only had individual therapies.

#### Challenges

The main difficulty in the secondary school is ensuring continuity in all activities. The students must adapt to different environments with different groups and different teachers. However, this situation provides an excellent opportunity to see how each student has embraced their challenges and strategies and to identify when they still rely on adult assistance or expectations.

#### After School

The greatest challenge is preparing these students for adulthood. In Belgium, we lack day structures that can support young adults, and once they reach the age of 21, most of our students will stay at home for a few years before securing a place in a day cen-

ter. This is a significant problem, so we must be creative and develop new opportunities.

At 17, they benefit from various internships prepared with their parents and the staff. These internships are based on activities they can continue after school. The skills learned in school are related to each student's individual project.

The training

Embarking on a transdisciplinary approach and introducing everyone to Conductive Education is a significant challenge. The staff engage in various modules on Conductive Education at the training center 'Le Fil Conducteur' and receives support in their practice.

It will take time to align our perspectives and share common understandings, but building this project together is an invaluable and growing endeavor.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN FRANCE

### 1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN ASSOCIATIVE CONDUCTIVE CENTER – FRANCE

**Presenter: Judit Pázmány** – Referent conductor – Centre d'éducation conductive du Gard  
(CEC du Gard) – Clarensac, FRANCE

Judit Pázmány completed her studies at the International Pető Institute with a diploma as a conductor and primary school teacher in 1995.

After working in Budapest, she moved with her family to New Zealand, where she worked in the field of conductive education for nine years. In 2009, she relocated to France, where she established the first year-round conductive education program.

She is operational with a French non-profit association and its board of trustees to create the “French model of associative conductive center”.

She introduced “Parent coaching” to families raising children with disabilities in France. Since January 2015, she has been responsible for the CEC du Gard educational program.

Judit organized or participated in numerous professional forums, congresses, and conferences in France, New Zealand, and Hungary.

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#### **Introduction:**

Working overseas as a conductor entails a high level of responsibility towards both our profession and the public we serve. It requires a long period of professional experience, a deep understanding of the foreign culture, and effective communication skills to share information about conductive education and advocate for its principles and values. In France, the journey has been long and challenging, but we are beginning to see progress.

I have been working in France since January 2009. Prior to this, I had the opportunity to spend nearly 10 years in New Zealand as part of an all-conductor team in a conductive early childhood center, working with experienced conductors across six different groups.

At the time of my arrival to France, (January 2009) there were no conductive education centers operating year-round in the country; only summer camp-style programs were available, offered by a few conductors. Conductive education was entirely unknown in France. I moved to France with my family and began working in collaboration with an association of several families. Before opening the first year-round conductive center in France—which was also the first to include parent coaching—initial assessments, program development, project planning, and extensive paperwork were required, along with the preparation of the facilities and equipment.

When we started laying the groundwork for a conductive program centered on parent coaching, there was uncertainty about whether French families would accept our approach and teaching methods. My primary objective during the first six years was to establish our system as a viable alternative rehabilitation method in France. We faced significant scrutiny from the mainstream educational system, politicians,

healthcare professionals, and others. To spread awareness, we consistently kept our doors open. After years of hard work in establishing our center's management, other associative centers began opening across France, all following the "French conductive education model" but operating independently.

In 2015, I decided to assist in opening a conductive education center in the south of France, where I have been working as the head conductor ever since. Over the years, we have faced numerous challenges and made significant decisions. For example, we considered whether to collaborate with large, traditional service providers to access government funding. Ultimately, we chose to maintain our professional integrity by remaining independent and self-financed with local financial support concerned that joining a larger organization might compromise our mission. We continue to fight daily for the recognition of our center and our profession in France. Our goal is to stay an independent rehabilitation center with full autonomy, to be recognized by the national education and rehabilitation system nationwide and to be fully supported by local or governmental funding.

Today there is 9 centers open all year round (The center CEC du Gard is one of these) and two centers offer summer camp type of CE program. All CE centers have fully trained conductor(s), and an association with its board of trustees behind, but the profile of the public may be very different from one center to another in terms of age from babies to adults, and in terms of level of development or rhythm of participation as well. The direction and secretariat as well as the communication is often organized by volunteers of the association, with more or less personal experience or knowledge about conductive education. A couple of centers are financed for their actions in collaboration with classic service providers, and they had to give up some of their autonomy in operation. The conductor(s) have different level of intervention, depending on their experience and relation with the direction.

**Aim:**

In this presentation, I aim to share my experiences in France as a conductor, including my work with children, their parents, other conductors, and assistants. I will explain the characteristics of the French associative model and the parents' coaching that we are practicing. I will highlight the professional and personal-family level obstacles, the challenges and successes we have faced, and the possible future of our profession in France.

**Key words:**

Goal-oriented teaching, parent coaching, "French CE model," national system, conductor identity, CE principles

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN FRANCE

### 2. THE DIFFICULTIES OF CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN FRANCE

**Presenter: Nóra Tar** – Conductor – Association Honorine Lève-toi Conductive Education Centre de Bayeux – Normandy, France

Nóra graduated from the Department of Pedagogical Rehabilitation at the Faculty of Pedagogical Rehabilitation, András Pető Faculty of Semmelweis University in 2023. Within this specialization, she focused her studies on early childhood conductive educational settings (0–3 years of age) and on teaching adults with neurological disorders in conductive educational settings.

After completing her studies, she started working for the Conductive Association of Honorine lève-toi.

Education Centre de Bayeux (Normandy, France) works with children and adults with multiple disabilities in a conductive educational setting.

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**Presenter: Aron Alan Shakkour** – Senior Conductor – Association Honorine Lève-toi Conductive Education Centre de Bayeux – Normandy, France

Alan graduated from the András Pető Faculty of Semmelweis University in 2023. During his studies, he focused on the complex development of elementary-age students in the conductive education school setting. During his four-year practicum, he encountered and worked with students living with various types of cerebral palsy, becoming increasingly dedicated to the profession each year.

After completing his studies, he started working in France as a conductor at the Honorine Lève-toi Association – CEC de Bayeux. For him, the main goal is to develop simple but understandable communication options tailored to the individual, and to develop independence for people living with disability through conductive methods. During his 2 years of experience, he has gained experience in early development and in the development of adults.

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#### **Abstract:**

In our presentation, we will talk about working abroad with people who live with multiply disabilities the difficulties arising from the differences in the systems of other countries and the adaptation process. We are three conductors who studied at different times and systems of the Pető Institute, with different specializations and work experience. We will be discussing in the presentation the system of the French state and how it affects the institutions that deal with conductive pedagogy and on the conductors themselves who are working in these institutions. We also touch on what the working environment and colleagues are like in the institution where we work based on personal experience.

I finished my studies in Pető András Faculty of Semmelweis University in 2023. After graduation, we moved to France to work for the Association Honorine lève-toi. This center deals with children with multiple disabilities. Moving here had many difficul-



ties, the first of which was the language itself. We speak English on a fairly good level, but French was a completely new field for me. The other hardship was leaving our family and social life behind; we have many friends in Hungary who are like family to us; we can keep in touch on social media, but of course, it's not the same. Getting new friends is also not that easy; the people of France are not that open if you don't speak French, although we were able to find a few new friends. They were from different countries, so they spoke English. Of course, all of this was easier because we moved here together; every second weekend or so, we go on different trips and tourist attractions, which lightens up our mood. Also, having a partner with whom you can talk gives you a certain comfort zone where you can be yourself completely. If someone wants to make friends here, speaking French is a must.

In the Pető Institute, we didn't see any child or adult who is polyhandicaped, and the older teaching materials, based on which we are also taught, say that the polyhandicaped people are not suitable for conductive pedagogy. At first, it was a big challenge, adapting everything the Pető method stands for into the polyhandicaped development. However, we think our progress in the past year was promising. We were able to develop the children's individual eating processes and their transfer and significantly increase their physical capabilities. Their communication and self-expression also developed; they can answer "yes or no" questions or choose between multiple options. Half of the group can speak with limited vocabulary; the other half answers nonverbally.

**Keywords:**

conductor life abroad, social differences, the children we work with

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN FRANCE

### 3. THE DIFFICULTIES OF CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN FRANCE

**Presenter: Eleonóra (Shakkour) Lévai** – Senior Conductor – Association Honorine Lève-toi Conductive Education Centre de Bayeux – Normandy, France

Eleonóra received her conductor-teacher qualification in 1993. She started her career at the Szigetszentmiklós Kindergarten for Children with Physical Disabilities. Since then, she has had broad experience working with children and adults with various motor disabilities in Hungary as well as internationally.

She also worked as a classroom teacher and conductor at Hungary's Friss Dió Primary and Special Education School, where she adapted conductive education for people with severe and multiple disabilities.

Over the years, she has gained experience in the professional training and practice of conductors in public education, health, and social sectors. She is committed to conductive education, which aims to increase independence, improve quality of life, and promote social integration, focusing on adapting conductive education to people with severe and multiple disabilities.

Since 2020, she has worked in France as a senior conductor at the Honorine Lève-toi Association – CEC de Bayeux. Her mission is adapting conductive education for severely and multiple disabled people between the age 7–23.

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#### **Abstract:**

The two main topics of my presentation: the difficulties and results of conductive education in France, as well as the new challenges of current conductive education abroad, the place of multiple disorders in conductive education.

I want to talk about what it is like to introduce conductive pedagogy in a completely new culture, in different pedagogical and social conditions, and to incorporate conductive pedagogy into therapies or pedagogical methods. Still, before that, I would like to briefly describe my profession, life path. I will try summarizing the emergence and spread of conductive pedagogy in France in a few words. I wonder why the conductor's diploma cannot be accepted, what is more important from the point of view of our work, why conductive pedagogy cannot be included in the pedagogical systems, and what resistance is there to conductive pedagogy. Can we, conductors working in France, answer the resistance and views that question conductive pedagogy? In addition, I would like to highlight the efforts of the (usually) parents who founded conductive institutes to make conductive pedagogy and conductive philosophy known and recognized by the public.

There was a question as to whether there is progress in the recognition of conductive pedagogy, and the answer is currently that progress is very slow, but more and more doctors (neurologists, orthopedic doctors) know it or are trying to learn the method.

We need to discuss whether it has been proven that conductive pedagogy can be adapted to multiple disordered populations and whether they can develop with this holistic pedagogical method. Before expanding on this topic, it is necessary to review

the traditions and laws that determine the development of the cumulatively impaired.

The situation of multiple diseases in France. A brief overview of French laws regarding persons with multiple illnesses. Possible errors in the financing system.

I would also like to present the French social network and care system based on the following aspects. What happens after a child is born (whether it's a visible abnormality around birth or different development is noticed as the baby grows). What therapies are available to parents? How are these therapies related or not? The attitude of neurological, orthopedic, and "re-education functionary" doctors towards caring for the cumulatively injured – is there progress in medical attitudes? Resource centers are currently being established.

Conductive development of the cumulatively injured in our center. Design and development of the Resource Center.

Conductive pedagogy is very important for the development of people with multiple disabilities. It must be adapted, of course, but it must maintain the holistic conductive approach.

Keywords: France; conductive pedagogy; multiple disorders; cognisance; development; adaptation; problems; proofs.

## ROUND TABLE: CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN THE USA

### 1. PANORAMIC INTRODUCTION OF THE CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM AT THE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENCE IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, USA

**Presenter: Gabriella Molnár** – Conductive Education Teacher /Lead Conductor – Center for Independence – Chicago, Illinois, USA

Gabriella Molnar is a Conductive Education Teacher who has been working in the Chicago area since 2005. Currently she is the Lead Conductive Education Teacher at the Center for Independence. Gabriella currently is the Financial Director of the Association of Conductive Education in North America (ACENA), where she is collecting financial data and producing financial reports for the organization.

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**Presenter: Anita Keresztury** – Conductive Education Teacher/Program Coordinator – Center for Independence – Chicago, Illinois, USA

Anita Keresztury is a Conductive Education teacher who has been working in the Chicago area since 1997. Currently, she serves as the Program Director and Coordinator at the Center for Independence in the low-income Latino community. Anita is also the President of the Association of Conductive Education in North America (ACENA), where she plays a pivotal role in advancing the mission and visibility of Conductive Education across the continent.

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#### **Abstract:**

##### **Introduction**

In this section we intend to briefly describe the history of the Center for Independence in Chicago, Illinois, USA.

The Center is operating as an IL 501(c)3 non-profit organization. In 1998, parents of a child with a disability founded the Center for Independence to provide intensive therapy, conductive education for children with disabilities and their families. To this day, the Center continues to remain family focused serving over 300 children and adults annually at 3 locations. Our highly sought after intensive motor therapy programs are accredited and highly rated.

##### **Mission**

In this section we intend to briefly describe the mission of the Center for Independence.

The mission of the Center for Independence is to help children and young adults with disabilities achieve their highest level of independence in the home, school, community and workforce. Our therapy programs help children with Cerebral Palsy to develop life skills, motor function and an “I Can” attitude. We firmly believe being committed to breaking down barriers to employment. The Center also provides job

training and placement for young adults with developmental disabilities through our innovative program *Working Together Chicago*.

### **Financial Sustainability**

In this section we intend to briefly describe the complicated health system in the USA and how to fill the gap the best way we can. You will get a broad view of what are the main funding sources of the Center and how it effects the program structure in practice.

Financial sustainability is crucial for nonprofit organizations to ensure that we can continue our mission and services over the long term. Achieving financial sustainability involves several key strategies. We are planning to list the diversified funding sources that make the structure standing still, and affordable for all families in our community.

### **Operational Structure**

In this section we will introduce how the Center operates and integrates various disciplines to address the complex needs of participants.

How the integration of CE within therapeutic programs offers a transformative approach that fosters independence and holistic development, significantly enhancing the quality of life for individuals with motor disabilities.

The operational structure of Conductive Education at the Center for Independence is designed to provide comprehensive support to individuals with motor disorders, such as CP, through a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach.

## ROUND TABLE: CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN THE USA

### 2. TO WORK INDIVIDUALLY

**Presenter: Zsolt Ézsiás** – Conductive Education Teacher – The Smiling Child – Chicago, USA

Zsolt Ézsiás is a dedicated professional with a deep commitment to supporting individuals with disabilities. A graduate of the International Pető Institute in Hungary in 1998, Zsolt moved to the Chicago area in 1999, where he contributed to the founding of a non-profit organization. In 2007, Zsolt established his own LLC, The Smiling Child, where he has been providing individualized therapy to clients in the comfort of their own homes.

In 2016, Zsolt faced a life-changing challenge when he suffered a stroke. His own rehabilitation journey provided him with invaluable insight, allowing him to approach his work from a unique perspective. This personal experience deepened his empathy and understanding, enabling him to refine his approach to treating clients, offering them not only professional expertise but also a compassionate and relatable approach to healing.

Zsolt's career is a testament to resilience, dedication, and the power of a holistic, client-centered approach to therapy.

**Contact:** [zsoltezsias@yahoo.com](mailto:zsoltezsias@yahoo.com)

#### **Abstract:**

I have lived in the Chicago area since 1999. I was working for an organization for 8 years when I decided to start working for myself. This meant working by one-on-one with clients. This is different than being in a group, working with more patients, other conductors, physical therapist, or occupational therapists.

Being on my own means running the session from the beginning till the end, motivating the child or adult, talking to parents, and other therapists. Depending on the family's situation, also being an advocate for my clients.

It is easy to individualize the program with this set up and focus on specific areas. Some families would like to spend more time working on hand functions, incorporating tools such as the Neofect Smart Glove which is a training program to promote motor learning.

These programs use the same principles as conductive education which is being aware, concentrating on the task, and repetition.

In 2016 I suffered a right frontal intra-cerebral hemorrhage stroke. During my rehabilitation, I had a chance to work with some of these devices, such as the **Robotic Exoskeleton**. They use it during stroke rehabilitation to assist with ambulation during the recovery process by providing mobility very early on. Exoskeletons enhance post-stroke gait training, helping with weight shifts and improving step patterns and rhythm.

Going through my rehabilitation taught me to emphasize stretching more while ambulating with my patients. While I was walking my muscle tone increased which was

blocking my gait pattern and with a quick and simple stretch, I was able to continue walking.

Another very important concept I gained from my own experience is really emphasizing weight shifting and weight bearing. Dr. Pető also emphasized these concepts.

## ROUND TABLE: CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN THE USA

### 3. INTRODUCTION OF CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION AT BOOST IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

**Presenter: Saskia Kramer Wong** – Conductive Education Teacher – BOOST Director  
– San Rafael, California, USA

Saskia Kramer is a Conductive Education teacher who earned her degree in Budapest, Hungary and holds a California Teaching Credential. She has been working in the United States since 2014 as an educational specialist. After two years in New York City she settled down in the San Francisco Bay Area. She works for the non-profit organization United Cerebral Palsy of the North Bay. Saskia is the founder of BOOST School, an academic school that integrates related therapies and folds them into a CE based program. Saskia runs a wide variety of programs with a multidisciplinary team, serving children with motor disabilities. Over the years she has served on the board of ACENA in different roles.

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#### **About us:**

BOOST, part of United Cerebral Palsy of the North Bay (UCPNB), is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting individuals with orthopedic impairments. Founded in 2001 by two families seeking better care for their daughters with cerebral palsy, BOOST has grown to offer intensive programs that cater to the unique needs of children and young adults. In 2010, UCPNB expanded its services, and in 2024, it proudly opened a non-public school to further enhance educational and therapeutic opportunities for its community.

#### **Our Mission:**

“BOOST provides enduring learning opportunities for students with Cerebral Palsy and other motor disabilities in a safe environment where they can achieve their highest level of intellectual, physical, and emotional independence.”

#### **Financial Sustainability:**

BOOST is financially sustained through a variety of funding sources, primarily from the Department of Education in California. The school offers different programs for children and young adults with orthopedic impairments, each funded based on the specific services provided and the age groups served. The funding structure varies depending on whether the programs are designed for children or young adults, and there are some unique aspects to the funding processes in Northern California. This section of the presentation will detail these funding sources, including the nuances and specificities that impact our financial sustainability.

#### **Operational structure:**

BOOST operates a diverse array of programs, all managed by a multidisciplinary team led by Conductor Teachers. These programs are designed to address the unique needs of children and young adults with orthopedic impairments. Our team includes



specialists from various fields, such as education, therapy, and equipment support, each working collaboratively to provide comprehensive care and instruction. In addition, BOOST partners with neighboring colleges and universities to enhance our programs and offer students opportunities for hands-on learning and development in the field.

## ROUND TABLE: CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN THE USA

### 4. CONDUCTIVE PEDAGOGY IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN - CONDUCTOR TRAINING AND CE SERVICE PROVIDED WITH PARTNERSHIP WITH SEMMELWEIS UNIVERSITY ANDRÁS PETŐ FACULTY TRAINING -

**Presenter: Dr. Andrea Benyovszky** Conductor, Adjunct Professor  
Pető András Faculty of Semmelweis University (Budapest, Hungary)  
Aquinas College (Grand Rapids, MI USA)

Dr. Andrea Benyovszky is a Professor at the Institute of Conductive Education at Semmelweis University András Pető Faculty (Budapest, Hungary). She is also an adjunct professor at Aquinas College (Grand Rapids, Michigan) and has been the director of the conductor-teacher/physical or other health impairment training program since 1999.

Dr. Benyovszky is a founding member and former President of the Association for Conductive Education in North America (ACENA)

Dr. Benyovszky holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and conductive education, a master's degree in special education, and a Ph.D. in Educational and Behavioral Science from Eötvös Loránd University Doctorate School in Budapest, Hungary.

Dr. Benyovszky is a special education/conductive education teacher with over 35 years of international (re)habilitation and teaching experience. Her mission is to share her knowledge of the system of conductive education, where students are challenged, motivated, and led to achieve their full potential.

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#### **Early History:**

Since the mid-1990s, there have been several initiatives to launch and operate conductive education programs, mainly led by families raising children with motor impairments. However, the programs were unstable due to limited access to qualified conductors and lacked the required financial support. Conductive education (CE) was not recognized as an evidence-based practice, thus educational institutions were not incentivized to support CE. Because CE was not viewed as contributing to the health of those served, health insurance companies would not recognize such services for those families and children they insured.

The program developed in Grand Rapids was also started by a family with a child who needed something more to address their educational and physical needs. That family discovered the unique approach in Hungary and visited the programs there. Excited to bring the program to Grand Rapids, they recognized the need to bring key professionals and organizations together to ensure that children with motor disabilities had the opportunity to benefit from such a program.

#### **The Training of Conductors:**

Discussions with the Semmelweis University and the Pető András Faculty (SEPAK) went beyond creating the programs for children to include the first US conductor-

teacher training program, under the title of Physically and Otherwise Health Impaired (POHI). Aquinas College (AQ) financed the program and accredited the new BA major in Michigan.

**Components of the program:**

- POHI (general, special education courses),
- General education course
- Conductive education courses and closely associated biomedical courses, taught exclusively by the Semmelweis University Pető Faculty's Professors since the beginning of the program
- A conductive educational school model to include training special education conductor teachers, today known as the Conductive Learning Center of North America (CLC). CLC is a training model experiment in which conductive education programs are drawn up and conducted by trained conductor teachers only.

The degree that conductor teachers earn includes a POHI endorsement for the state of Michigan. After completion of their studies, students will receive a:

- BA degree Elementary Education teacher certification (K-5, from pre-school to grade 5)
- BA degree Elementary Education teacher certification (K-12, from preschool to grade 12, special education teacher),
- conductor-teacher degree certificate.

**CE Today: Perspective**

Shortly after the CLC was established, it became independent, economically maintained, and managed by the community members, the Board of Trustees. Today, it is a part of the local community; it started as a grassroots movement initiated by the parents to bring CE and the conductor-teacher training program to Grand Rapids.

In the view of the universal history of conductive education, these 25 years of cooperation between SEPAK/AQ/CLC has verified unique importance: the conductive education system based on and built up on the Petőian principles is successfully feasible and sustainable even within a different educational, socio-cultural and legal environments if there is a professional, scientific background of the SE/PAK and Aquinas College and the CE laboratory school where students complete their teaching practice, and if all these are under the advisor of the originator and authentic source.

The number of students earning a degree at the AQ /SE PAK program is far less than needed in the conductive education workforce market, and sadly, since COVID-19, AQ has not been enrolling new students in the POHI – Conductor-Teacher training program.

There is still a high demand for conductors. More importantly, due to the development of inclusive education, there is a highly increasing need for professionals with specific knowledge in North America. We aim to encourage and support those professionals who feel responsible for conductive education, advocates who in international academic fields would like to foster the conductive education program based on the respect of the Petőian principles, and those who want to nurture the training of professional conductors.

Since 1999, the CLC has continuously provided conductive education services for children and young adults with non-progressive motor disorders. The education program is drawn up and conducted by local American conductor-teachers holding an AQ/SE PAK certification, working alongside Pető supervisors and delegated conductors as a conductor-teacher team.

Today, CLC is the only provider of conductive education in North America that is directly partnered with Semmelweis University in Budapest.

In discussing the future, we can only define the possible ways towards positive changes while laying down the essential pillars, which will also define the position of the Pető method within the framework of the American educational system.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN YAKUTIA

**Presenter: Yana Makarova** – Conductor-teacher – Nyerjungui, Yakutia, Russia

Please see more information about the presenter: QR

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### **Abstract:**

My name is Yana Makarova (maiden name Mukhina). I graduated from the Pető Institute in 2000 and returned to Russia, where I began my career as a conductor-teacher. For 16 years, I worked in the pediatric neurology department at a Rehabilitation Center, alongside Anna Bushkova, and later, Olga Badmaeva, both of whom also studied with me at the Pető Institute. From 2016 to 2023, I transitioned to private practice, a journey motivated in part by my collaboration with Elena Horvat, whose support and inspiration helped guide me. Since 2023, I have been working at the Center for Medical Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine.

Throughout my entire career, I have been using conductive pedagogy to work with children with cerebral palsy (CP). What has been particularly striking is that this method has proven valuable not only in the rehabilitation of children with CP but also in working with children with autism, Down syndrome, and other developmental conditions. I often reflect on my time at the Pető Institute with warmth and gratitude – the teachers, the fellow students, the conductors. The most profound aspect of my education was the integration of theory with practical experience. Those daily hours spent working directly with children with CP provided us with the most essential tools.

This hands-on training became invaluable when we returned home – 7,000 km away from Budapest – without any immediate guidance to lean on. We simply began working, just as we had in practice, and that was our biggest asset. Without the practical experience we gained at the Pető Institute, it would have been far more challenging to apply conductive pedagogy in rehabilitating children with CP.

In brief, I have lived in Yakutia, Russia, for all these years, working primarily as a conductor. Along the way, I also trained as a speech therapist and special education teacher and took physiotherapy courses in Moscow. Yet, the fundamental knowledge from the Pető Institute continues to be the foundation of my work.

In my video, I hope to convey that even though the world is vast, we are united by a shared mission. Even 7,000 km away from Hungary, in distant Yakutia, the Pető Institute, conductive pedagogy, and the legacy of András Pető live on!

## **"TUT RASTUT" - CONDUCTIVE KINDERGARTEN IN KAZAN**

**Presenter:** **Ida Igra**, Ph.D. – Associative Professor – Orot College and Hemdat Hadarom College – Netivot, Israel

Dr. Ida Igra is an Israeli conductor. She holds a Conductor's diploma from the Pető Institute in Hungary, as well as a Ph.D. in Special Education from Bar Ilan University in Israel. For 20 years, Dr. Igra worked with "Tsaad Kadima", a leading Israeli organization dedicated to helping children with cerebral palsy (CP) and their families. Through this work, she gained extensive experience in applying Conductive Education to empower children with disabilities, teaching them skills for independence and fostering their development.

Today, Dr. Igra serves as an Associate Professor at two education colleges in Israel, where she trains future educators to create inclusive and supportive environments for children with special needs. Her teaching emphasizes the importance of integrating Conductive Pedagogy into modern education to improve the lives of children with disabilities and their families.

In addition to her work in Israel, Dr. Igra has made a significant international impact. She leads Conductive Educational intensive courses and supportive groups for children with CP and their families in Ireland, Estonia, Russia, Ukraine. She is the founder of "Tut Rastut", an inclusive Conductive Kindergarten in Kazan, Russia

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### **Abstract:**

Conductive pedagogy in Russian Federation today is in a strange situation.

There are about 5 conductors who trained at the Pető Institute 25–30 years ago. In addition, there are several Hungarian conductors, some of them speak Russian, come to different Russian cities for interval intensive Conductive Education courses.

In Russia, the system of rehabilitation kindergartens is completely undeveloped. Most of the CP children stay at home with their mothers and from time to time have various rehabilitation courses, such as Bobath, Vojta, Physiotherapy, speech therapy, etc. At school age, they are most often homeschooled, i.e. a teacher from a comprehensive school comes to the child's home several times a week and teaches him some subjects.

10 years ago, I began to come to Russia (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Tyumen, Kazan) with short intensive (2-3 weeks) Conductive Education courses, where I taught CP children and their parents' things that Conductive Pedagogy teaches a different outlook on life, active participation in different situations, movement, ADL, communication with other kids, etc. Every time I told parents: courses are not the right solution to the problem. You need a kindergarten, and then a school, where children will study, and mothers will be able to work and live their own lives. Children will be surrounded by other children; they will learn and develop.

One of the mothers in Kazan liked this idea. Together with her, I opened an inclusive kindergarten "Tut Rastut". The kindergarten works in the spirit of Conductive Pedagogy.

The kindergarten "Tut Rastut" opened on 15/10/2023. Today, 16 children with cerebral palsy and 10 healthy children study there. At the kindergarten work 5 teachers

and 2 neuropsychologists. I meet the staff weekly on zoom for discussions on various issues, including teaching the basics of Conductive Education. Three times a year, I come for 2-3 weeks for practical classes.

Our center has great plans. Next year, we are going to open the first class of the Conductive School, open a summer Conductive Camp and much more.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

### 1. ARIADNA CENTER

**Presenters: Bodrova, Natalia, Maslova, Tatyana and Ilyicheva, Lyubov** – Conductor-Kindergarten Teacher – Ariadna Center – Togliatti, Russia

Please see more information of the presenters here: QR

**Contact:** [natalia.bodrowa@yandex.ru](mailto:natalia.bodrowa@yandex.ru)

In 1993, specialists from the Center “Ariadna” located in Togliatti – Natalia Bodrova, Tatyana Maslova, and Lyubov Ilyicheva – were sent to the Pető Institute in Budapest to learn the methodology of conductive education, with the goal of implementing it in our Center. At that time, there were no institutions in Russia practicing this approach. We understood the significant responsibility placed upon us to fully master this methodology and introduce it effectively.

During our training in Budapest, we dedicated ourselves to absorbing everything taught by the Institute’s specialists. Our education spanned 4 years, from 1993 to 1997, and upon completion, we received our diplomas as conductors.

In our country, however, a diploma from the Pető Institute is not considered a full qualification but rather as professional development. Therefore, in 2004, we also completed studies at a teacher training institute to obtain an official higher education diploma.

Our official job title to this day remains “educator”, and we work six hours daily. During summer breaks, we, as aspiring specialists, had the opportunity and strong desire to apply our newly acquired skills and knowledge within the walls of “Ariadna”.

Simultaneously with our studies, the Center “Ariadna” was actively preparing a technical foundation to ensure quality future services. This involved purchasing and custom-making the necessary equipment, including special conductive plinths, ladder-backed chairs, varied-sized chairs, and installing handrails, along with selecting the appropriate furniture.

Upon completing our studies at the Institute in summer 1997, educators Bodrova, Maslova, and Ilyicheva began working as conductors. Two “Mother and Child” groups were established for children aged 1 to 3 years and for children aged 3 to 7-8 years with cerebral palsy who did not attend preschool institutions. At that time, no other centers in the region provided rehabilitation for such children. It was only after several years that similar services began to appear in other organizations. Today, there are both kindergartens for children with motor disabilities and private centers. However, “Ariadna” remains **a free, state-run institution** providing essential support to children in need.

In 1997, this approach marked a powerful advancement in pediatric rehabilitation. Children attended 40-day courses at the Center, often three to four times per year. During these sessions, children and their parents would stay for 4-5 hours, receiving conductive education sessions, medical treatments, breakfast, and lunch. We organized seasonal events such as “Hello, Summer”, Autumn Festival, and New Year celebrations.



Later, we also established a group for infants aged 5 months to 1 year, aiming to prevent motor development delays. Children would attend sessions for about two hours, receiving both conductive education and medical treatments.

We have always put into practice everything we learned at the Pető Institute, guided by experienced and professional educators.

Our center functions as a medical institution, providing rehabilitation for children with motor impairments. Parents obtain a referral to “Ariadna” through their local clinic and submit the required medical tests and health documents for admission. Upon arrival, the lead neurologist examines the child, prescribes necessary treatments, and, if needed, arranges consultations with other specialists, such as orthopedic and physical therapists, who may recommend electrotherapy treatments. Conductive sessions, if prescribed, are accompanied by massage, physiotherapy, electrical stimulation for major muscle groups, and the use of specialized equipment as needed.

Our team also includes speech therapists, psychologists, special education teachers, and a music therapist. If deemed necessary, the lead neurologist refers the child to these specialists, who then determine the frequency and type of sessions required.

In recent years, the Center has acquired additional equipment and exercise machines for refining motor skills, allowing children to train with specialized instructors.

For children prescribed conductive education, we conduct an initial consultation to assign them to the appropriate age and motor skill group for ongoing conductive education sessions.

Recently, our Center has undergone structural changes. Rehabilitation courses for children with disabilities now last 21 days (3 weeks), excluding weekends, while non-disabled children attend for 14 days (2 weeks). Our daily sessions range from 1.5 to 2 hours, and, unlike before, we no longer provide full meals but allow parents to bring snacks for their children.

We conduct a variety of structured activities each week: Monday and Friday sessions are floor-based; Tuesday and Thursday sessions include sitting and standing exercises by the Swedish wall; and on Wednesday, activities take place on plinths. These sessions may be adjusted according to the children’s developmental levels and motor capabilities.

As before, our sessions focus on developing motor skills, self-care, and mobility within the group using specialized mobility aids such as walkers, handrails, and orthopedic canes. We also include cognitive activities like drawing, construction, and fine motor skill exercises.

Currently, we operate in two shifts: 8:00–14:00 and 14:00–19:00. Both shifts cater to children of various ages, including infants under one year and older children, in “Mother and Child” groups. We conduct group sessions to teach parents how to engage effectively with their children, empowering them to support their children’s motor and cognitive development at home.

Even after many years, we remain passionate about our work! We fondly remember our training at the Pető Institute and all the wonderful teachers and fellow students who understood and supported us. The rigorous training and practical experience from day one strengthened us, giving us invaluable knowledge and skills that we still rely on today!

We graduated as qualified professionals – specialists and conductors – who share our expertise with parents in need of our assistance and support.

It's only regrettable that there are no new specialists like us in our city (or even in the country).

For many years, our Center has combined medical treatments with pedagogical expertise, providing invaluable support to families in need.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

### 2. ABSTRACT FOR PRESENTATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN MEMORY OF ANDRÁS PETŐ

**Presenter: Tatiana Saltzman** – Head of the Department of Social Work – Orthodox St. Tikhon University for the Humanities – Moscow, Russia

Please see more information about the presenter and her presentation here: QR

**Contact:** [tyzai@yandex.ru](mailto:tyzai@yandex.ru)

#### **Abstract:**

I graduated from the Pető Institute in 1999. Upon returning to Russia, I completed my studies at the Russian State Social University in the field of “Social Work” and defended a dissertation, which was a continuation of the research I started at the Pető Institute. My dissertation focused on the history of segregation and integration of people with musculoskeletal disorders, earning me a Ph.D. in History.

In my role as a conductor, I worked for only one year at a social rehabilitation center for adults, after which I transitioned to teaching at a university. Currently, I am the head of the Department of Social Work at the Orthodox St. Tikhon University for the Humanities, where I am involved in training both undergraduate students and practitioners – specialists who support people with disabilities.

I ensure that all my students gain an understanding of the history of the Pető Institute and conductive education. My students have undertaken practical training with Russian specialists experienced in conductive education and have studied their methods. Although connections with the Pető Institute remain active and there are occasional attempts to initiate conductive education projects in Russia, these efforts have not achieved significant expansion. This is largely due to the persistence of Russia’s course-based approach to supporting children with cerebral palsy: children attend intensive sessions several times a year for 21 days, but between these sessions, support is often irregular, minimal, or completely absent.

In organizing student training, I also strive to implement what I learned at the Pető Institute: teamwork, conductor support and mentorship, the close integration of practice and theory, goal setting and planning, paying close attention to the child you work with and believing in them, fostering motivation, taking responsibility for one's actions as a specialist, and punctuality.

I am deeply grateful to my teachers and the organizers of my education for the unique opportunity to study at the Pető Institute.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN SWEDEN

### “IT ALWAYS SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE, UNTIL IT’S DONE” (N.M.)

**Presenter: Zsófia Nádas** – Conductor, Principal – Move & Walk, Sweden

Zsófia Nádas graduated from Pető College as a conductor-teacher, where she in the following 10 years has accumulated extensive experience, particularly in the international department. Her career has taken her to several countries, allowing her to apply her expertise in diverse cultural and professional contexts.

In addition to her professional work, Zsófia served as a lecturer at Pető College for several years, where she contributed to the academic development of future professionals in the field.

Her passion for the profession and commitment to advancing Conductive Education led her to join the Move & Walk team in Sweden, where she played an important role in furthering their mission.

Currently, Zsófia is the head of the Stockholm Conductive Education Special Schools, her leadership extends beyond her local work, as she is also an active member of the IPA (International Pető Association) and ECA (European Conductive Association) boards, contributing to the global advancement of conductive practices and educational standards.

**Contact:** [zsofia.nadas@movewalk.se](mailto:zsofia.nadas@movewalk.se)

**Eszter Tóthné Horváth** – Founder of Move & Walk – Move & Walk, Sweden

Eszter Tóthné Horváth is the founder of Move & Walk and has been its leader ever since. Eszter has started as a conductor and became an experienced CEO and lobbyist, committed to working for the acceptance of Conductive Education both nationally in Sweden and internationally as Vice President of the ECA.

**Contact:** [eszter@movewalk.se](mailto:eszter@movewalk.se)

This presentation shares personal memories, professional compromises and decisions of two conductors. What is completely common to the two professional careers is that the conductor profession has developed further; we have also taken on the roles of mentors, supervisors, leaders, associate professors, board members, directors, managers, owners, lobbyists and many more. For both of us, the mission of raising awareness and implementing conductive education as widely as possible in our homeland and in our new country has been the most important.

In Sweden, Conductive Education has been successfully integrated into several sectors in 2024. In the 21 counties, local political leaders have the autonomy to make independent decisions, including the allocation of funds for healthcare. Grants are announced for the provision of Conductive Education services, typically lasting 2-3 years, after which the successful applicant can organize the conductive sessions in accordance with the established conditions. The private center Move & Walk currently has active contracts with many counties and the intensive interval periods last four weeks, occurring daily for 2-3-4 hours, with programs planned, organized, and led by conductors.

The country has a system of free school choice, with the state funding both municipal and privately operated schools. The special feature of our schools is the harmony of the Swedish core curriculum and conductive education. There are two special elementary schools based on the conductive philosophy in Stockholm, while one each operates in Gothenburg and Malmö. The local authorities corresponding to the students' places of residence fund their placements.

Furthermore, the law regulating social services states that all individuals who are disadvantaged due to differing developmental delays, illness or injury, have the same rights as everyone else. Sweden has a strong social safety net aimed at enforcing the provisions of the law, which also coordinates the system of personal assistants. Move & Walk has now three centers that employ young adults, give opportunity for a valuable life. Their daily routine is based on conductive principles. The center is provided free of charge with support from the municipality of their residence.

The perspective of Conductive Education was entirely new in Sweden in 1997, and success hinged on first recognizing the essential needs of families, followed by those of official bodies and society. Alongside persistent lobbying efforts, professional credibility was paramount, as it was the goal not to simply replicate a well-established model from another country, but to adapt the model we knew and wished to promote.

The implementation of Conductive Education system in Sweden has a history already but not ready yet. We still have a lot of plans: we want to reach full recognition of the conductor profession and to reach our big dream, the conductor training.

We share the common belief that the acceptance of conductive education requires immeasurable perseverance, a well-planned strategy, resilience and sometimes a little bit of luck too.

## CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION IN NORWAY

### NORWAY - TROMSØ

**Presenter:** Eszter Daróczy – Conductor, Lecturer – Pető András Faculty of Semmelweis University

Eszter entered the Pető Institute on 25 August 1980, working until 1 November 2020, when she retired. She worked as a conductor and later as a group leader conductor. She also gained much experience in her international work in England (Birmingham and London). Israel, the USA (Washington DC, Grand Rapids), and Norway, she supported the establishment/ and introduction of conductive education. She also represents the Pető Institute, supports the La Famille organization, and advised its professionals to improve conductive development for children in their education units during the past several years.

Since 2016, as a retired lecturer, she still engages in conductor training by giving lectures for students in Illyefalva (Romania), the English conductor BA (Budapest), and the students of Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, USA.

Until 2023, she was a board member of ECA, representing the Hungarian conductors and the Pető Institute (APF SU). Eszter still supports and participates in the activities of the IPA board.

**Contact:** [deszter62@t-online.hu](mailto:deszter62@t-online.hu)

#### **Abstract:**

The so called Pető project started its completion in Autumn 1994. The discussions and preparation was based on Parents' initiative. The Nord Norge Diakonistiftelsen became the main, and the local Regional Hospital, provided joint support, provided food, financial support for family's travelling and accommodation (if needed) in Tromsø and professionals for the research.

The research were completed during the first 3 years, 8 children were selected from the 2 groups. The aim of this research was to see how conductive education promotes the development of the children. General physical condition was followed by a specialist pediatrician; motor development by a physiotherapist, manipulation development by an occupational therapist, and cognitive development by a psychopedagogue; parents were asked to regularly fill out a survey about their understanding and satisfaction, one of the parents were responsible for this area of the research.

Two groups were organized. Children's age in one of the groups were 3-6 years, number of the group was 14 and among those, 6 children were in the group for further observation, if CE would be beneficial for them.

In the other group, children's age were 7-11 years, number of the group was 10, 2 children were admitted to the group for further observation.

24 families were involved, after two weeks 20 families participated in the programme. The parents of those 8 children were involved in the research for filling out the survey regularly. During those three years, groups were organized twice a year, spring and autumn based on the recommendation of the Norwegian partners, due to the light condition of north Norway., 6 weeks each time

1994–1997 research period – measuring development of the children.

Physiotherapist decided to use GMFM66 measurement tool for following motor development of the selected children.

Psychopedagogy specialist changed his measurement tool after the first session and finally used passive vocabulary test because many of the children were not able to speak at that time.

The Parent who was responsible for the parents' questionnaire was the employee of the Hospital and was the director of the Hospitals school. His child was not involved in the research programme. He created a survey to follow parents' understanding CE development, cooperation, and satisfaction.

The pediatrician followed the physical and health development of children participated in the research.

Evaluation report was completed in spring 1998: All in all it reported a good result in parents' understanding and satisfaction, children's development during the programme, with some relapse in between the development terms, the development of passive vocabulary of the children was also considerable, even the language of the programme was in English.

In 1998, due to the positive experience and the Parents' request, the Hospital took over and continued providing CE, which resulted some promotion of benefits:

- CE was moved into an apartment house of health professionals, it meant permanent places for groups, for conductors' apartment, for parents apartments' on a different floor
- Central organization of planning and organizing families for CE
- Closer cooperation with local professionals

After the Evaluation report, the Norwegian Government signed up a specialists' group for study and give recommendation – if Doman – Delacato method or CE should be supported by the government. Their final report was completed in 1999, and recommended CE which got legal support. Since then, conductive education is paid by the health insurance system for those who are benefited by CE.

The Hospital signed the Department for Child Habilitation for cooperation with the Pető Institute, organization of CE in Tromsø which included the places for development and accommodations for all.

The need for CE increased, so we had to organize 5 groups. Besides, individual sessions were provided as well for children, whom we needed further observation or who had to wait for group admissions. We served more than 50 families

Because of time limitation and increased needs for CE we had to change the length of the group development, therefore, 2 week-sessions were provided per group.

Conductors from the Pető Institute provided conductive education. Group leaders were always the same, conductors working with the group leaders may be different in the groups from time to time.

Parents' involvement – during the first three years all the parents participated in the group programme to enable the children to have better understanding English, and for the parents to learn more about CE and understand the development their child received. At the beginning and at the end of each session, we had meetings with the parents to exchange information.

Professional involvements were also encouraged, each child who's assistant were

signed to be with the child during the programme were taught how to support the child during the programme and how to apply those activities the child learnt during the interval at home, local/home professionals, habilitation professionals are also visited the programme and we had discussion about it as well.

In Norway, according to their system, children up to age 16 years, belong to the Department of Child Habilitation is responsible for the development, over the 16 years of age the Department of Adult Habilitation (DAH) became responsible for the patients. As children at this age together with their parents, wanted to continue conductive education we have to start to cooperate with the DAH.

We agreed to organize an Adult Daily Living Programme which started in 2004. The ADL programme was organized for 3 weeks in each term, and 6 young patient participated. By the time of the first programme, the Hospital changed the apartments and the common kitchen up to the standards.

New approach – new structure

- 3 week sessions were organised – based on Patients' request – twice a year
- Patients lived in their own apartments – parents were not involved
- New kind of daily routine – learning to relax, learning self care – making decisions, preparing breakfast and lunch, learning all movement organization and techniques needed for completing activities

Patients enjoyed this way of learning and the activities, they became very motivated to learn to take care of themselves.



## Farewell Speech

Dear Guests,  
Dear Colleagues,

It was an honour and also a pleasure to see so many of you participating at the International Conductors' Day and the round table session.

This makes us feel, that such events should be organized from time to time, since we are only able to make the conductive world stronger if we communicate, educate and research together and make sure that conductive education is available in as many countries as possible for the people in need.

Today, we were able to hear and share the experiences and innovations of the members of associate professions as well as practicing conductors. I know that these experiments, adaptations and needs heard today will bind us closer than in any other profession.

On behalf of the Faculty, we promise to organize this event between the World Congresses every year, which will keep those close working for the conductive world together and updated.

Thank you everyone for participating!

Dr. Éva Feketéné Szabó  
Vice Rector for Strategy and Development

**New Date:**  
**29th of**  
**November**



SEMMELWEIS UNIVERSITY  
ANDRÁS PETŐ FACULTY

# International Conductor Day

Please welcome the planned program of our free online event on the  
29th of November

Time schedule based on Budapest time zone

## Welcome Speech

**7:45**

Dr. Alán Alpár - Vice-Rector for International Studies  
Andrea Zsebe - Dean of András Pető Faculty

## Announcement

**12:30**

Information about the Designated Institute for Practice initiative  
Information about the Hungarian Conductors Association

## Introduction

**8:15**

Technical information and details about the program and  
presenters by the 2 hosts of the event:  
Andrea Benyovszky - Szabolcs Tiger

## Conductive Education in...

**13:00**

Presenters

- Virág Homonnai (Austria) - Erzsébet Kovács (Romania) - Jennifer Moreau (Belgium)

## Conductive Education in Hong Kong

**8:30**

Presenter

- Luca Antoni

## Conductive Education in France

**14:00**

Roundtable, Host:

- Judit Pázmány
- Eleonóra Lévai - Nóra Tar - Áron Alan Shakkour

## Conductive Education in the UK

**9:00**

Round Table, Host:

- Melanie Brown
- Lizzie Bell - Theresa Kinnersley - Jules McDonald

## Conductive Education in the USA

**15:00**

Presenters

- Andrea Benyovszky - Anita Keresztúry - Saskia Kramer
- Gabriella Molnár - Zsolt Ezsias

## Conductive Education in Australia

**10:00**

Presenters:

- Eszter Agócs - Shona Ballantyne - Andrea Kocsi Thwaites

## Conductive Education in Russia

**16:00**

Presenters:

- Natasa Bodrova - Ida Igra - Jana Makarova - Tatjana Zalcman

## Conductive Education in Germany

**11:00**

Presenters:

- D. Fülle - Dr. N. Hermeking - R. Mechtel - A. Pintér - A. Papné - Sz. Hegedüs - U. Kortas - M. Holper - R. Albers

## Conductive Education in Scandinavia

**17:00**

Presenters:

- Eszter Daróczy - Zsófia Nádas - Eszter Tóthné Horváth

## Farewell Speech

**18:00**

Andrea Benyovszky - Szabolcs Tiger  
Éva Feketéné Szabó - Vice Rector for Strategy and Development

Registration: <https://forms.office.com/e/gihktmu4g1>



zoom

Zoom ID: 979 8033 9165

We reserve the right to change the program.