

Audio Industry Connects Through AES Events and Activities in 2020

Looks Ahead to Expanded Events and Resources in 2021



The Audio Engineering Society looks back on unprecedented events of 2020, while forging ahead in both new and traditional directions for 2021.

The Audio Engineering Society brings the audio industry together to “Listen, Learn and Connect” with peers and pros around the world – a vital role through the past year’s industry changes, challenges and opportunities. Under the leadership of outgoing AES president Agnieszka Roginska and the AES’s Board of Directors and Board of Governors, with the assistance of the AES staff spearheaded by Executive Director Colleen Harper, scores of volunteers led and served on the committees and working groups that recreated AES services in the face of a global pandemic. Throughout 2020, the AES facilitated paths for advancement in the art and science of audio for audio professionals, students and enthusiasts, while looking ahead towards adding new, additional ways to provide the benefits of Audio Engineering Society membership in 2021. From numerous AES Section events to the AES Virtual Vienna and virtual AES Show Fall 2020 conventions, the addition of abundant new online resources and more, the Audio Engineering Society remains the definitive resource, year-round, for those looking to advance their audio knowledge and connection to the industry.

“AES faced many unprecedented and daunting challenges this past year,” Past-President Roginska reflected. “When I look back on what we accomplished in the face of chaos, fear, and uncertainty, I feel an immense sense of pride – none of these things would have been possible without the commitment of the amazing AES community.”

The AES began 2020 with the sold-out AES Academy in January, a featured four-day event held in conjunction with The NAMM Show 2020 in Anaheim, CA, which was followed in March by the AES Worship Sound Academy held in partnership with Belmont University in Nashville, TN – a first-of-its-kind AES event dedicated to training house-of-worship technical ministry staff and volunteers. These events bookended a victorious advancement for the Society’s AES67 standard with the

announcement that the AES would be receiving a Technical & Engineering Emmy® Award for “Development of Synchronized multi-channel uncompressed audio transport over IP Networks.”

As the AES looked ahead to the first AES convention of the year, the Society agilely pivoted and adapted the planned AES Europe Convention into “AES Virtual Vienna,” presenting the AES’s first online-only convention. Through the hard work of dedicated leadership, organizers and volunteers, attendees from 59 countries were able to take part in the Convention, featuring more than 200 presentations in live-stream and on-demand formats, live Q&A sessions and virtual exhibition elements featuring top professional audio brands showcasing the latest gear and technologies. Highlights included Keynote addresses from Jamie Angus, Marisa Hoeschele and Franz Zotter, and the Heyser series presentation given by Francis Rumsey.

The AES also introduced a new initiative dedicated to audio product development, the new AES Audio Product Education Institute (APEI) and its dedicated events, including an Interactive Voice Con in July, a Product Development Symposium held during the AES Show Fall 2020 Convention in October, and the recent Supply Chain and Sourcing Webinar on December 15.

August saw the third in its series of AES AVAR Conferences on Audio for Virtual and Augmented Reality, which hosted virtual attendees for a three-day event focusing on spatial audio and technology for virtual, augmented and mixed reality, with a focus on technical solutions and recommended practices in the field. The AES Virtual Symposium on Applications of Machine Learning in Audio followed in September, exploring topics including automatic mixing, audio source separation, audio visualization and effect control, audio capture and recording, sourcing audio data, legal issues, and more.

Expounding on the theme, “Connect,” the AES Fall Show 2020 expanded into “Audio Engineering Month,” offering engaging new ways for attendees to experience more than 300 livestreamed and on-demand presentations, the Partner Showcase exhibition and online booths, virtual TechTours of top studios around the world and more. AES Show 2020 events began the first week of October and included an Audio-Over-IP Summit, exhibitor events and more leading up to the final week of Technical Program events, including featured presentations from FINNEAS, Jackson Browne & Friends, Imogen Heap and John Chowning, as well as workshops, tutorials, research paper presentations, and a host of other activities.

The Audio Engineering Society was also hard at work on securing new assets and resources for members, on standards development and implementation, and on overall enhancement of AES Member benefits and initiatives for involvement in the Society. One of the year’s biggest debuts was the newly rebuilt AES Live: Videos portal, offering more than 365 videos curated from decades of AES Convention sessions, oral histories, topical workshop and tutorial presentations and more, with additional videos being added year-round. In addition, hundreds of new research

papers and documents have been added to the AES E-Library, now featuring more than 20,000 searchable documents covering a variety of topics and technologies. Further, the AES has bolstered its social media and online presence to promote the plethora of AES Section events, partner promotions and discounts, and the latest news and announcements. Additionally, 2020 saw the launch of the re-branded AES Connect newsletter, an updated AES Member News monthly email, and the new AES The Loop weekly newsletter, highlighting upcoming AES Section events and opportunities offered only to AES Members.

2021 looks extremely bright for the Audio Engineering Society, so make plans to join the AES and take advantage of the latest member benefits and activities, and to join us at upcoming events including an AES APEI Supply Chain and Sourcing Webinar (January 6, 2021), the AES Audio Education Virtual Mini-Conference (February 7, 2021), the AES Immersive Audio Academy (February 11, 2021), an AES AoIP Summit (February 25, 2021), AES EDM Academy (March 11, 2021), the AES Show Spring 2021 Convention (June 1 – 4, 2021), the rescheduled AES Audio Education Conference (July 22 – 24, 2021), the 2021 AES International Conference on Automotive Audio (October 6 – 8, 2021), and the AES Show Fall 2021 Convention and Audio Engineering Month events (October 2021). Stay tuned to AES.org for the latest announcements and opportunities in the coming year.

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