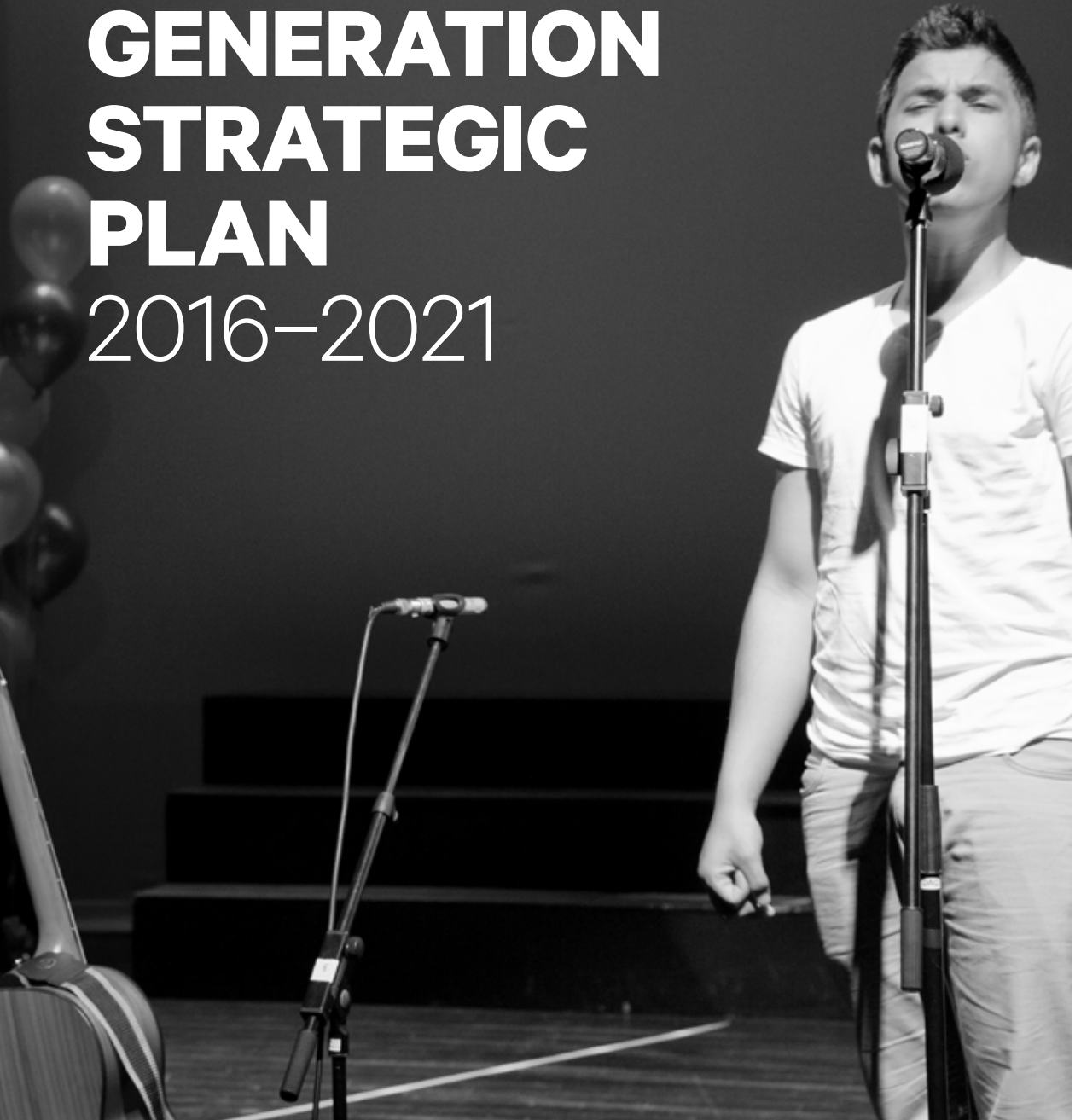


# MUSIC GENERATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–2021





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Ireland's National Music Education Programme  
A Music Network initiative, co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds,  
The Department of Education and Skills  
and Local Music Education Partnerships



## **VISION**

**‘WHAT WE WANT TO DO IS REALLY SIMPLE. WE JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE, WHATEVER THEIR BACKGROUND, GETS ACCESS TO MUSIC TUITION. THAT’S THE IDEA.’**

**(BONO/U2)**

# INTRODUCTION

Music Generation was set up in 2010 by Music Network to establish infrastructure for performance music education. Its genesis stems from the combined philanthropic support of U2 (€5m) and The Ireland Funds (€2m) to seed-fund phased implementation of Music Network's Feasibility Study Report: *A National System of Local Music Education Services*. Charged with developing that infrastructure, Music Generation operates through a devolved model of delivery by Music Education Partnerships under the leadership of Coordinators/Music Development Officers, in response to local need and context and within an overall national framework.

Five years on, Music Generation's impact on transforming the landscape for performance music education in Ireland has been very significant. With Music Education Partnerships now established in 12 areas of the country (Carlow, Clare, Cork City, Laois, Louth, Limerick City, Mayo, Sligo, Offaly/Westmeath, South Dublin and Wicklow) and working also in collaboration with Donegal Music Education Partnership, the programme currently reaches some 38,000 children and young people annually, supporting a workforce of over 330 people across a range of artistic/managerial, musician, and administration/support roles.

Informed strongly by the principles of philanthropy which seek to achieve long-term and lasting outcomes, sustainability has been achieved through a pioneering model of public-private partnership between Philanthropy, the Department of Education and Skills and Local Music Education Partnerships. These are major milestones to have reached in a relatively short period of time, demonstrating Music Generation's proven track record of successfully delivering ambitious targets.



The achievements of Music Generation in its first five-year phase have paved the way for a new phase of development during which the programme will expand into more areas of the country. This phase will also see the further consolidation of the existing Music Education Partnerships.

Much has been learned from our journey so far – about the quality of musical experience for children/young people, about engaged partnership working, about innovation and about the multiple dimensions of performance music education. As a learning and development organisation built on partnership, from 2016 - 2021 we look forward to continuing to strengthen our work with a renewed sense of enquiry, to embedding a strong culture of reflection and, most especially, to aligning our learning in order to continue to achieve positive musical outcomes for children/young people.

This Strategic Plan sets out the overall priority goals for Phase 2 of Music Generation (2016 – 2021) and articulates a plan of action by which these goals will be achieved.

# CONTEXT

## MUSIC NETWORK FEASIBILITY STUDY

The establishment of Music Generation in 2010 created the conditions that had the potential to complete an important part of the jigsaw of music education in Ireland – the development of infrastructure for performance music education.

**In the case of vocal and instrumental tuition, despite some excellent provision in various institutions and schemes, we lack the kind of systematic provision appropriate to a twenty-first-century European country so distinguished by its cultural achievement and identity. Whole regions of Ireland lack appropriate provision and hundreds of thousands of citizens are thereby culturally deprived.<sup>1</sup>**

Music Network's Feasibility Study, the blueprint document underpinning Music Generation's approach, presented a model that involved the creation of a national system of Local Music Education Services that would be *publicly supported, socially inclusive, community focused, of high quality, to complement the teaching and learning of music in the classroom*. Music Generation's 2016 – 2021 Strategic Plan will continue to draw upon and develop the model envisioned in this Feasibility Study.

1. Music Network (2003), *A National System of Local Music Education Services: report of a feasibility study*, p.vii. Retrieved from <http://www.musicnetwork.ie/content/files/publications/adminfeasreport.pdf> on 9 September 2016.

## LOCAL AND NATIONAL POLICY

Since Music Generation's establishment, significant developments in local and national policy contexts have emerged. Nationally, these include the introduction of the Arts in Education Charter in 2012 by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Education and Skills; the Arts Council Strategy 2016 – 2025 *Making Great Art Work*; the National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2020; and Ireland's first cultural framework policy, *Culture 2025*. Locally, the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 and the Local Government Reform Act 2014 have resulted in the amalgamation of VECs into Education and Training Boards and have changed Local Authority structures for local and community development. This Strategic Plan takes into account the changed local and national policy context.

## RESEARCH, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Much has been learned from the work of Music Education Partnerships during Phase 1 of Music Generation. The Research Partnership between Music Generation and St Patrick's College Drumcondra<sup>2</sup> has also revealed important findings from its investigation into the transformative potential for children and young people of performance music education based on the principles of diversity. From in-depth engagement with Music Education Partnerships, the research has developed the understanding and thinking needed to secure a future direction for Music Generation that continues to achieve transformative experiences in music for children/young people. The findings of this research have shaped the direction of this Strategic Plan.

## PERFORMANCE MUSIC EDUCATION

Music Generation focuses on the provision of performance music education – that is, the breadth of vocal and instrumental learning in all genres and styles of music. This includes all pedagogical approaches and practices<sup>3</sup> appropriate to particular musical cultures and traditions, and is delivered by professional musician educators. Recognised by the Department of Education and Skills as non-mainstream music education, performance music education complements and enriches – but does not replace – the mainstream music curriculum provision of the formal education system.

2. See Music Generation (2016), *Possible Selves in Music: The transformative potential for children and young people of performance music education based on the principles of diversity*. Retrieved from [http://www.musicgeneration.ie/content/files/Possible\\_Selves\\_in\\_Music\\_-\\_summary\\_report\\_July\\_2016.pdf](http://www.musicgeneration.ie/content/files/Possible_Selves_in_Music_-_summary_report_July_2016.pdf) on 9 September 2016.

3. See *Possible Selves in Music* which documents research on the modes of performance music education.



## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 – 2021**

### **MISSION**

**Through access to the breadth of high-quality performance music education, transform the lives of children and young people, enabling them to develop their creativity, reach their full potential, achieve self-growth and contribute to their personal development within a vibrant music community.**



## AT THE CORE

Placing children/young people and musicians at the core, to inform values and articulate strategic actions.



Children/young people and musicians are at Music Generation's core. This is where musical interaction and inspiration occurs, where music-making and musical growth is established, where meaning-making and learning happens, where transformation is experienced and ultimately where the development of the future 'possible self' through music is discovered and realised.



## **FOR CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE, MUSIC GENERATION:**

- Values a child/young person centred approach;
- Is committed to nurturing the innate creativity and musical potential of children/young people;
- Believes in the power of creating agency for children/young people in their musical journey;
- Is committed to enabling transformation in children/young people, ultimately leading them to develop their future possible self through music.



## **FOR MUSICIANS, MUSIC GENERATION:**

- Recognises that musicians with a combination of vibrant musician identity and strong educational skills are the essential resource in the delivery of high-quality performance music education;
- Encourages musicians to promote and maintain the highest quality of performance music education for children and young people;
- Supports the need for musicians to reflect on and continue to improve their professional education and musical practice in order to envision, imagine, innovate and achieve positive musical outcomes for children/young people;
- Supports initiatives to encourage musicians to live and work in their locality.



# VALUES

**In placing children/young people at the core, our values are our guiding principles. They are fundamental to the way Music Generation operates and they guide the articulation of our strategic priorities.**

## ACCESS

Music Generation believes that it is the right of every child/young person to have the choice of access and the chance to participate as a musical citizen, regardless of circumstances.

## QUALITY

Music Generation is committed to achieving the highest possible standards in every aspect of its work, in particular the highest quality of musical experience for children/young people and to assisting and supporting others who share this value.

## INCLUSION

Music Generation believes in inclusive access for children/young people and places inclusion at the centre of its approach.

## DIVERSITY

Music Generation believes in a diverse approach to all aspects of performance music education. It understands that the principle of diversity within performance music education is what empowers transformation in the lives of children/young people.



## CREATIVITY

Music Generation recognises that creativity is at the heart of making inspirational performance music education experiences happen for children/young people.

## PARTNERSHIPS

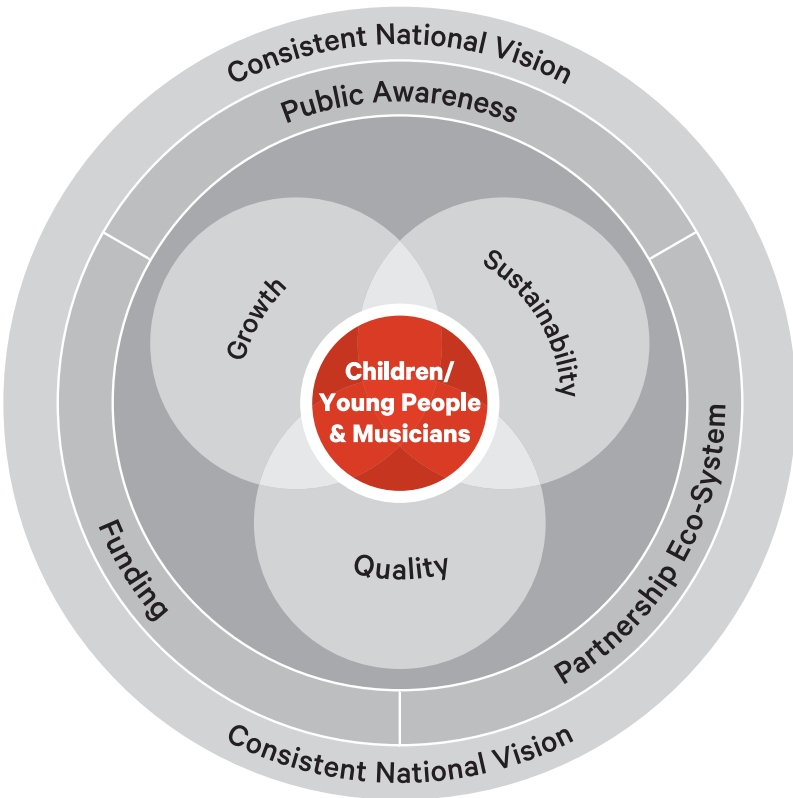
Music Generation believes that the shared agency of working within a partnership ecosystem is critical to strengthening the infrastructure of performance music education in Ireland and ultimately achieving positive musical outcomes for children/young people.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Music Generation is committed to achieving long-term, lasting and sustainable provision for performance music education in Ireland, empowered through local ownership.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To achieve our core ambitions for children/young people and musicians our overarching Strategic Priorities for 2016 to 2021 are **Growth, Sustainability** and **Quality**, underpinned by actions in **public awareness, funding** and **partnership ecosystem**, framed by consistent national vision.



Our goals for **GROWTH** will enable expansion into new areas of the country, alongside nourishing the growth of the existing Music Education Partnerships in terms of depth of provision.

Our goals for **SUSTAINABILITY** will strengthen the infrastructure for performance music education.

Our goals for **QUALITY** will seek to achieve the highest quality of musical experience for children/young people.



## UNDERPINNING ACTIONS

Our underpinning actions in **public awareness** will ensure that we continue to tell our story effectively to multiple audiences and keep Music Generation's presence to the fore among key partners. This proactive approach to public awareness will enable Music Generation to disseminate key messages regarding the implementation of this strategy and its delivery in conjunction with partners.

Our underpinning actions in **funding** are to secure a combination of philanthropic/ Local Music Education Partnership/Department of Education and Skills funding for Phase 2 expansion and protect the funding for the established Music Education Partnerships from Phase 1, ensuring that the Department of Education and Skills and Local Music Education Partnerships continue to meet their commitment to ongoing sustainable matched funding.

The **partnership ecosystem** is an environment created by Music Generation comprising multiple local and national partners. These include children/young people, musicians, Coordinators/Music Development Officers, schools, community groups, Education and Training Boards, Local Authorities, Music Network, Philanthropic Donors and Government departments and agencies.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 GROWTH

## GOALS

- **Expand into more areas of the country**
- **Nourish growth in terms of depth of provision with the existing Music Education Partnerships established in Phase 1**

## ACTIONS

- Co-fund and work with new Music Education Partnerships
- Guide and support delivery by the existing Music Education Partnerships to grow the depth of provision as they continue to focus on building capacity to:
  - Sustain and transform the diversity of practice among musicians across the spectrum of performance music education;
  - Nourish children/young people's growth, progression and musical independence across a diversity of programmes, music genres and contexts;
  - Develop longitudinal programming which enables engaged partnership between musicians and children/young people.
- Continue to invest in incentivising collaboration between Music Generation Music Education Partnerships through regional and national projects
- Continue to invest in learning and networking opportunities for the range of partners involved in Music Generation's wider partnership ecosystem

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 SUSTAINABILITY

## GOALS

- **Through partnership, continue to develop, strengthen and sustain the infrastructure for performance music education**
- **Advocate for the value of performance music education in the lives of children/young people by engaging effectively with key stakeholders and target audiences**

## ACTIONS

- Work with relevant Government Departments and Local Music Education Partnerships to respond to Music Generation's need to be adequately resourced by an appropriately skilled workforce across a range of artistic/managerial, musician, and administration/support roles to sustain future development
- Through public-private partnership, work with Philanthropists, Government and Local Music Education Partnerships to continue to secure long-term sustainable funding streams
- Work effectively with the existing and new Music Education Partnerships by responding strategically in a co-ordinated way to long-term development and sustainability needs
- Increase public awareness of Music Generation's impact
- Amplify and promote the work of Music Education Partnerships
- Empower youth voice by giving agency to children/young people's advocacy for performance music education

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 QUALITY

## GOALS

- **Work with all partners within Music Education Partnerships to achieve the highest quality of experience for children/young people in performance music education**

## ACTIONS

- Foster a strong culture of shared learning across the Music Education Partnership Network by:
  - Supporting Music Education Partnerships in developing, articulating, maintaining and sustaining high artistic and educational standards in their strategic planning for performance music education;
  - Continuing to invest in professional development and learning networks for musicians to support their engagement with innovative approaches and new ways of thinking about performance music education practice;
  - Giving agency to musician-led initiatives, in order to achieve positive musical outcomes for children/young people and recognise musicians' need to enrich their own creative practice;
  - Continuing to invest in the Coordinator/Music Development Officer Leadership Forum, strengthening its function as an empowering professional development network to support this key role;
  - Continuing to invest in research with a focus on articulating quality and sharing best practice across the diversity of performance music education;
  - Co-ordinating a variety of forums to enable shared learning/knowledge exchange within and between the existing and new Music Education Partnerships.





**MUSIC GENERATION**  
MAKING MUSIC EDUCATION HAPPEN

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A Music Network initiative, co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds,  
The Department of Education and Skills  
and Local Music Education Partnerships

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