



**Music
Generation**

Annual Report

2023

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Glossary



Music Generation Wexford

Seedlings

Photo by Zena O'Brien, Zvisuals

Creativity and Collaboration Fund (CCF)

The Music Generation Creativity and Collaboration Fund supports national, regional, and local projects which provide children, young people, and professional musicians opportunities to come together musically. Co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Arts Council/An Comhairle Ealaíon and the Department of Education .

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Continuing Professional Development is the term used to describe the learning activities staff engage in to develop their skills and abilities.

Directorate Steering Group (DSG)

The Music Generation – Education and Training Boards (ETB) Directorate Steering Group provides a forum for communications, collaboration and consultation between Music Generation National Development Office and ETB Directors who have

responsibility for Music Generation programmes within their Directorate. The membership comprises of ETB Directors of Further Education and Training, Schools and Organisational Support and Development along with the Music Generation National Development Office Executive.

Education and Training Boards (ETB)

Education and Training Boards are statutory education authorities. They are the driving force of education and training in the local community, with pathways for every learner across Early Education, Community National Schools, Post-primary Education, Further Education and Training, Apprenticeships and Traineeships, Youth Services, Outdoor Education Services, and Community Education Services. Education and Training Boards nationwide play a lead role in the local management of Music Generation Local Music Education Partnerships.

Local Music Education Partnerships (LMEP)

Local Music Education Partnerships are groups of local experts, individuals, and organisations that champion and guide the development of the Music Generation programme in their area. Each LMEP is led by a Local Authority or an Education and Training Board.

Music Development Officer (MDO)

Music Development Officers are appointed in each Music Generation LMEP Area. They lead and oversee the development of performance music education programmes for Local Music Education Partnerships.

National Development Office (NDO)

The National Development Office aims to achieve Music Generation's mission by supporting the national system of local performance music education provision, through strategic partnership between philanthropy, Government, and Local Music Education Partnerships.

Music Generation Westmeath

Big Sing

Photo by Paul Moore Photography



Performance music education

Music Generation provides 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 appropriate to musical cultures and traditions and is delivered by professional Musician Educators. Performance music education is recognised by the Department of Education 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.

Planning for Quality (PfQ)

Planning for Quality is a collaborative reflexive process facilitated by the Quality, Support and Development team of Music Generation's National Development Office. They are led in partnership with LMEPs to engage with local teams in cultivating a shared understanding of quality.

Quality, Support and Development Team (QSD)

This team leads, develops, and delivers the Quality, Support and Development functions of Music Generation's National Development Office. QSD support Music Generation's national network of Local Music Education Partnerships cultivating a culture of continuous improvement, so that children and young people have the best quality of experiences and outcomes.

Chairperson's Foreword

I am pleased to introduce Music Generation's Annual Report for 2023.

At Music Generation, we take pride in another incredibly successful year in which 8% of children and young people in Ireland were reached through exciting performance music education opportunities and experiences. Beyond our ongoing growth in participation and musical experiences, 2023 stood out as a significant year for many reasons. Young musicians from across Ireland collaborated across counties and borders, took part in vibrant youth-led festivals, and worked with professional artists to create new music, showcasing their creativity and musicality.

As we reflect on our achievements, we are reminded of the importance of amplifying the voices of young people in shaping the future of music making. We're excited to continue our mission to empower children and young people to realise their full potential through access to, and participation in, high quality performance music education. We believe in an Ireland where every child and young person is given the opportunity to transform their lives through the power of music making and learning.

Music Generation's partners are instrumental in our shared success. The work of Music Generation would simply not be possible without their support. In particular I would like to acknowledge U2, The Ireland Funds, Bank of America, the Department of Education, Music Network, and the Arts Council. I would also like to highlight the considerable efforts of Local Music Education Partnerships, in which Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and Local Authorities play a lead role, in furthering our shared goals. With special gratitude we thank the local teams of Music Development Officers, Administrators, Resource Workers, and Musician Educators for their dedication to progressing our shared mission.

I also extend my thanks to the very committed Board and staff of Music Generation National Development Office. There have been some amazing achievements in 2023 and I look forward to what the future brings for Music Generation.

Leo Blennerhassett

Chairperson

National Director's Introduction

Throughout 2023, Music Generation continued to thrive. Working closely with and through our local partners across Ireland we pursued our mission of empowering children and young people through performance music education.

Participation continued to increase with 8% of all children and young people across Ireland accessing and participating in Music Generation programmes. Music Generation worked with 115,936 programme participants, increasing access by 13.7% since 2022. 116,682 performance music education tuition hours took place and 1,246 performances by children and young people were held.

While hundreds of performances and musical experiences took place across the country, some highlights included:

- Totem of Music Generation Roscommon opening the launch of Creative Ireland's Creative Youth Strategy 2023–2027
- Over 100 young musicians from Music Generation Clare, Music Generation Laois and Music Generation Tipperary performing to a national and international audience across the weekend of celebrations at St. Patrick's Festival Quarter
- Music Generation Laois' "Bicycles, Boomerangs and Blue Macaws" – a suite of six songs composed by young musicians from Paddock, Cloneyhurke and Rath National Schools which explored their unique musical take on the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Music Generation's partnership with ETBI, supporting the ETB Anthem Competition which was awarded to young musicians at National Learning Network Holyhill / Cork ETB. The young winners took part in a special recording experience at Windmill Lane ahead of their premiere performance of the chosen Anthem at Cork City Hall.

Within the context of our 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, we continued to focus on implementation of our three strategic priorities: quality, sustainability and advocacy.

Key developments in quality included a revised quality strategy, the five priorities of which were advanced in 2023:

- Planning for Quality (PfQ)
- National Celebration 2024
- Performance Music Education Research and Learning
- Network Strengthening and
- Creativity and Collaboration Fund.

In terms of sustainability, we continued to nurture and strengthen our valued partnerships with philanthropic, government and local partners.

Our communications strategy supported our advocacy goals, ensuring we raise awareness of our mission through listening and engaging with children and young people in our storytelling. We increased our digital engagement and continued to craft content to find new and compelling ways to communicate our impact. We developed consultative and participative processes with children and young people to include their voice in planning the vision for 2024 national events.

2023 was a year of momentous efforts, planning and dedication to creating a special 2024 – a year of “We are Music Generation” National and local events. We are excited to launch and share what we hope will be a special and memorable year for all children and young people, Musician Educators and all partners involved in Music Generation past and present.

As we look back on the achievements of 2023, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to everyone involved in Music Generation for progressing our shared mission. With excitement, we embrace the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in 2024, holding firm to our commitment to transforming young lives through music.

Rosaleen Molloy

National Director

Music Generation

Music Generation is Ireland's national music education programme, which **transforms the lives of children and young people** by giving them access to high-quality performance music education in their local area. Initiated by Music Network, Music Generation is co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education, and Local Music Education Partnerships.

Vision

We believe in an Ireland where every child and young person is given the opportunity to transform their lives through the power of music making and learning.

Mission

Our mission is to empower children and young people to realise their full potential through access to, and participation in, high quality performance music education.



Music Generation Waterford

Woodstown Songwriters Weekend

Photo by Davi Matheson

Values

Quality

Placing quality of experience for children and young people at the heart of our work.

Diversity

Practicing and promoting diversity, equality and inclusion: social, cultural and pedagogic in all settings where we work and have influence.

Partnership

Working collaboratively with many partners using influence and engagement to build trusted relationships to achieve our goals.

Curiosity

Listening and learning; continuously curious about how to do better, thinking big, embracing research and innovation, and planning strategically.

Accountability

Holding ourselves to high standards of transparency, accountability and effectiveness, committing to sustainable growth, and being active in relation to our responsibilities to the environment. Read more about Music Generation's 2022–2026 Strategic Plan.

 [2022–2026 Strategic Plan](#)

Music Generation Roscommon

Night and Day Festival

Photo by Brian Farrell



The Year in Photos



Music Generation Kilkenny
Early Years Workshop
Photo by Brownes Photography



Music Generation Laois
Bicycles, Boomerangs and Blue Macaws
Photo by Alf Harvey



Music Generation Limerick County
Newcastle West Christmas Busk
Photo by Three.By.Eight

Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan
A Deep Ravine
Photo by Lorcan Doherty





Music Generation Offaly

Opening of Esker Arts Centre with Tolú Makay

Photo by Paul Moore Photography



Music Generation Cork City

Lámh Choir

Photo by Seán Downey



Music Generation Roscommon

Senior Youth Voices

Photo by Brian Farrell

Music Generation Carlow and Music Generation Cork City

Music @ Mount Leinster

Photo by DGM Photographic



“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



Activities and Outputs

Music Generation Longford
Early Years Programme
Photo by Rachel Berry



8%

of all **children and young people** in Ireland access Music Generation activities



1

2

513

Musician Educators actively delivered Music Generation programmes in 2023

2023 Year in Review

116,682

Performance Music Education **tuition hours** were delivered in 2023



115,936

Programme Participants



3

4

1,246

Music Generation **performances** by children and young people were held in 2023



45

musical genres taught on Music Generation programmes

5

1 – **Music Generation Sligo** *Culture Night 2023*, Photo by Carl Brennan

2 – **Music Generation Tipperary** *Clonmel Junction Arts Festival*, Photo by John D Kelly Photography

3 – **Music Generation Clare** *St Patrick's Festival*, Photo by Dave Keegan

4 – **Music Generation Galway County** *Galway Ukulele Orchestra*, Photo by XPOSURE

5 – **SubSounds Youth Music Festival**, Photo by Chiznics Photography

Participation

Music Generation worked with **115,936 programme participants** in 2023, across **28 LMEP Areas**.

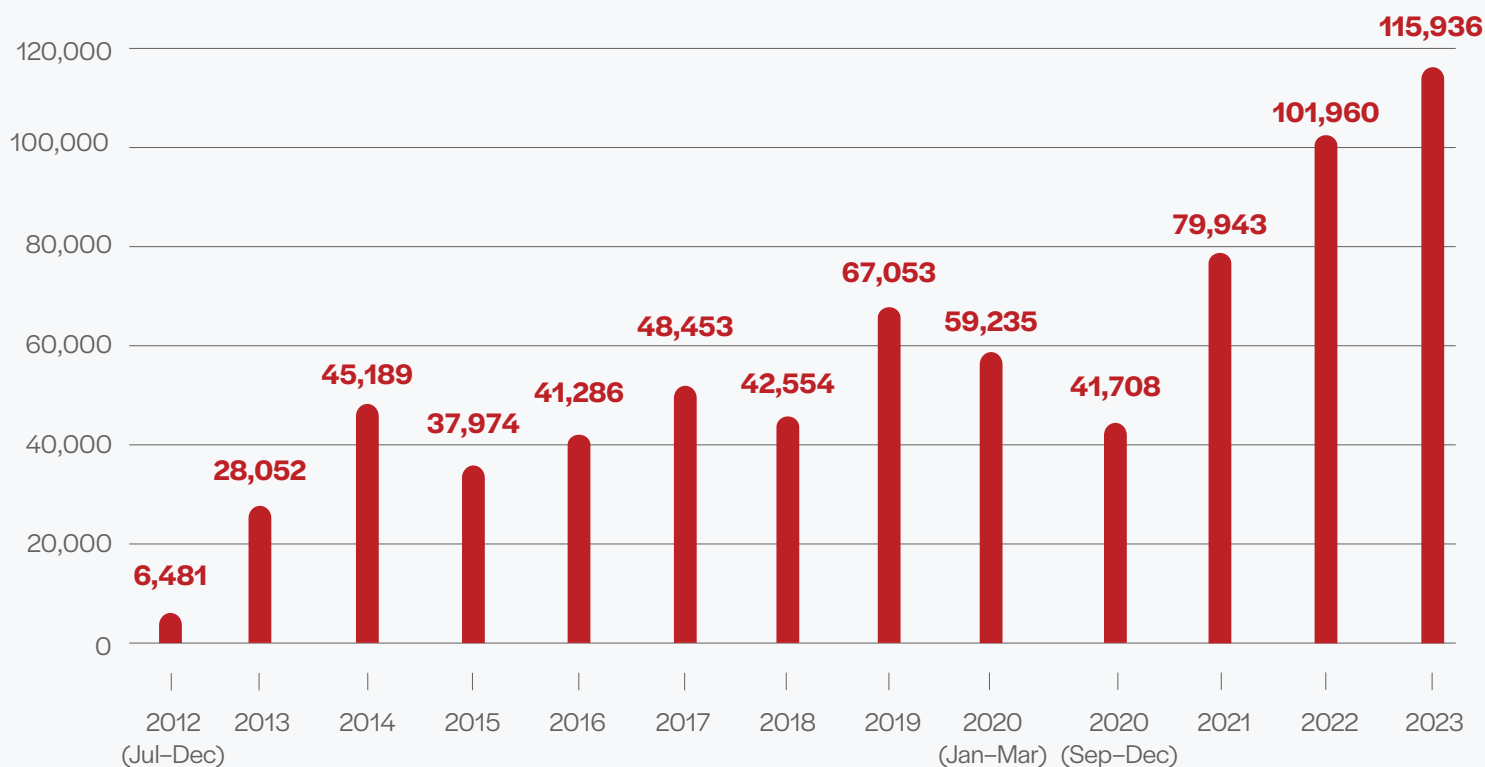
This number reflects the continued growth of Music Generation and expansion into new areas of the country.

Music Generation worked with 8.3% of all children and young people in Ireland.



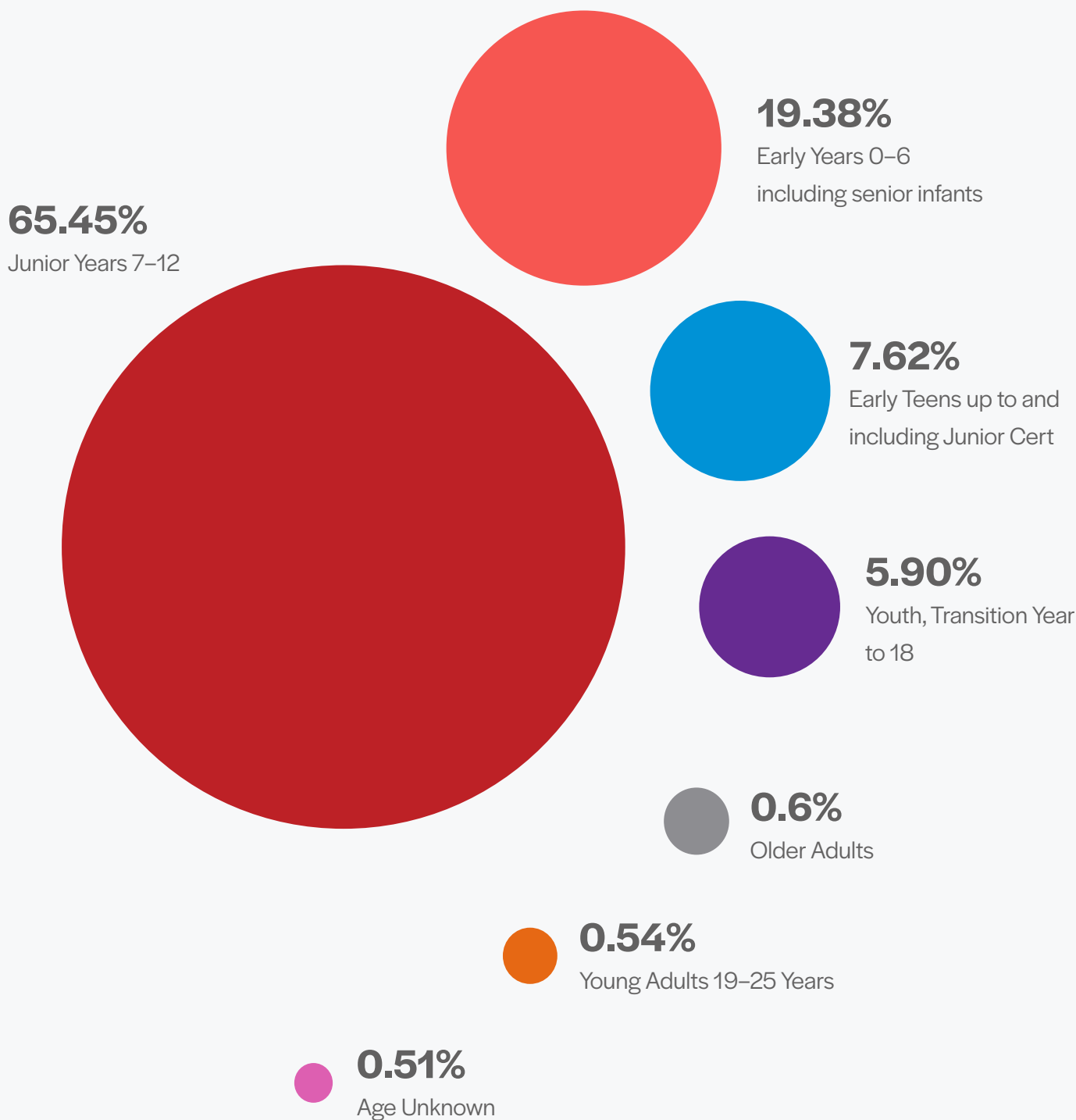
Music Generation Dublin City
Summer DJ Camps
 Photo by Kieran McGuinness

Total Annual Programme Participants



Ages of Programme Participants

The highest proportion of programme participants are among the Junior Years (7–12 years old) age group.





Tuition Hours

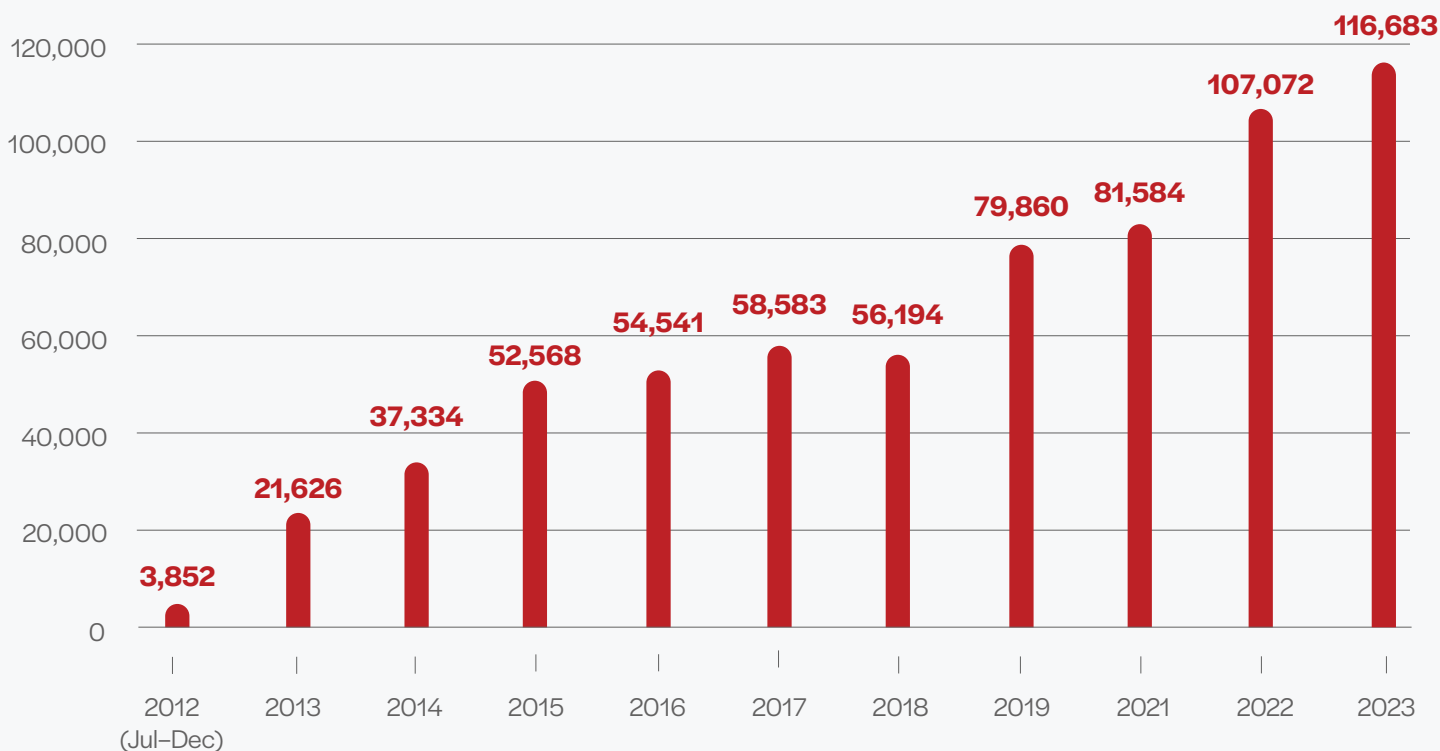
There was a **8.97% increase** in tuition hours delivered in 2023.

Music Generation Laois

Bicycles, Boomerangs and Blue Macaws

Photo by Alf Harvey

Total Tuition Hours

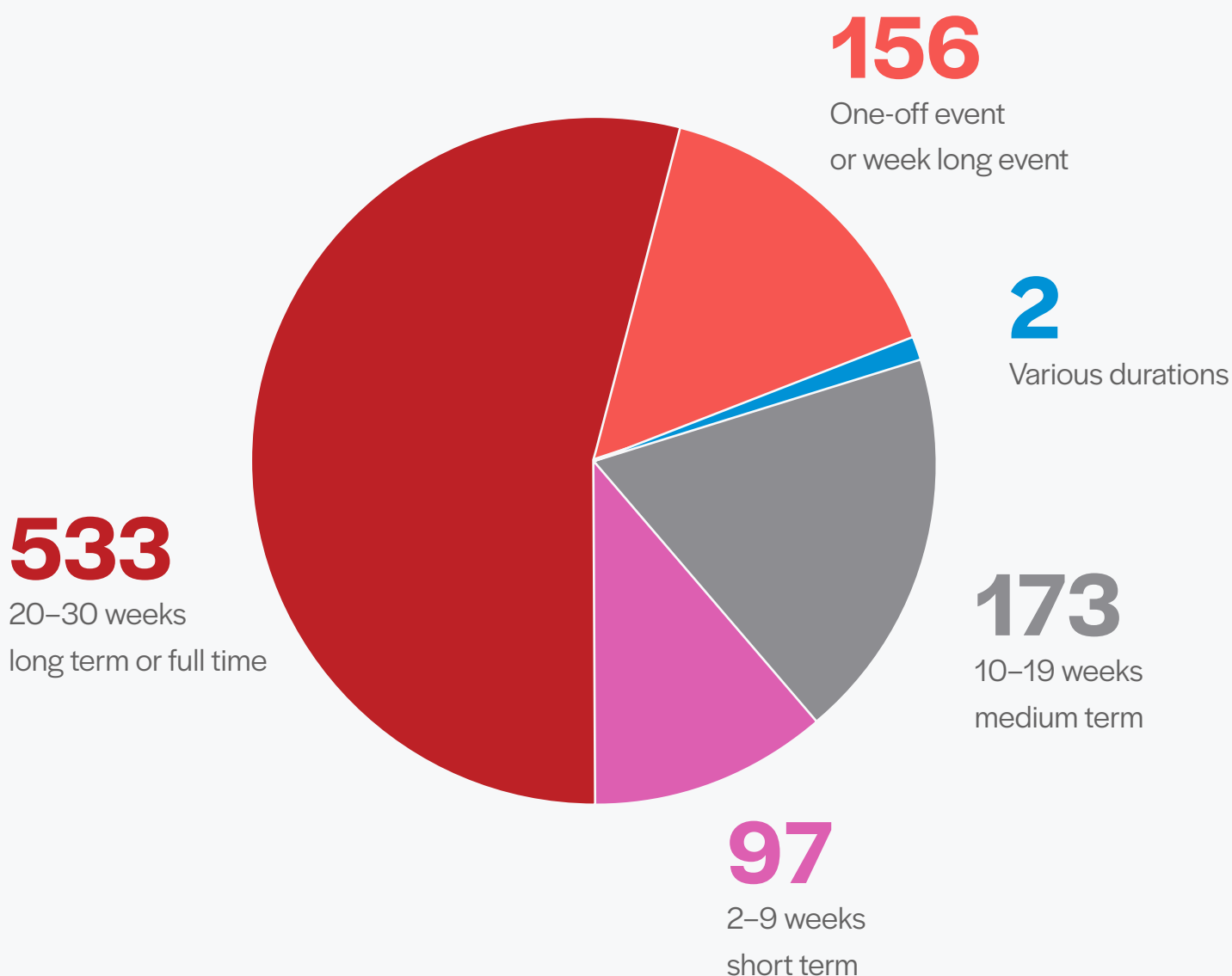


During the pandemic in 2020, information on tuition hours was collected differently. Rather than totalling tuition hours for that year, the average weekly tuition was monitored at three time points. Because of this difference, the total tuition hours for 2020 is not included in this graph.

Programme Focus, Formats and Delivery

Duration of Programmes

The largest proportion of Music Generation programmes are of 20–30 weeks duration, or full-year tuition programmes.



Genre

LMEP Areas reported that programmes had 45 distinct types of genres, 12 more than 2022. Two hundred and forty-seven (247) programmes reported having a single genre focus but most programmes offered a mix of genres, informed by the aims of the programme. Examples of the kinds of programmes where a mix of genres occurs include:



SubSounds Youth Music Festival
Photo by Chiznics Photography

Foundational or Pre-Instrumental

Podcasting

Music Technology

Recording and Production

Spoken Word

Composition

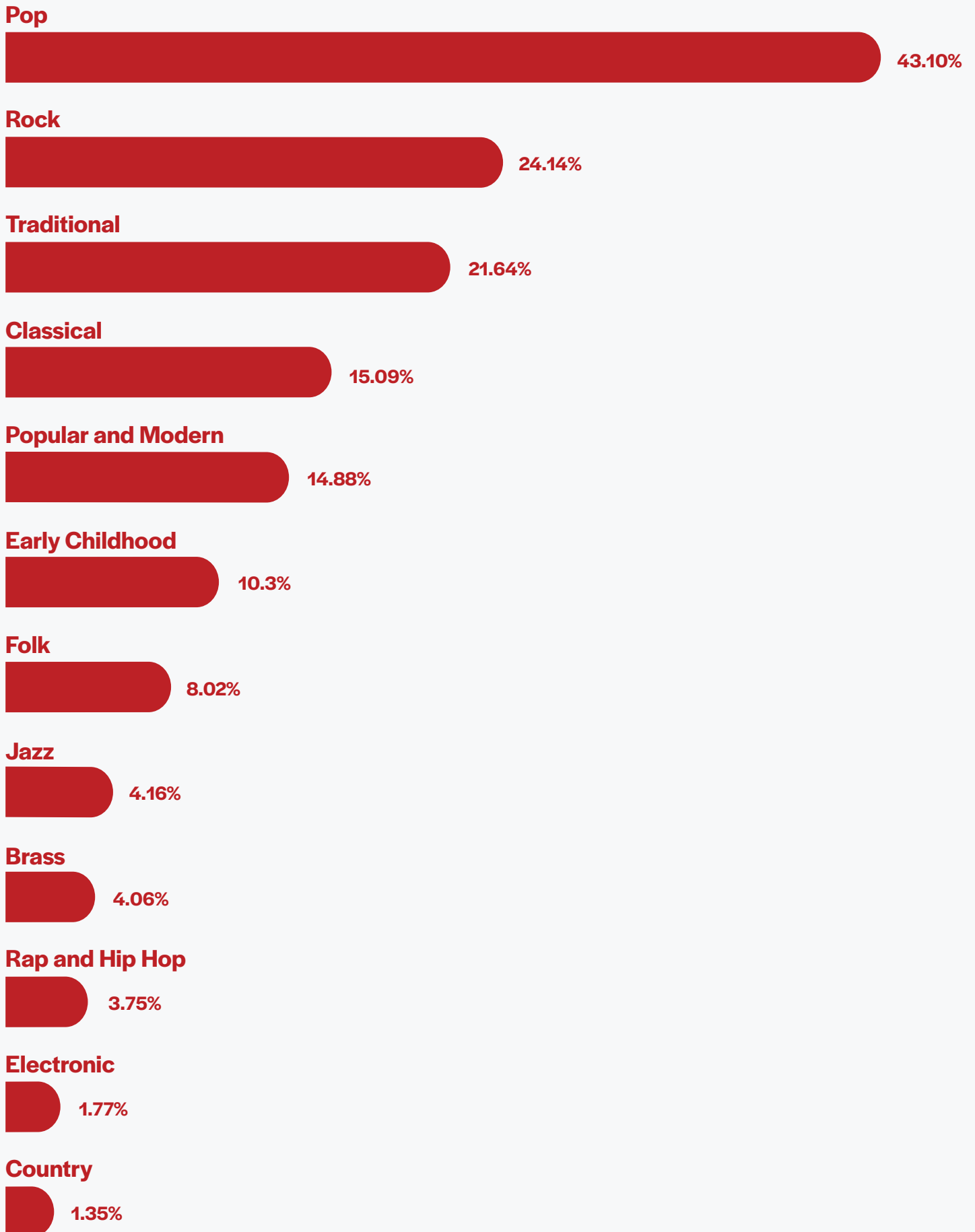
Rap

Creative Music Making

Singer-Songwriter



Music Generation Clare
St Patrick's Festival
Photo by Dave Keegan





Unique Venues

Music Generation LMEP Areas reported using **1,318 unique venues** in 2023. This is an increase of 13.4%.

The proportion of venue types in use is comparable with previous years. Primary school settings account for the highest proportion of venues used, at 53.9%, a 0.5% increase from 2022. Post-primary school settings are next at 10.7%, a decrease of 0.7% from 2022, followed by youth centres at 6.6%. This represents a 0.1% increase from 2022.

Music Generation Waterford
Woodstown Songwriters Weekend
Photo by Davi Matheson

Music Generation LMEP Areas reported working in **710 unique primary schools**

This represents 22.98% of all primary schools in the State, an increase of 3.98% from 2022.

Music Generation LMEP Areas reported working in **142 unique secondary schools**

This represents 19.7% of all secondary schools in the State, a 1.7% increase from 2022.

Music Generation also worked in **17.4% of the special schools (24 of 138)**

in the State. This is a decrease of 2.6% from 2022.

Workforce and Continuous Professional Development

Workforce

513 Musician Educators actively delivered programmes in 2023. This is an increase of 1.58% compared to 2022.

Twenty-five LMEP Areas also organised 514 visits from 204 Professional Musicians (or in some cases, ensembles).

Music Generation Limerick City

One Day in May

Photo by Dominik Kosicki



Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

3,798 hours of CPD were delivered to Musician Educators within the LMEP Areas. This represents an increase of 2,471.58 hours (186.3%) in 2023. The most frequently occurring topics and focuses for training included:

Quality

Programme Planning

Pedagogy

Genre

Instrumental Training



Music Generation Carlow

Vocal Playshop Bagenalstown

Photo by DGM Photographic



Music Generation Clare

St Patrick's Festival

Photo by Dave Keegan

Music Generation Clare

Irish Concertina Orchestra

Photo by Dave Keegan

“It was just a surreal experience, being up there on the stage and playing with the orchestra. I love the experience of playing the tunes live. It's just lovely playing the tunes you love to play in front of a crowd.”

Kate, Young Musician, **Music Generation Clare**

Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan

A Deep Ravine

Photo by Lorcan Doherty



Programme Highlights from Across the Country

Carlow

[Music Generation Carlow](#) hosted “Music at Mount Leinster” a festival celebrating traditional Irish music. The five-day event gathered young musicians from across Ireland for a series of workshops, sessions and performances. After a three-year break due to the pandemic, aspects of the festival were redesigned to generate more interest and participation. This led to the creation of a new youth ensemble for the festival in 2023. The new platform encouraged more involvement from young musicians and gave them a space to collaborate and perform together. Throughout the festival, experienced traditional Irish musicians guided and mentored the young musicians. The festival closed with three concerts featuring live performances from Musician Educators, Junior and Senior Ensembles.

[Watch a performance here.](#)

Cavan/Monaghan

[Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan](#) Cross Border Youth Folk Orchestra presented “A Deep Ravine: Reflections on a Divided Ireland”. This musical suite was part of The Decade of Centenaries 2023. The piece depicted life on the border and provided insights into the end of Ireland’s partition era. Over 100 young musicians from Cavan, Monaghan, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Scotland and Ukraine made up the Folk Orchestra. It brought together young people from a variety of musical backgrounds including trad, folk, rock and classical. “A Deep Ravine: Reflections on a Divided Ireland” was composed and conducted by Michael Rooney with scripting by writer, Tommy Mc Ardle. The world premiere performance took place in the Spiegeltent at Hilton Park in Clones, County Monaghan.

[Find out more about their experience here.](#)

Clare

Music Generation Clare presented their inaugural “Folk Festival”. Over 100 young musicians participated in the festival. A team of professional musicians hosted small group sessions to help the young musicians develop their skills in composition and instrumental techniques. They also developed their confidence through performances on stage alongside professional musicians. The finale performance saw guest musicians and young musicians perform together to a full house at the Old Ground Hotel in Ennis.

Cork City

Music Generation Cork City Lámh Choir presented “Crazy World” through music and Lámh hand sign language. The Lámh Choir initiative provides access for young people of all abilities to participate in music in a fun and relaxed way. Through blending music and Lámh sign language, this unique project promotes inclusivity and creativity. Young singers from School of the Divine Child, Lavanagh Centre and Scoil Ursula, collaborated to perform a special rendition of the Aslan classic, “Crazy World”. It was dedicated to writer and performer, Christy Dignam.

[Click here to view their performance.](#)

Music Generation Cork City
Music Gives Me a Reason
Photo by Claire Keogh

Dublin City

Music Generation Dublin City started working with Migrant, Refugee and Direct Provision Centres across the city. Young people and their families had the opportunity to take part in weekly music programmes. These included songwriting, music production and group instrumental sessions. Music Generation Dublin City partnered with Bohemians FC to further enhance its outreach programmes in the inner city. The new partnership project aims to reach disadvantaged and socially isolated children in the community and will continue to grow in 2024.



Dún Laoghaire — Rathdown

In 2023, a strategic review of [Music Generation dlr](#) took place following the completion of its first development phase (2019–2022). This resulted in a restructuring, with [DDLETB](#) taking on the lead partner role for the next development phase from 2024. Planning for the next phase began, and programmes will focus on creating access for children and young people experiencing disadvantage. These programmes will align with the objectives of DDLETB, dlr County Council, and the county’s Youth Development Plan.

Fingal

[Music Generation Fingal](#) expanded its Rhapsody programme to four new locations in Fingal County. The programme, aims to create inclusive access for young people aged 12–18, from all backgrounds. Each group meets weekly with Musician Educators to compose and record an original song. The Rhapsody programme is tailored to the interests of each group. This approach creates a safe youth-led space for participants to develop social and songwriting skills. The Balbriggan Rhapsody group performed their original song for the first time at SubSounds Youth Music Festival.

[Find out more about the programme here.](#)

Galway City

[Music Generation Galway City](#) presented Misleór Youth Open Mic in the O’Donoghue Centre at the University of Galway. This open mic initiative was part of Galway Traveller Movement’s Misleór Festival of Nomadic Cultures. The festival celebrates cultures and traditions of nomadic communities. The afternoon event was hosted by Musician Educator and alumnus PJ Mongan and participant Francis Ward. The duo performed together and facilitated many open mic performances by the attendees. The event also featured a performance from Radharc na Mara Primary School who are part of Music Generation Galway City “Music in Nature” project. Following their successful hosting of the Misleór Youth Open Mic event, PJ and Francis received an award in the music category at the Traveller Pride Awards 2023 for their outstanding contributions to the festival. [See more here.](#)

Galway County

Galway Ukulele Orchestra, an initiative of [Music Generation Galway County](#) brought 450 young ukulele players together to rehearse, and record at University of Galway. The orchestra was supported by professional musicians Mikey Maloney and Martin McDonnell. The young performers were part of local primary school ukulele programmes across Galway County. Young performers from Youth Services and other community programmes also took part in this unique performance. Galway Ukulele Orchestra was set up as a pathway for young musicians from diverse locations across Galway to sing and play together.

[Find out more here.](#)

Music Generation Fingal

Rhapsody Programme

Photo by Natenael Abi Negash



Kerry

Young musicians from [Music Generation Kerry](#) headlined at Féile Thrá Lí 2023. The “Youth Wind Ensemble”, “Young Strings Ensemble”, and bands from the “Tralee Band Project” performed across the 5-day festival. A highlight moment for the “Youth Wind Ensemble” was their performance for the Roses and Rosebuds in Siamsa Tíre. They prepared and performed a specially arranged version of “The Rose of Tralee” for the occasion. The “Young Strings Ensemble” were joined by guest violinist Hannah O’Shea, leader of the [National Youth Orchestra of Ireland](#), at their mainstage performance.



Music Generation Kerry
Féile Thra Lí Kerry
Photo by Pauline Dennigan

Kildare

[Music Generation Kildare](#) launched a “Music Summer Camp” pilot series. It included three camps for children and young people aged 0–18 years. For younger children (0–6), early years music workshops were held in partnership with Kildare Library Service. Participants explored singing, movement, percussion, and music games. Young music makers (7–12) were introduced to a variety of instruments and music activities over four days in four locations throughout the county. Young musicians (12–18) were invited to take part in a pilot “Jazz Workshop Series”. The programme explored Jazz improvisation, composition and performance. The pilot series led to the creation of a “Teen Spirit” Jazz Ensemble. [Watch some of the jam sessions here.](#)

Kilkenny

[Music Generation Kilkenny](#) produced “TradCamp 2023” in partnership with Music Generation Tipperary. Young musicians from both counties came together for five days to learn new skills and perform in a group setting. They were led by guest musician and multi-instrumentalist Richie Delahunty. Richie is a former all-Ireland title holder and member of renowned folk band Moxie. The camp culminated in two special performances at Clonmel Junction Arts Festival and The Medieval Mile Museum in Kilkenny. [Click here to watch the group perform.](#)

Laois

[Music Generation Laois](#) led a new children's songwriting project, "Bicycles, Boomerangs and Blue Macaws" in partnership with Creative Ireland and The Arts Council. Composers Lorna McLaughlin and Sarah Murphy worked with 110 children from three primary schools to create a suite of six songs titled "Bicycles, Boomerangs and Blue Macaws". The songs were inspired by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Lundy Model of Participation (2007) was used to facilitate and empower the voice of the child throughout the songwriting process. The new suite of songs emerged organically, with every child contributing ideas, words, sentences, musical lines. The children's thoughts and ideas were central to the project. The premiere performance took place at The Malthouse in Stradbally. The suite was performed by the young composers from Cloneyhurke, Paddock and Rath National Schools in County Laois, with support from a team of Musician Educators. [Watch more here.](#)

Leitrim

[Music Generation Leitrim](#) ran pop-up bucket drumming and percussion workshops at primary and secondary schools throughout the county. During these workshops, children and young people learned the basics of bucket drumming and other percussion instruments, as well as singing songs. The workshop concluded with a performance of a new song developed together with the band and bucket drumming and percussion. [Watch one of their bucket drumming workshops here.](#)

Music Generation Leitrim

Europe Day

Photo by Brian Duignan Photography

Limerick City

To commemorate a decade of programming, [Music Generation Limerick City](#) organised a one-day festival named "One Day in May". Held at Dolan's, the event featured over 40 acts across four stages. The festival aimed to celebrate creativity in an inclusive festival style. The programme, opened by hip-hop star Denise Chaila, showcased performers from Music Generation Limerick City, Music Generation Cork, Music Generation Clare, Music Generation Laois, and Music Generation Waterford. Participants came from diverse musical backgrounds, including pop, rock, country/folk, jazz, traditional, and classical genres. These young musicians received support from professional artists affiliated with the Music Generation Limerick City Musician Educator team.

[Watch highlights of "One Day in May".](#)



Limerick County

[Music Generation Limerick County](#) introduced its first series of Community Hubs in collaboration with local partners. These hubs began with a pilot programme in Newcastle West and later expanded to include communities in Castleconnell, Askeaton, Rathkeale, and Kilmallock. Each hub provides creative performance workshops alongside live community events. The Newcastle West Hub now hosts an annual Christmas busking event, with plans to involve all newly established community hubs in 2024.

[Learn more about the Newcastle West programme by watching this video.](#)

Longford

[Music Generation Longford](#) delivered “Longford Sounds”, a programme supporting young musicians in collaborative live performances. Focusing on rock, pop, and songwriting, it encouraged self-expression and creativity. The programme’s highlight was an end of year showcase at the Backstage Theatre, featuring various musical groups of all ages. The event ended with an exciting 'bandjam' finale. [Watch a snapshot of their performance here.](#)

Louth

[Music Generation Louth](#) curated a series of guest workshops with Berlin-based digital artist Æ Mak. The series was designed to build a progression route from the technology programme TY Trax. It aimed to inspire participants to continue as creative musicians beyond the school experience. The workshops took place in local music venues and gave participants the opportunity to learn about Æ Mak’s own techniques and approaches to creating music. The young people had the chance to experience her music in live performance. They also had the opportunity to demo and discuss their own tracks with Æ Mak and join her on stage in performance.

[Watch their experiences here.](#)



Music Generation Limerick County
Newcastle West Christmas Busk
Photo by Three.By.Eight

Mayo

[Music Generation Mayo](#) created a new initiative “Fret Frenzy” which ran throughout the year. “Fret Frenzy” was created as an inclusive community music space where young musicians regardless of their experience or background could explore pop and rock music in a relaxed, non-competitive environment. The programme also brought together young musicians who had previously learned music in isolation to provide them with a space to connect with like-minded musicians and form new friendships.

Meath

[Music Generation Meath](#) hosted a gig for the young musicians of “Abbey Road Sounds” in Navan. “Abbey Road Sounds” supports bands and young artists through mentorship and access to resources and music technology and aims to build confidence and form connections. Participants had the opportunity to perform original music and covers to a sold out audience in the Central in Navan.

[Hear more about their experiences at Abbey Road Sounds.](#)

Offaly

[Music Generation Offaly](#) participated in the official opening of the new [Esker Arts Centre](#) in Tullamore. A choir of children from two local primary schools performed with local musician Tolú Makay, with accompaniment from musicians Donal Lunny and Graham Henderson. President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina attended the event along with local dignitaries and guests from the community. [Find out more about the event here.](#)

Roscommon

[Music Generation Roscommon](#) developed a performance programme for Boyle Arts Festival in July 2023. Forty students from Boyle Music hub supported by local Musician Educators developed a show that explored musical influences from the decades of 60’s, 70’s, 80’s, and 90’s. The young musicians and Musician Educators performed to an audience of over 400 people at the festival.

[Watch a taster of the performance here.](#)



Music Generation Roscommon

Boyle Arts Festival

Photo by Brian Farrell

Sligo

[Music Generation Sligo](#) hosted its largest ever event “School’s Celebration Concert” at Atlantic Technological University Knocknarea Arena. Over 520 young musicians from 21 schools took part, performing to an audience of 900 people. These young musicians participated in Music Generation Sligo’s annual “Discovering and Performing Music” programme which took place throughout 2023. They played various instruments like ukulele, violin, guitar, cello, and keyboard, and participated in junior bands and vocal ensembles [Watch their experience here](#).

South Dublin

[Music Generation South Dublin](#) supported and participated in “The Night Belongs To Us 2023”. This series of events ran from September to December 2023 in venues across Tallaght and Clondalkin. It featured DJ sets, masterclasses, and performances by local headliners, catering to young musicians aged 14–18. Open Mic sessions were also held for young musicians. The events were free, with local venues, community centres, and libraries staying open late, providing a diverse space for young musicians to enjoy nightlife.

[See more of ‘The Night Belongs to Us’ here](#).

Music Generation South Dublin

NOISE Music

Photo by Pati Guimarães

Tipperary

[Music Generation Tipperary](#) hosted the “Big Sing Along” performance workshop at the Source Arts Centre, Thurles. Three workshops were delivered over one day and attended by more than 600 children and young people from local primary school programmes including “Primary Beats” and “Tune Up Tipp”. These programmes focus on early years and instrumental performance music education. The young musicians were invited to perform and sing along with the Music Generation Tipperary House Band for a final performance workshop.



Waterford

[Music Generation Waterford](#) collaborated with the Blackwater Opera Festival to create “Discover Opera” and “Discover Singing” educational workshops in Lismore. “Discover Opera” is an immersive opera experience for primary school children to discover the world of opera. The workshop takes place annually at Lismore Castle Gardens during Ireland’s Summer Opera Festival. Each year, participants engage in workshops and an opera trail which explores music, storytelling, set-design, costume and cast and crew through a series of workshops and an opera trail. The programme engages young participants with a creative and imaginative programme of opera. [Find out more about the programme here.](#)

Westmeath

[Music Generation Westmeath](#) continued its long-standing community youth music project, “Music Jam”, in 2023. “Music Jam” provides youth-led music sessions for children and young people aged from 4–18 years old in an inclusive environment. Young musicians can perform together, write, record and learn about event management, production and sound engineering. In 2023 “Music Jam” celebrated its 10th year and performed its first “Music Jam Live at The Stables” in Mullingar. This event included performances by the young “Music Jammers” supported by their Musician Educators. Alumni of the Music Jam programme provided support for programming and sound engineering at the event. [Watch some of the event here.](#)

Wexford

[Music Generation Wexford](#) premiered their climate change youth opera “Seedlings” at the National Opera House in Wexford in partnership with Wexford Festival Opera. Directed by Elizabeth Drwal and composed by Andrew Synnott, the opera was created in collaboration with the young musicians. The project began through youth opera workshops in July 2022, where participants explored their creativity and performance skills through various activities like circus skills, acting, singing, and songwriting. They also attended workshops with Climate Ambassador Adam Stapleton and poet Sasha Terfous to learn about environmental themes. [Watch more about the development of the project here.](#)

Wicklow

[Music Generation Wicklow](#) initiated a programme with young residents at the Direct Provision Centre at Kippure Estate. It began with a one-day songwriting workshop where participants explored their creativity, expressed themselves through song, and collaborated. The workshop evolved into the creation of new performance pieces guided by local Musician Educators. The goal was to provide a platform for these children and young people to showcase their talents and creativity at [Cruinniú na nÓg](#) celebrations, held at Blessington Library in June 2023. This process allowed them to discover their musical abilities and share their stories and perspectives through music. [Watch their performance piece here.](#)



Young Ambassador Opportunities and National Cultural Events

ETB Anthem Winners

Find Your People

Photo by Marc O'Sullivan

Each year, young musicians from Music Generation programmes from across the country are invited to bring their music to national and international audiences.

Music Generation works closely with funders, donors, and partners to **create** these **memorable performance opportunities**.

Young Music Generation band perform at Creative Ireland's Youth Plan Launch March

Music Generation Roscommon band 'Totum' performed at the launch of Creative Ireland's new [Creative Youth Plan 2023-2027](#). The Young musicians showcased their original music to an audience of young creatives and delegates from the arts sector and government. The event took place at the National Gallery of Ireland and was attended by Minister Catherine Martin (Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media), Minister Roderic O'Gorman (Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth) and Minister Norma Foley (Education).

[Read more about the event here.](#)



Music Generation Tipperary

St Patrick's Festival

Photo by Dave Keegan

St Patrick's Festival March

Over 100 young musicians from Music Generation Clare, Music Generation Laois and Music Generation Tipperary performed at the main stage of the Festival Quarter in Collins Barracks for St Patrick's Festival 2023. [Watch their experience here.](#)

ETB Week March

Young musicians and ensembles from Music Generation areas including Carlow, Kildare, South Dublin and Wicklow performed at a variety of ETB Week events and celebrations. Performances took place in Croke Park, ETBI Headquarters and at a bespoke mural created for the launch of ETB Anthem Competition in Dublin 8. [Find out more here.](#)

Music Generation Carlow

Young musicians perform for

US President Joe Biden

Photo by Adam Schultz



Young Ambassadors perform for President of United States

April

Three young musicians from Music Generation Carlow performed for President of the United States Joe Biden at the State banquet dinner in Dublin Castle during his official visit to Ireland. The young musicians, supported by their Musician Educators had the honour of being the first musicians to perform for, and welcome President Joe Biden as he arrived. All three musicians started their musical education with Music Generation Carlow and have been with the programme for many years. They progressed through Music Generation Carlow's primary school Encore programme, HUB programme and ensemble programme. [Read more about their performance here.](#)

Standing International Conference of Inspectorates

April

Thirty-five young musicians from "Creative Sounds" performed at the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates in April at Dunboyne Castle. "Creative Sounds" is a collaborative project led by Music Generation areas Cavan/Monaghan, Roscommon, Leitrim and Longford in partnership with Music Network.

[Watch some of the performance here.](#)

Music Generation celebrates Europe Day

May

To celebrate Ireland's 50-year membership of the European Union, young musicians and schools across the country were invited to learn and perform the EU Anthem, Beethoven's "Ode to Joy". Performances of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" took place in 12 Music Generation areas with over 2,200 participants for Europe Day celebrations. Music Generation Leitrim hosted "Ode to Joy Sing Up" events in Ballinamore and

Manorhamilton. Over 1,000 children and young people from 17 primary schools in Leitrim took part.

[Watch Music Generation Leitrim's "Ode to Joy Sing Up" event here.](#)

Cruinniú na nÓg Ireland's national day of free creativity for children and young people

June

Each year Music Generation partnerships throughout Ireland take part in [Cruinniú na nÓg](#), Ireland's national day of free creativity for children and young people. A diverse variety of performances, workshops and experiences are made available to children and young people in local communities nationwide. In 2023, over 50 dedicated musical activities took place in 22 Music Generation LMEP areas. Here are some examples:

Music Generation Sligo performed at Music at the Marquee. The gig featured local bands with a dedicated performance of an original track called "The Summer is Here" written for Cruinniú na nÓg Sligo. The catchy song was performed live by young musicians and singers from Summerhill College at "Music at the Marquee."

Music Generation Clare hosted a singer-songwriter masterclass and performance with the one and only John Spillane. Young songwriters had the unique opportunity to learn from one of Ireland's most talented wordsmiths and accomplished performers.

Young rappers from **Music Generation Limerick County** and **Music Generation Wicklow** participated in Creative Ireland's Rhyme Island with GMC Beats and [The Kabin Studio](#). Each group wrote an original rap and recorded a music video.

[Read more about Cruinniú na nÓg at Music Generation here.](#)

Young Musicians from Music Generation jam with US Navy Band August

Thirty-seven young musicians from Music Generation programmes in Mayo, Waterford, Kerry and Galway County took part in an inspiring masterclass with the [US Naval Forces Europe and Africa Band](#).

The masterclass was facilitated by [US Embassy](#).

The young musicians participated in an afternoon of learning, performance, and creativity with the ensemble. [Read more about the experience here](#).

ETB Anthem August

To mark the 10-year anniversary of the establishment of Education & Training Boards, [Education & Training Boards Ireland](#) (ETBI) launched the ETB Anthem Competition in partnership with Music Generation National Development Office. Learners and participants in all ETB schools, colleges and Music Generation programmes around the country were invited to compose an anthem to celebrate the core values of ETBs. “Riverdance” composer Bill Whelan, rapper/songwriter MuRli and musician/composer and broadcaster Ellen Crantich served as judges of the competition. The winning anthem, “Find Your People”, was created by ten ETB learners from the National Learning Network Hollyhill, funded through [Cork ETB](#) and supported by the Kabin Studio. The young songwriters were awarded with the opportunity to record their anthem at the iconic [Windmill Lane Studio](#). The anthem debuted at the ETB Conference held at Cork City Hall. [Find out more about their experience here](#) and [more here](#).

US Navy Band Workshop

Young musicians from five Music Generation areas jam with US Navy Band

Photo by Kyran O'Brien



Music Generation Celebrates Culture Night September

Culture Night is a national event celebrating culture, creativity, and the arts in Ireland annually. Local Music Generation areas hosted over 30 exciting Culture Night events across the country. There was a wide range of music workshops and live performances for everyone to enjoy. Here is a snapshot of what took place:

Music Generation Roscommon took us back in time with their 70's and 80's music set list in Somers Park, Castlerea. Young bands and singers from Music Generation Roscommon's Boyle Hub took part in the performance.

Music Generation Sligo brought a contemporary twist to the 13th century surroundings of Sligo Abbey. Sligo Youth Voices, and young musicians filled the ancient Abbey with music for this special Culture Night performance.

[Read more about events around the country here.](#)

Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) Child Talks 2023 November

Two young DJs from Music Generation Dublin City performed to over 1,000 young people at the [Ombudsman for Children's Office](#) (OCO) Child Talks event in The Helix. The OCO Child Talks gives young people in Ireland a platform to discuss and voice their opinions on children's rights and issues that matter to them. The event was the first time the two young DJs performed their set live, and they were delighted to engage with the large audience. [Watch the young DJs experience here](#) and the [live broadcast here](#).

Music Generation Leitrim

Europe Day

Photo by Brian Duignan Photography

Child Summit November

Music Generation Laois performed at Child Summit 2023 hosted by The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The young singers from Paddock National School, performed a segment of "Bicycles, Boomerangs and Blue Macaws", a suite based on the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child. [Watch the performance here.](#)

Bank of America celebrates its Irish Philanthropic Partnerships November

Six young musicians from Music Generation Laois performed with their Musician Educator, Siobhán Buckley, at a special event hosted by [Bank of America](#). The event was an evening of celebration and conversation with Bank of America's philanthropy, arts, and environment partners in Dublin.

[Watch the performance here.](#)



Mayo at US Navy Bands Workshop

Young Musicians from Music Generation jam with US Navy Band

Photo by Kyran O'Brien, DCU



“The best part of today was getting to have a chat with an actual member of the US Navy Band who is years in the profession ahead of me and learning new techniques from them. It was an amazing experience”

Aaron, Trombone, **Music Generation Mayo**

Strategic Goals

In 2022, Music Generation published Transforming Young Lives Through Music.

This plan charts the future direction of Music Generation for the next five years and continues to bring our mission to life.

Quality

Goal: to influence and nurture a culture of continuous improvement across the Music Generation network, so that children and young people have the best possible quality of experiences and outcomes in a variety of settings and across a wide range of musical genres and disciplines.

Objective 1

We will work in an in-depth and long-term way with Music Generation local programmes to **support the further development of a culture of quality.**

A new Quality Strategy was developed in June 2023. Designed to deliver on the objectives of the Quality Pillar of our 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, it identifies five priority actions:

1. Planning for Quality (PfQ)
2. National Celebration 2024
3. Performance Music Education Research and Learning
4. Network Strengthening
5. Expanded Creativity and Collaboration Fund

Planning for Quality (PfQ)

Our strategy for PfQ involves implementing a learning and development process with Musician Educator teams in LMEPs from 2023 to 2026. In 2023, we designed workshops to support Musician Educators in their reflection on teaching practice and quality within PME. The workshops helped to clarify the aims of our work and to establish ways of thinking about quality in music making and learning. We started this process with five Music Generation areas across two ETBs: Galway and Roscommon ETB and Kilkenny and Carlow ETB. Participants in 2023 included 75 Musician Educators, 5 MDOs, as well as administrators and resource workers.



Music Generation Louth

The Causeway project

Photo by Nós Nua

National Celebration 2024

Planning for Music Generation’s national year of celebration began early in 2023. An advisory working group, with representatives from key stakeholders, began meeting in January 2023 to support planning the vision of the celebration. A programme outline was developed to include nationally led and locally led events. Consultations took place with a range of stakeholders, including children and young people, to gather their input for the programme and other aspects of planning.

¹ Objective 1, Action 2 of [Music Generation’s Strategic Plan 2022–2026](#)

Performance Music Education (PME) Research and Learning

In 2023, we incorporated PME research and learning into the PfQ process, as part of our work with local Musician Educator teams. We held a consultative session on understanding PME with MDOs during the annual residential conference. Alongside the PfQ rollout, the insights gained from this process were shared through joint MDO-NDO presentations at quarterly network meetings, conferences, and symposia. Further detail outlined in more detail under Objective 3.

Network Strengthening

We took steps to enhance and strengthen network structures and supports. These measures were implemented through DSG, MDO, LMEP and Admin/Resource Worker networks. Additional events and initiatives were organised to promote collaboration between Music Generation areas. Planning and delivery of the national celebrations led by NDO, included active involvement from the MDO network as part of the advisory working group. This group also included representation from the

DSG, Music Generation Board, and NDO. The aim of this coordinated effort led by NDO, was to further strengthen the partnerships and relationships that contribute to the development of Music Generation both nationally and locally. Further detail is provided under Objective 3.

Expanded Creativity and Collaboration Fund (CCF)

The Creativity and Collaboration Fund (CCF) supports national, regional, and local projects. In 2023, we expanded CCF to prepare for 2024 national events. This expansion aimed to support locally led programmes, initiatives and projects as part of the national celebrations in 2024. This priority area is outlined in detail in the next section under Objective 2, including an overview of funding allocated in 2023.

Music Generation Clare
St Patricks Festival
Photo by Dave Keegan



Objective 2

We will collaborate with local and national partners to inspire and **support artistic and pedagogical excellence in programming** and practice across a range of settings.

One of the ways the NDO collaborates with local and national partners is through a dedicated Creativity and Collaboration Fund (CCF), which supports projects at national, regional, and local levels. CCF, provided in partnership with the Arts Council, aims to support artistic and creative development opportunities for professional artists and children and young people.

These projects offer children, young people, and musicians the opportunity to collaborate and to explore creative music making and learning in diverse ways, in addition to their regular music tuition. Two rounds of CCF funding were held in 2023: Round 1 supported projects commencing in 2023; Round 2, renamed the Create, Collaborate, Celebrate Fund (CCC) focused on projects for 2024 to support locally led programmes for the national year of celebration in 2024. In Round 1, 10 CCF projects were funded, and an additional 28 CCC funding awards were made under round 2.



Music Generation Westmeath

Sing Out

Photo by Paul Moore Photography

In 2023, a comprehensive evaluation of the Arts Council – Music Generation partnership was carried out by Sound Connections, a consultancy based in the UK that specialises in youth music development. The report includes case studies of six CCF projects and initiatives that have taken place since the partnership began in 2014. The findings and recommendations from this report will be reviewed in 2024 to guide future development.

2023 CCF Projects

Irish Concertina Orchestra 2024

The Irish Concertina Orchestra is a unique ensemble made up of 50 young concertina players from around Ireland. In 2023, the ensemble was funded for the academic year 2023/2024 to collaborate with Bill Whelan, NOTIFY, Cormac McCarthy, and a professional orchestral ensemble. They collaborated to create and perform a series of original compositions and arrangements. The 2023–24 project will culminate in a concert premiering new works, including a commission by Bill Whelan, in May 2024.

SubSounds Youth Music Festival Dublin 2023

A collaborative day-long festival which took place on June 24th at TU Dublin. The event was organised by six LMEPs – Music Generation Fingal, Dublin City, South Dublin, Meath, Kildare, and Wicklow – with Alternative Entertainments. The festival gave young musicians the chance to perform on a large festival stage.

Each LMEP showcased three acts including solo performers, ensembles and bands. They covered a diverse range of musical styles from contemporary pop and rock to garage band, school choir, hip hop, and more.

Corde Connections

This project brought youth ensembles and Musician Educators from Kerry, Louth, and the Irish Chamber Orchestra together to rehearse and perform as a large string collective. The collaboration ran throughout 2023 and will culminate in a high-profile performance in 2024.

The collaboration served as a practical and strategic approach to sharing learning and strengthening the development of string ensembles in both areas. The involvement of the Irish Chamber Orchestra enhanced this initiative, drawing on its “Sing Out with Strings” programme.

CPD and Mentorship Programme

Music Generation Laois delivered Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Mentorship opportunities to strengthen the skills of Musician Educators involved in the Laois Early Years Music and Singing Programme.

This initiative supported Laois in building their Early Years team to address the need for whole class singing and music programmes for young children.

Creative Engagements

Music Generation Laois supported a range of high-quality creative projects for children and young people. These projects involved guest musicians collaborating with Music Generation Laois Musician Educators to engage with and collaborate with children and young people. This series took place under the following projects:

Summer series:

- Irish Traditional Music Summer Camp
- Rock and Pop Summer School

Tionól Harps and Pipes:

- A unique festival dedicated to showcasing Harp and Uilleann Pipes. It is a one-of-a-kind festival in Ireland and featured 175 young musicians in 2023.

NOISE (Year 3)

A youth music programme with two parts: (1) Songwriting and Music Production; and (2) DJing.

In Songwriting and Music Production, young musicians teamed up with professional artists to enhance and develop their music-making abilities.

In DJing, young people were guided by mentors and learned how to use DJ equipment creatively.

Woodstown Songwriters Weekend

The Woodstown Songwriters Weekend was a retreat where 24 young music creatives learned about songwriting, lyric writing, and being creative. Professionals in the music industry helped and supported them in a safe and positive atmosphere at Woodstown Activity Centre in April 2023.

Travelling Summer Sound Circus II

Music Generation Limerick City's portable venue brought outdoor performance opportunities and live music experiences to young people in a variety of heritage and cultural locations throughout Clare and Limerick.

Events ran from June to August across Limerick County (Abbeyfeale, Newcastle West, Kilmallock, Lough Gur, Rathkeale), Clare (Killaloe, Ennis, Spanish Point) and at various places within Limerick City (Moyross, Arthurs Quay, People's Park).

Da Capo young strings event Reimagined as Baroque Opera

A partnership between Music Generation Sligo, [Irish National Opera](#), and the [Sligo Baroque Festival](#) that creates musical opportunities for children and young people locally. This project aimed to strengthen local partnerships and create networks with visiting international artists. The programme included events and workshops for children and young people, as well as professional development for Sligo's Musician Educators in opera and baroque music.

Building Orchestral Pathways

A three-year action research project to explore ways to improve instrumental ensemble development across Music Generation Offaly, Music Generation Westmeath, and Music Generation Laois. Music Generation Longford to take part in the future. This project aims to address a gap in ensemble opportunities for young instrumentalists in the midlands to:

- **improve access** to lifelong music making
- **ensure sustainability** for existing and new ensembles
- **provide progression opportunities** for young instrumentalists at all levels of development.

Project planning began in 2023 and an appointed consultant researcher will begin in 2024.

Objective 3

We will continue to **develop and strengthen the Music Generation national network** throughout the life of this plan.

In 2023, we hosted 26 national network events, bringing together various groups including the DSG, MDO Network, Admin/Resource Worker Network, National Events Advisory Working Group. Consultation events with children and young people also took place. We continued to develop our collaborative approach to MDO network planning, involving MDOs in the planning of events and projects. Our annual residential event, held over three days was hosted by Music Generation Louth at Dundalk IT. The gathering was attended by MDOs representing 23 LMEP areas. The event featured workshops, professional development, discussions, site visits, and networking activities.

Quarterly in-person MDO Network meetings took place throughout 2023. The agendas included opportunities for knowledge exchange, sharing of learning, models of effective practice, strategic planning and partnership collaboration.



Music Generation Carlow
Music @ Mount Leinster
Photo by DGM Photographic

The annual in-person meeting for Administrators and Resource Workers took place in Q2. Six online meetings and training opportunities were also delivered, including Digital Marketing and Event Coordination. The in-person meetings included presentations by network members. Additionally, 14 delegates from 13 LMEP areas participated in networking and shared learning.

As outlined under Objective 1 above, the formation in late 2022 of an Advisory Working Group to plan the national year of celebration served as another method to strengthen the national network. This allowed for further collaboration between members of the DSG, MDOs, Music Generation board members and NDO executive team.

Additional efforts in advocacy, knowledge exchange, and network strengthening included consulting with youth in the planning of national events. In June 2023, the NDO commissioned an independent researcher to conduct a Review of Children and Young People's Participation. This report provided insights into methods and approaches to youth consultation, policy outlines, and best practices. Led by the NDO Communications team, in collaboration with QSD, consultations were held with children and young people to gather their input for national event development. Further planning for children and young people's participation will be expanded in the 2024 work plan.

Research integration remained a key focus during network meetings and external knowledge exchange opportunities. Joint presentations by MDOs and the NDO highlighted learning from the PfQ initiative. These insights were presented at a DSG meeting in June 2023, and at MDO network meetings in April and November. Additionally, a panel comprising MDOs from Music Generation Tipperary, Music Generation Meath, and Music Generation Louth, along with the NDO QSD team, presented on "Music Generation: Perspectives on Quality in Performance Music Education" at the Society for Music Education in Ireland (SMEI) annual conference on November 4th, 2023. Further submissions were made for international music education conference opportunities in 2024.

Sustainability

Goal: to work towards achieving the long-term sustainability of a publicly supported national system of local performance music education provision.

Objective 4

We will work to **secure a local and national infrastructure that is well resourced** (in human and financial terms) and characterised by exemplary governance.

In 2023 the Department of Education completed an Independent Review of Department of Education public funding to Music Generation. The National Development Office began the process of revisiting the original aims of Music Generation outlined in the 2003 [Music Network Feasibility Study](#).

This was undertaken to prepare for an evaluation of the model’s strengths, the role of the NDO, and how this relates to the ongoing work of NDO and its partnerships.



Music Generation Roscommon
Youth band Totem at Creative Youth Plan Launch with Minister Catherine Martin
Photo by National Development Office

Objective 5

We will continue to **broker strategic partnerships with a range of existing and new stakeholders.**

As part of our work, Music Generation maintains close relationships with our partners and funders. In 2023, we continued to engage regularly with U2 and The Ireland Funds through structured reporting and strategic checkpoint meetings. Along with this engagement, our Young Ambassadors performed for our partners at various events.

The NDO met regularly with the Department of Education, provided structured reporting, and fulfilled the terms of the 2023 performance delivery agreement. We attended the annual meeting with the Department of Education Committee for Non-Mainstream Music Education in late 2023. We continued to develop our partnership with the Arts Council who co-fund our Creativity and Collaboration Fund. This partnership has seen two phases, with the second being slightly extended due to the pandemic. In 2022, we initiated an independent evaluation of this partnership conducted by Sound Connections, a UK-based consultancy specialising in youth music development. The report was completed at the end of 2023.



Music Generation Laois

Young musicians at Bank of America philanthropy event with CEO Fernando Vicario

Photo by National Development Office

We participated in Bank of America’s celebration of partnership and continued our engagement throughout the year.

We also continued our engagement with Creative Ireland through local participation in Crinniú no nÓg, Young Ambassadors performance at the launch of the 2023–2027 Creative Youth plan.

Objective 6

We will continue to **provide insight and information** to the Department of Education and to local partners in respect of the appropriate human and other resources required to **deliver high-quality performance music education programmes.**

In collaboration with ETBs, the NDO continues to review the Music Generation workforce resourcing. We aim to understand how staff capacity and human resources can support the sustainability and quality of the delivery of local programmes.



Music Generation Tipperary

St Patrick's Festival

Photo by Dave Keegan

Objective 7

We will continue to ensure that the **Music Generation National Development Office works effectively** within available resources.

In 2023, the NDO was staffed by an 11-member team across Finance, Communications, Operations, and Quality, Support and Development. We continued to support and develop expertise within our team by providing ongoing CPD and training opportunities with 4% of NDO staff costs invested in 2023.

We also continued to improve our processes, like our financial systems, Creativity and Collaboration Fund processes, workplan, and statistical reporting. We continue to review and refine these processes and will examine the results of these changes to keep improving how we do things in 2024 and beyond.

ETB Anthem Premiere

Young singers at Cork Opera House with Broadcaster Ellen Cranitch and Paddy Lavelle, the General Secretary of ETBI
Photo by Jim Coughlan



Advocacy

Goal: We will advocate to key audiences for the right of all children and young people to have the opportunity to participate in performance music education.

Objective 8

We will continue to **raise awareness of the value of performance music education** in the lives of children and young people.

A Communications Strategy was developed to support Music Generation's Advocacy Goal and raise awareness for Music Generation's mission. We focused on actively involving children and young people in our storytelling and strengthening Music Generation's brand identity to engage with audiences.

Key elements of the strategy included:

- **Using our digital channels to empower children and young people**, giving them a space to share their Music Generation experiences and stories
- **Creating memorable and inspiring experiences and musical opportunities** for children and young people and supporting the development of National Events in 2024
- **Enhancing Music Generation's national brand identity** and improving our digital communications.
 - In 2023 we saw an increase in our website traffic by 14% and our audience engagement on social media by 8.6%
 - We held a public logo design competition with young people to create a new brand identity for our national events in 2024

Music Generation Logo Design Competition

In preparation for 2024 National events, we asked children and young people across Ireland to design a new logo. Ideas, artwork and designs were submitted from schools, youth hubs and Music Generation programmes across the country. Three young artists were chosen to collaborate with graphic designers to create a new identity to use for the nationwide celebrations in 2024. The shortlisted artists were young musicians from Music Generation programmes in Louth and Waterford.

We continued to share our story to key stakeholders and audiences through new video documentation, reports, and performances. The NDO also coordinated Young Ambassadors performances with children and young people in 2023.

We promoted local performances throughout the year through email and promotional campaigns, videos, social media, and interviews with children and young people.



Music Generation Waterford

SoundCrowd '23

Photo by DGM Photographic

“It was amazing to meet professionals and receive in-person feedback on our entries. To have our voices heard in such a big project is a one-of-a-kind experience, thank you so much to Music Generation for the fantastic opportunity”

Maebh, Young Trumpet and Concertina player
Music Generation Waterford

Objective 9

We will **actively encourage and facilitate child and young person-led advocacy** that speaks to their ambitions for, and experience of, the value that performance music education plays in their lives.

In 2023, we continued to review participative opportunities for children and young people. This included the coordination of child and young person-led content creation to share their stories through video documentation and online channels. We also worked with national and international partners to create performance opportunities. We continued to foster relationships with important advocates, like the Ombudsman Children's Office and the Children's Rights Alliance.

To prepare for Music Generation National Events in 2024, we held consultations with children and young people Music Generation programmes to include their voice and participation in key elements including the title, brand identity and programming.



Music Generation Dublin City
Ombudsman for Children's Office
Child Talks
Photo by Maxwell Photography

Objective 10

We will continue to **engage in research and anchor our advocacy in evidence-based learning.**

The focus of our research in 2023 was action learning through our PfQ initiative, a review of CYP Participation and independent evaluation of Arts Council partnership. These actions will inform the development of our research strategy in 2024.

Music Generation Offaly

Esker Arts Centre Official Opening with President Michael D Higgins and Artists Tolü Makay and Donal Lunny
Photo by Paul Moore Photography





SubSounds Youth Music Festival

Photo by Chiznics Photography

Music Generation Board and National Development Office

Board

Established as a subsidiary company of Music Network Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), Music Generation Designated Activity Company (DAC) is governed by a ten-member Board of Directors. The Music Generation

Board Members in 2023 were:

Leo Blennerhassett

Chairperson, Management Consultant, and former Managing Director of Accenture Ireland

Pat Burke

Former Assistant Secretary General at the Department of Education. Chair of the State Examinations Commission from 2015 to 2023

Anna Marie Delaney

Chief Executive of Offaly County Council

John Kelly

Writer, Broadcaster and SONY, EMA, and PPI award-winner

Joe Cunningham

Chief Executive of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board

Deirdre McCrea

Independent Arts Consultant and former CEO of Music Network

Mel Mercier

Emeritus Professor of Performing Arts, Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick

James Morris

Founder of Windmill Lane Studios, Windmill Lane Pictures, The Mill (London), and Lead Promotor in the establishment of TV3. Currently working on the development of a digital services initiative for film and TV production

Dr Méabh Ní Fhuartháin

Head of Unit, Centre for Irish Studies, University of Galway (from May 2023)

Chantal O'Sullivan

Antique dealer, member of the New York board of the Irish Georgian Society, board member of The Ireland Funds and New York's Glucksman Ireland House

Staff

Music Generation's **National Development Office staff in 2023** were:

Rosaleen Molloy

National Director

Rebecca Murphy

Communications and Marketing Officer

Anita Butler

Finance and Administration Officer
(until February 2023)

Margaret O'Sullivan

Head of Quality, Support and Development

Mairéad Duffy

LMEP Support Manager

Maura Philpott

Finance Assistant (from March 2023)

Cathriona Grange

Operations Manager

Aoife Ruth

Reporting and Analysis Manager (until October 2023)

Helen Grant

Finance Manager

Helen Shyne

Strategic Communications and Marketing Manager

Paul Markey

Administration Officer

Stephen McFarlane

LMEP Support Manager (until June 2023)



Governance

Music Generation Wexford
Seedlings
Photo by Zena O'Brien, Zvisuals

How the Board Operates

The Board of Directors of Music Generation DAC is non-executive and independent. Board Members come from diverse backgrounds and bring a range of experience and skills, including significant artistic, education, business, and cultural expertise.

Together, they are responsible for providing leadership, developing strategy, identifying and mitigating risk, and monitoring the budgets and outcomes of the organisation. Board members are selected in line with the constitution of Music Generation DAC and all new board members undergo an extensive induction process. Board members are also updated on any new governance or legislative requirements when and as they arise. There is a 3-year term limit with a maximum of 3 terms.

Music Generation DAC has operational and governance processes in place to ensure that it:

Operates in an open and transparent manner

Complies with its statutory and legal responsibilities

Complies with the governance obligations of its funders and donors

Music Generation is guided by relevant national strategies, Government policies, and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Music Generation adheres to the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (SORP).

Music Generation DAC is governed by a Constitution and its Board of Directors is committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance, including adhering to the Charities Regulator Charities Code of Governance.

Frequency of Board and Committee Meetings

Board Meetings are held 8–10 times per year. In addition, smaller committees of the Board meet on particular matters such as Human Resources, Audit and Risk, and the Creativity and Collaboration Fund.

Statement on Risk Management Measures

The Board of Music Generation has in place an Audit and Risk Committee who oversee the Company's Risk Register and who monitor all potential risks to the organisation.



Music Generation Galway City
Festival of Nomadic Cultures
Photo by Alice McDowell



Financials

Music Generation Meath

Summer Showcase

Photo by Barry Cronin

Summary of 2023 Figures

Music Generation DAC's **total income for 2023** was **€7,385,615**.

Core funding of €400,257 was received from The Ireland Funds and €6,885,000 was received from the Exchequer through the Department of Education.

Music Generation also received €100,000 through its partnership with the Arts Council and €358 of deposit income.

The funds allocated to Music Generation DAC cover programme outlay costs to Local Music Education Partnerships and National Development Office running costs.

Funding is provided by Music Generation DAC to Lead Partners once the Local Music Education Partnerships (LMEPs) have raised the equivalent amount through locally generated matched funding. Of the €7,347,994 raised by Lead Partners in 2023, €1,270,763 was provided as Support-in-Kind. This recognises the significant contribution by each LMEP Area to the office accommodation, overheads, and administration staff required to support Music Generation programmes.

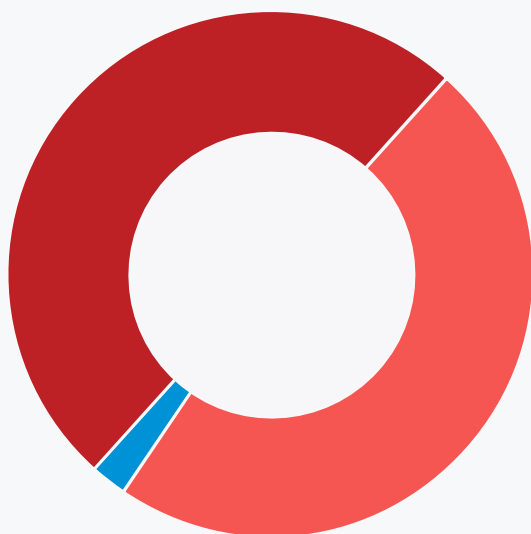


Music Generation Carlow
Music @ Mount Leinster
 Photo by DGM Photographic

Total income for Music Generation programmes

50%

Local Music Education Partnerships



3%

The Arts Council
 U2 and The Ireland Funds
 Other

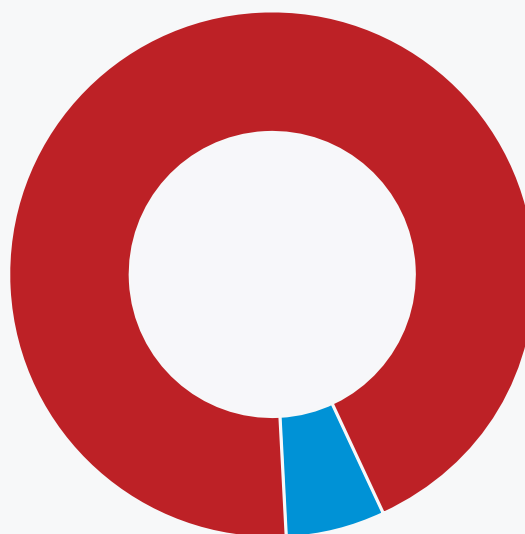
47%

Department of Education

Total expenditure for Music Generation programmes

93%

Programme Services



7%

National Development Office running costs

Appendices

Appendix A

Membership and Attendance at Board Meetings

| | Feb 07 | Mar 14 | Apr 17 | May 10 | May 26 | Jul 24 | Aug 24 | Sep 12 | Oct 17 | Dec 19 |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Leo Blennerhassett | ● | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Pat Burke | | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | | |
| Joe Cunningham | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | |
| Anna Marie Delaney | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| John Kelly | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | ● |
| Deirdre McCrea | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Mel Mercier | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● |
| James Morris | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Méabh Ní Fhuartháin | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| Chantal O'Sullivan | ● | | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | | |

Membership and Attendance at Board Committee Meetings

| Audit & Risk Committee | May 17 | Sept 12 | HR Committee | Feb 23 | July 18 | Dec 5 |
|---------------------------|--------|---------|-----------------------|--------|---------|-------|
| Leo Blennerhassett | ● | ● | Joe Cunningham | ● | | ● |
| Pat Burke | ● | ● | Deirdre McCrea | ● | ● | ● |
| Anna Marie Delaney | ● | ● | James Morris | ● | ● | ● |

Creativity & Collaboration Fund Committee

| | Mar 15 | May 29 | Jul 28 | Oct 10 | Oct 12 | Nov 2 |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| John Kelly | ● | ● | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Deirdre McCrea | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Mel Mercier | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Méabh Ní Fhuartháin | N/A | N/A | ● | ● | ● | ● |

Appendix B

Directors' Fees and Expenses Paid to Board Members in 2023

No Director's fees or expenses were paid to Board Members in 2023.

Appendix C

Local Areas involved in Featured Programmes and Events

Front Cover

Music Generation Louth

SubSounds Youth Music Festival

Music Generation Dublin City

Music Generation Fingal

Music Generation Kildare

Music Generation Meath

Music Generation South Dublin

Music Generation Wicklow

St Patrick's Festival

Music Generation Clare

Music Generation Laois

Music Generation Tipperary

US Navy Band Workshop

Music Generation Galway County

Music Generation Kerry

Music Generation Mayo

Music Generation Waterford

Cover photo:

Music Generation Louth

Photo by Dave Keegan



**Music
Generation**

Music Generation is Ireland's National Music Education Programme. A Music Network Initiative, co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, The Department of Education and Local Music Education Partnerships



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

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Registered Charity Number: RCN 20077426.