



**Music  
Generation**

Annual Report

2025

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# Glossary

## **Music Generation Kerry**

*Instrument Try Out Kenmare*

Photo by Don MacMonagle

## **Creativity and Collaboration Fund (CCF)**

The Music Generation Creativity and Collaboration Fund (CCF) supports national, regional, and local projects which provide children, young people, and professional musicians opportunities to come together musically. The CCF is co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Youth in partnership with The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

## **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

Continuous 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 an Education and Training Board in collaboration with Local Authorities and other local partners.

## 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 Music Generation National Development Office aims to empower the delivery of Music Generation's mission and plays a strategic oversight role across the national network from a governance, funding, quality, advocacy, and development perspective.

### Music Generation Kilkenny

*Sing Out*

Photo by Browne's Photography



## Performance Music Education (PME)

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 appropriate to musical cultures and traditions and is delivered by professional Musician Educators. Performance music education is recognised by the Department of Education and Youth 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 Development and Learning function of Music Generation's National Development Office. PfQ sessions are led by NDO in partnership with LMEPs to engage with local teams in cultivating a shared understanding of quality.

## Quality Development and Learning Team (QDL)

This team leads, develops, and delivers the Quality Development and Learning functions of Music Generation's National Development Office. QDL supports 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

As Acting Chairperson, I am delighted to present the 2025 Annual Report, a reflection of another year of music making and community connection across Ireland. This marks a significant milestone for our Board, as we say a heartfelt thank you to Leo Blennerhassett following the conclusion of his exceptional tenure as Chairperson. Leo's visionary leadership and dedication over the past decade have been foundational to the extraordinary scale and impact Music Generation achieves today.

As we look ahead, the Board remains entirely focused on building upon these strong foundations, supporting our incredible network, and ensuring that even more children and young people across Ireland have the opportunity to experience the transformative power of music education.

At the heart of Music Generation is a simple but powerful belief: that every child and young person should have the opportunity to access and participate in high-quality performance music education. In 2025, this commitment was realised at significant scale, with 10% of all children and young people under the age of 18 in Ireland engaging in Music Generation programmes.

Beyond these figures, what stands out is the consistency and quality of provision across the network. In a year of development and consolidation, Music Generation maintained strong national reach while continuing to enhance its focus on quality, sustainability and meaningful engagement with young people.

The success of Music Generation is rooted in partnership. The ongoing commitment of our national partners – U2, The Ireland Funds, Bank of America, the Department of Education and Youth, Music Network and the Arts Council – remains fundamental to our work. Equally, the leadership of Local Music Education Partnerships, managed by Education and Training Boards in collaboration with Local Authorities, ensures that this work is embedded in communities across Ireland.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of those delivering this work on the ground. Music Development Officers, Administrators, Resource Workers and Musician Educators continue to create meaningful opportunities for children and young people to engage with music in ways that are creative, inclusive and transformative.

Finally, I extend my thanks to my fellow voluntary Board members and to the staff of the National Development Office for their continued commitment.

As we look to the future, Music Generation is well positioned to build on its strong foundations. With a clear strategic direction and a shared commitment across the organisation, we remain focused on ensuring that more children and young people can experience the lasting impact of music in their lives.

**Deirdre McCrea**

Acting Chairperson

# National Director's Introduction

2025 was an important year of development and impact for Music Generation. Working closely with and through our local partners, we advanced our mission of empowering children and young people through access to performance music education. Across the country, our activities, programmes and music-making continued to thrive, ensuring access to performance music education for children and young people.

In 2025, 10% of all children and young people under the age of 18 across Ireland accessed and participated in Music Generation programmes. 129,517 tuition hours were delivered, alongside thousands of performances and musical experiences taking place across the country.

Some highlights included:

- **Féile Fearann Rí**

A festival celebrating traditional Irish music, language and creativity on the northside of Cork City, with a strong focus on social inclusion and community participation. The programme featured 16 events, including school performances, intergenerational workshops, storytelling and a flagship gala concert

- **Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan Cross Border Folk Orchestra**

Over 100 young musicians performed to wide acclaim at Dublin's St. Patrick's Festival and Belfast TradFest, presenting new work and arrangements by composer Michael Rooney

- **"Isle of Song"**

A cross-border collaboration uniting 50 young musicians from counties Laois, Offaly, Derry and Antrim to create, record and perform original music.

Alongside this work, the Music Generation National Development Office continued to focus on the key strategic priorities set out in our *Transforming Young Lives Through Music 2022–2026 Strategic Plan*: quality, sustainability and advocacy.

Within this, our Quality, Development and Learning team expanded and deepened the Planning for Quality process, strengthening relationships and shared practice across the national network.

Our commitment to sustainability was reflected in the continued nurturing of strong partnerships with philanthropic, government and local stakeholders. These partnerships were brought to life through a number of high-profile moments in 2025, including performances by children and young people at national events such as the Department of Education and Youth’s “Cinéaltas” Showcase and the launch of the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025–2030 at Dublin’s Mansion House.

In support of our advocacy goals, our communications strategy focused on raising awareness of our mission through meaningful engagement with children and young people. We further developed consultative and participative approaches to ensure their voices informed key areas of planning, including the development of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy and our communications and branding planning.

Highlights from across the National Development Office in 2025 also included the National Musician Educator Gathering, which brought together practitioners for musician-led presentations and hands-on learning, and a collaboration with Music Generation Offaly to support the creation and spotlighting of “Rocking December Nights”, a Christmas single involving over 370 young musicians in Tullamore.

As we reflect on the achievements of 2025, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone involved in Music Generation for their continued commitment to our shared mission. We look ahead to 2026 with confidence and ambition, as we prepare for the next phase of our strategic journey, remaining steadfast in 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 Youth, 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**  
*SoundCrowd*  
Photo by DGM Photography

## 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](#)

**Music Generation Westmeath**

*Fiddle Fiesta 2025*

Photo by Paul Moore Photography



# The Year in Photos



**Music Generation Roscommon**

*Boyle Arts Festival*

Photo by Brian Farrell



**Music Generation Westmeath**

*Fiddle Fiesta 2025*

Photo by Paul Moore Photography



**Music Generation Limerick City**

*One Day in May*

Photo by Robin Parmar



**Music Generation Waterford**

*Jam @ The Royal*

Photo by Keith Currans



**Music Generation Limerick County**

*Creative Hub Abbeyfeale*

Photo by Jamie Moore



**Music Generation Kerry**

*Kerry ETB Student Awards Night*

Photo by Tara Donoghue



**Music Generation Meath**

*SubSounds Youth Music Festival*

Photo by Dylan Scully

Music Generation Westmeath and Music Generation Offaly

Sing Fest 2025

Photo by Paul Moore Photography

“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 Galway City**  
*Youth Lates*  
Photo by Joseph Padfield



1

538

**Musician Educators** actively delivered Music Generation programmes in 2025

10%

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



2

129,517

Performance Music Education **tuition hours** were delivered in 2025

2025 Year in Review



3

52,963

children and young people performed at **1,199 live events** in 2025

132,151

**Programme Participants**



4

41

**varieties of music** taught on Music Generation programmes



5

1 – **Music Generation Galway City** *Bright Notes at Cruinniú na nÓg*, Photo by Joseph Padfield

2 – **Music Generation Waterford** *Waterford Trad Ensemble*, Photo by DGM Photographic

3 – **Music Generation Waterford** *Jam @ The Royal*, Photo by Keith Currans

4 – **Music Generation Louth** *Hub Concert*, Photo by Robin Barnes

5 – **Music Generation Laois** *Primary School Wind Programme*

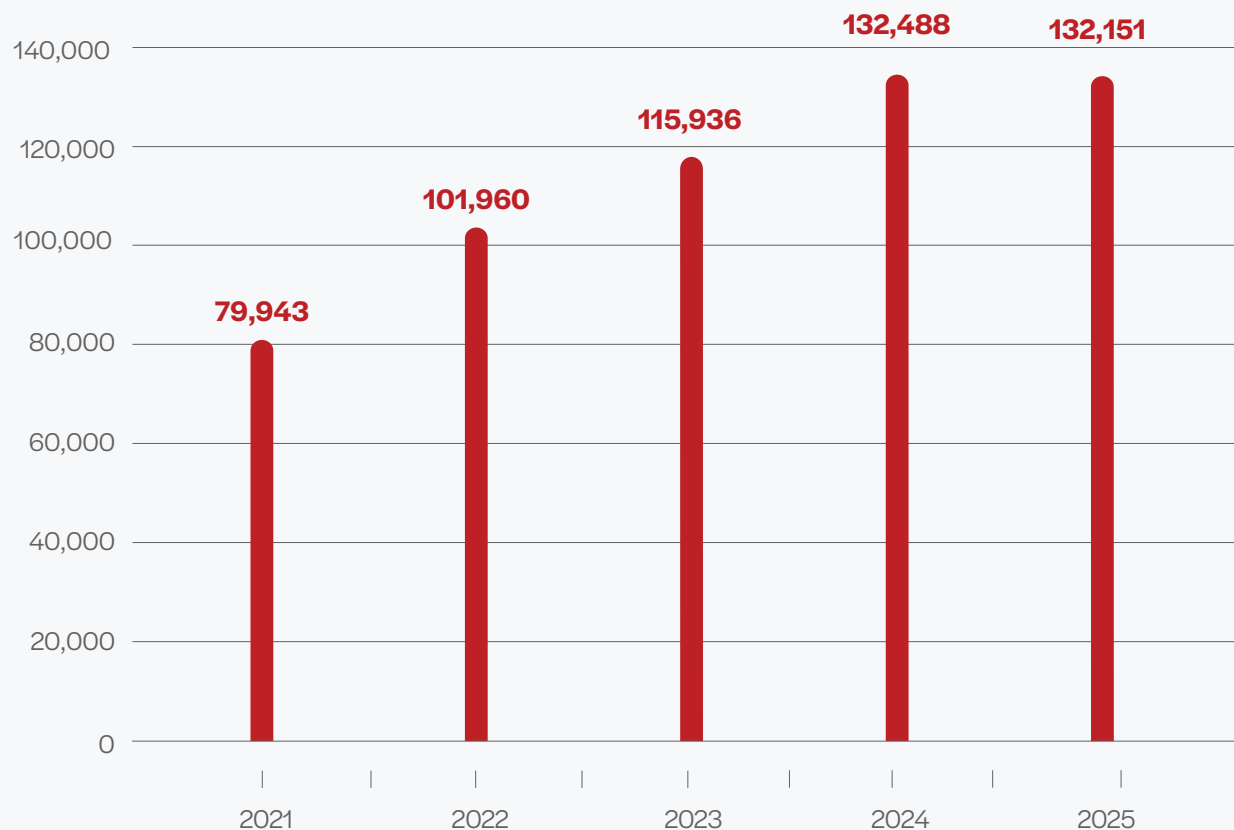


## Participation

Music Generation worked with **132,151** programme participants in 2025, across **29** Local Music Education Partnership (LMEP) areas. Approximately 10% of all children and young people in Ireland engaged with Music Generation programmes in 2025.

**Music Generation Cork City**  
*Féile Fearann Rí 2025*  
Photo by Clare Keogh

## Total Annual Programme Participants 2021–2025

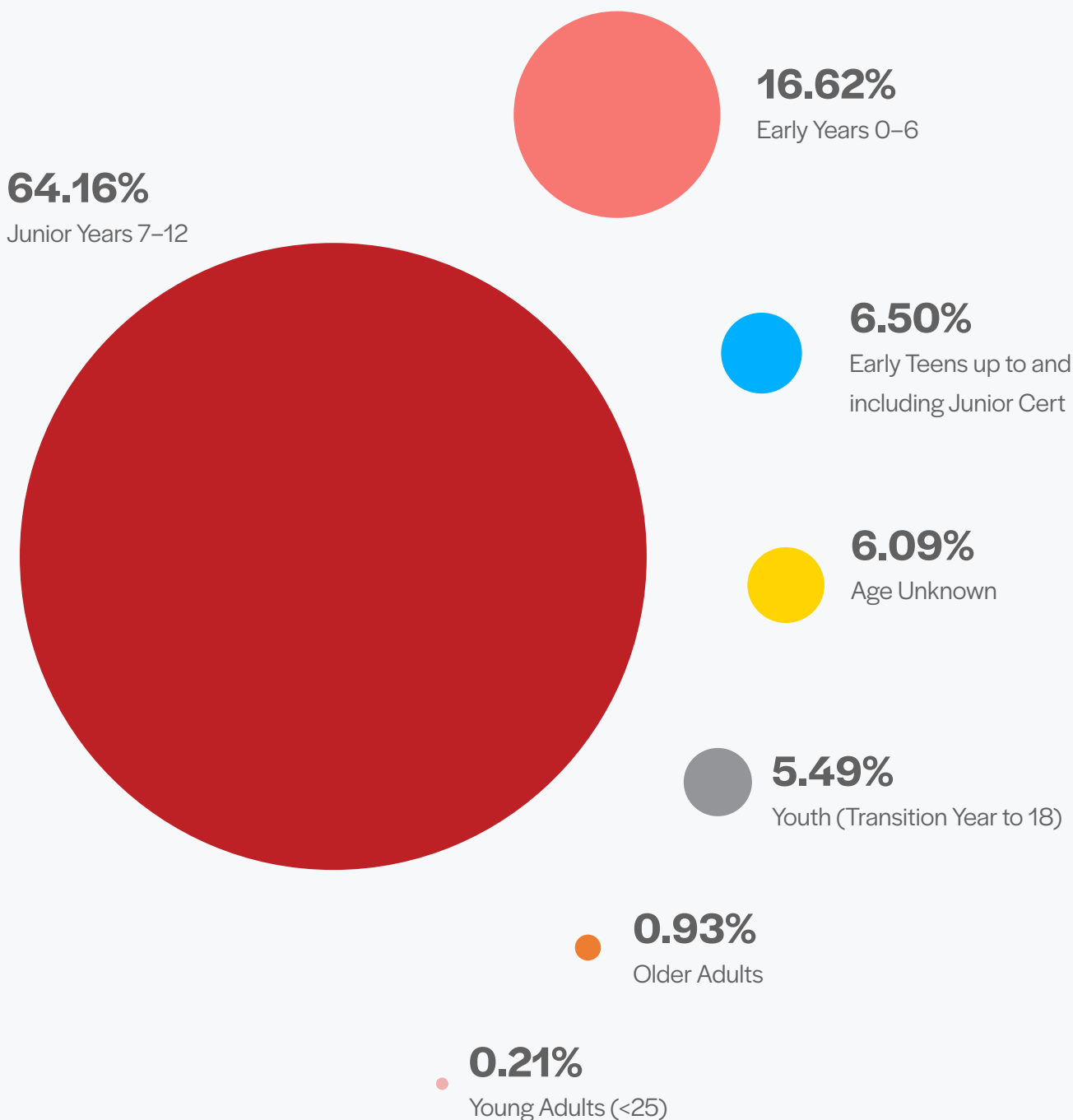


## Ages of Programme Participants

In 2025, 98.8% of Music Generation participants with known ages were aged 18 or under.

The highest proportion of Music Generation participants (64.2%) in 2025 were aged between 7 and 12 years old. 16.6% were aged below 7, while 12% were aged between 13 and 19 years old.

41.3% of Music Generation participants in 2025 were male, while 42.6% were female. 0.3% of participants identified as neither, with the remaining 16% unknown.





## Tuition Hours

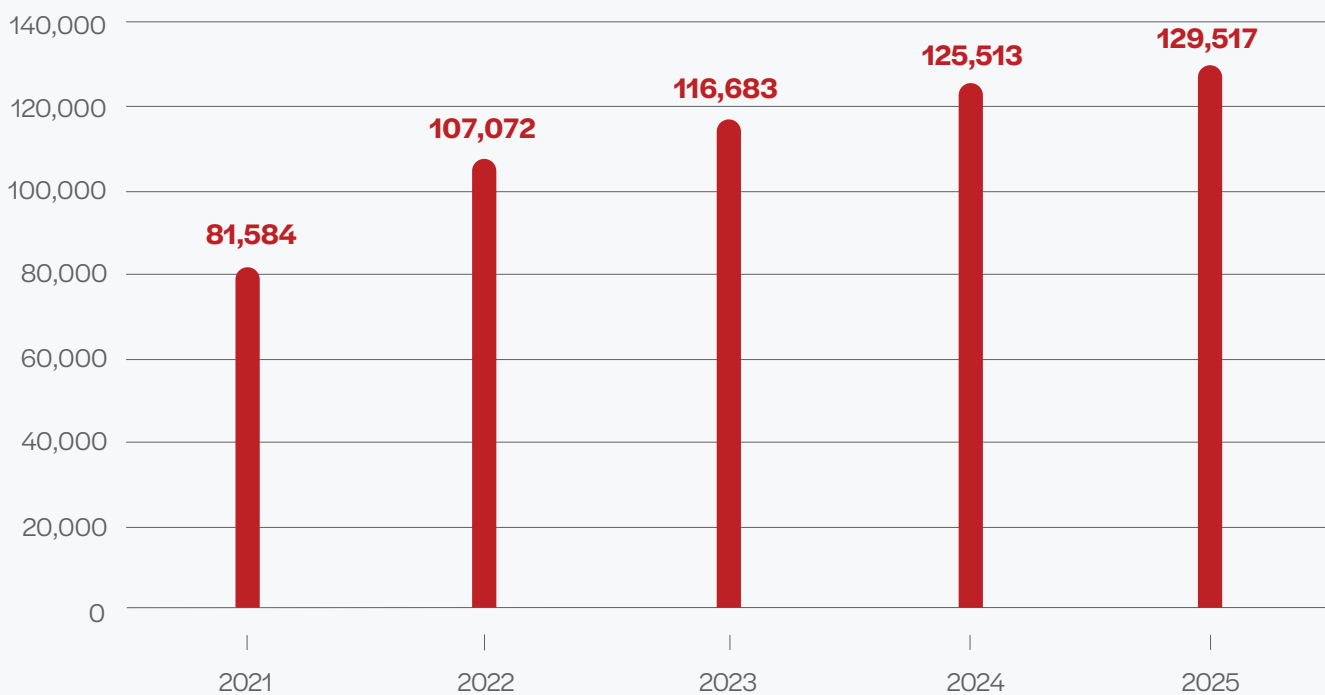
There was a **3.2% increase** in tuition hours delivered in 2025.

### Music Generation Laois

*Laois School of Music Open Evening*

Photo by Alf Harvey

## Total Tuition Hours 2021–2025



## Programme Details

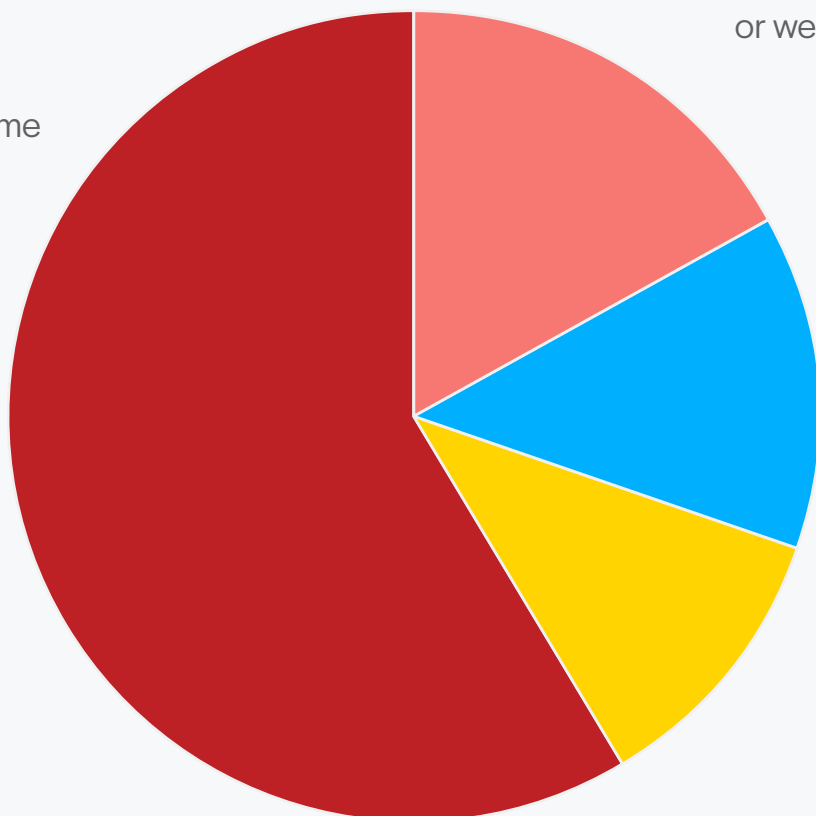
Music Generation ran **981** complete or continuing programmes in 2025.

## Duration of Programmes

The majority of programmes (58.5%) were **20–30 weeks** duration.

**574**

20–30 weeks  
long term or full time



**167**

One-off event  
or week long event

**132**

10–19 weeks  
medium term

**108**

2–9 weeks  
short term

## Genre

LMEP Areas reported that programmes had **41 distinct genres in 2025.**

42% of programmes focused on a single genre, while the majority, 58%, offered a mix of genres informed by the aims of the programme.

Examples of genres include:

**Pop**

**Traditional**

**Rock**

**Contemporary**

**Vocal/Choral**

**Folk**

**Percussion**

**Classical**

**Brass/Wind**

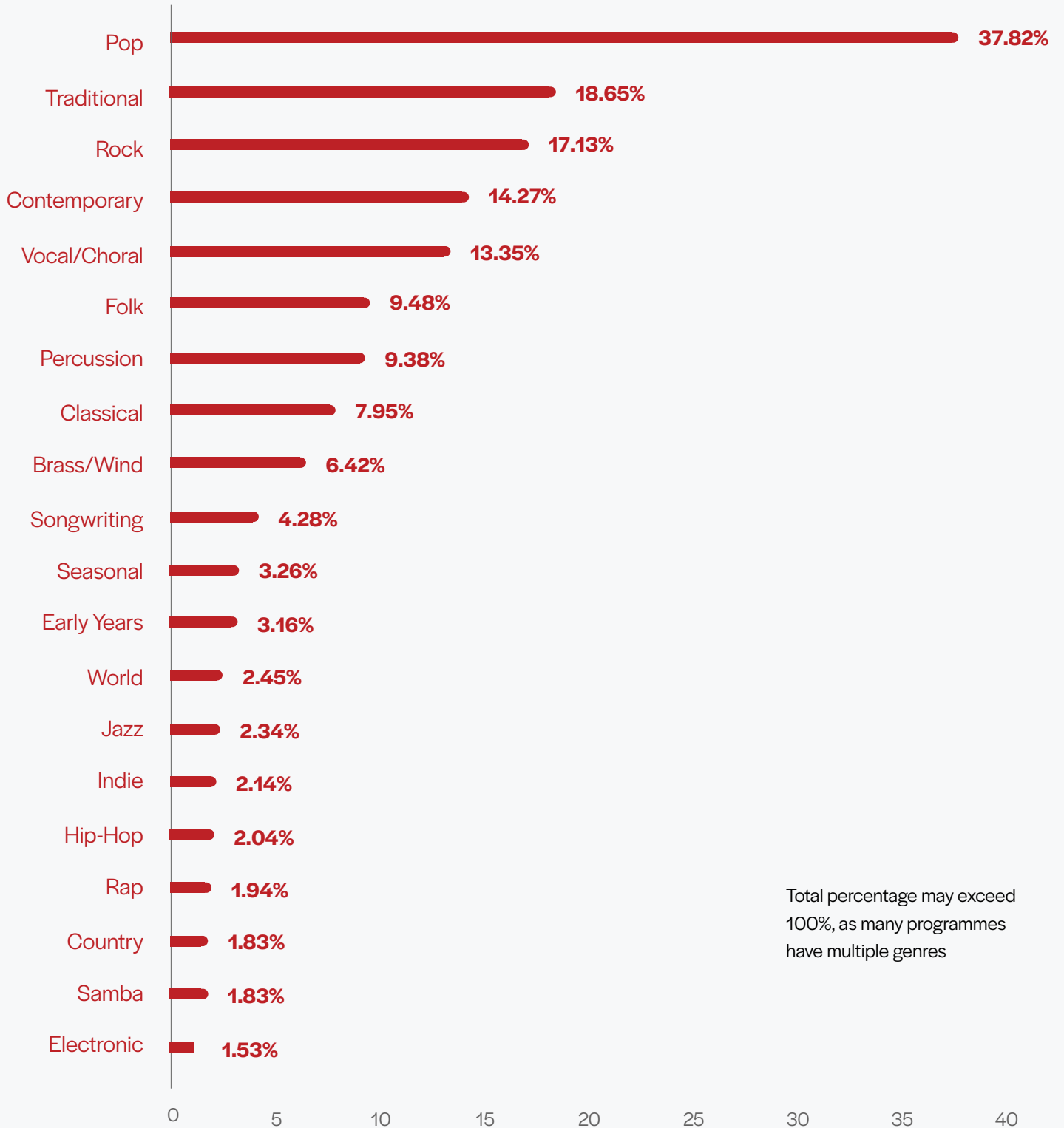


**Music Generation South Dublin**  
*SubSounds Youth Music Festival*  
Photo by Dylan Scully



**Music Generation Leitrim**  
*Afterschool Hubs*

## 20 Most Popular Genres



Total percentage may exceed 100%, as many programmes have multiple genres



# In the Community

**Music Generation South Dublin**  
*SubSounds Youth Music Festival*  
Photo by Dylan Scully

# Venues

## Primary school setting



## Post-primary school setting



## Civic space (Library, park etc.)



## Youth centre



## ETB Facility



## Community centre



## Arts venue



## Private venue



## Higher Education Institute / Further Education Centre



## Special Needs school



## Childcare facility



## Other



## HSE/Direct Provision



## Church hall



Music Generation LMEP areas reported using 1,536 unique venues in 2025. This is an increase of 7.4% since 2024.

Primary school settings account for the highest proportion of venues used, at 54.8%. These are followed by post-primary schools at 9.4%, Civic Spaces at 6.1% and Youth Centres at 4.9%.



Music Generation Kilkenny

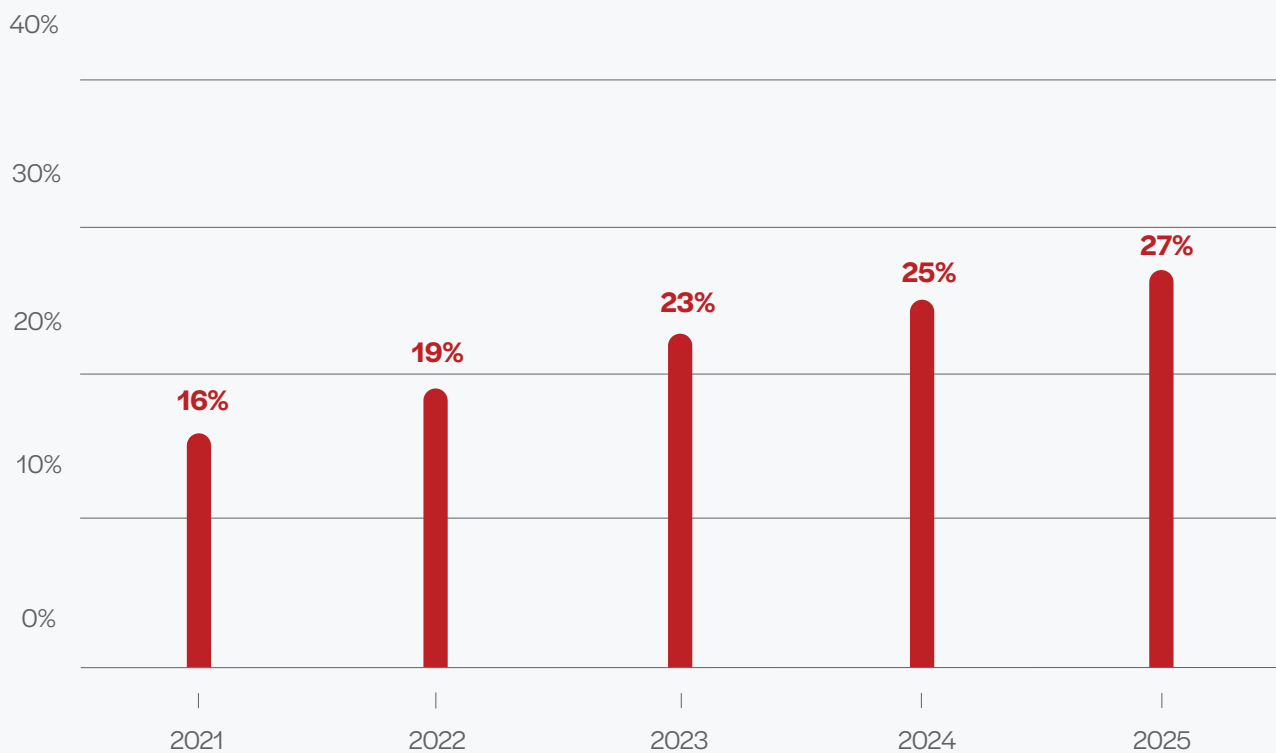
Sing Out

Photo by Browne's Photography

## Partnerships with Schools

Music Generation LMEP areas reported working in partnership with **27.3% of all primary schools** in the State in 2025<sup>1</sup>, an increase from 25.3% from 2024.

### Percentage of schools involved



<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/collections/primary-schools-enrolment-figures/#20242025>

## Schools

Music Generation LMEP areas reported working in partnership with **20.1% of all post-primary schools** in the state in 2025<sup>1</sup>, an increase from 18.8% in 2024.

48.7% of Music Generation programmes took place after school hours, while 47.7% took place within school hours, and 3.6% took place both within and outside school hours.

46% of Music Generation programmes took place in non-school settings.

Music Generation LMEP areas reported working in 23.5% of all special schools in the state in 2025, an increase of 2% from 2024. An estimated 36.4% of the primary schools worked in have DEIS status.

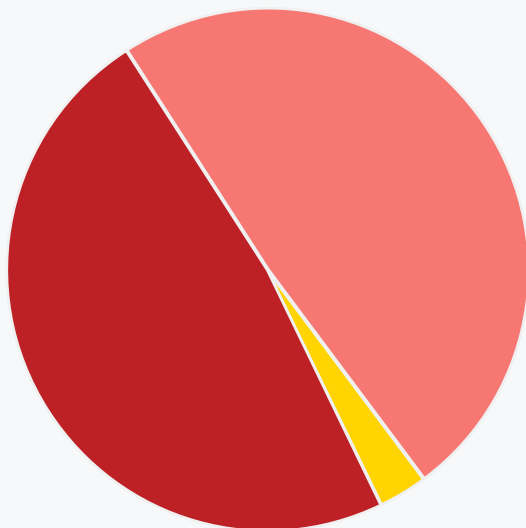
An estimated 55.9% of secondary schools worked in have DEIS status.

27.9% of primary schools worked in are classified as “small schools”, with less than 100 pupils, as are 24.8% of secondary schools worked in.

6,011 children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) participated in Music Generation programmes in 2025. This represents 4.5% of the total number of participants and is an increase of almost 2% from 2024, when children and young people with special educational needs accounted for 2.7% of total participants.

**49%**

After school hours



**48%**

Within school hours

**3%**

Both

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/collections/primary-schools-enrolment-figures/#20242025>

## Instruments

Twenty-seven LMEPs had a bank of instruments for use by participants, with an estimated 41,628 instruments available.

Sixteen LMEPs increased the number of instruments available in their instrument banks between 2024 and 2025.

Instruments are primarily made available through schools and rental programmes.



**Music Generation Laois and Nerve Centre Derry**  
*Isle of Song*  
Photo by Alf Harvey

## How instruments are made available





## Workforce and Continuous Professional Development

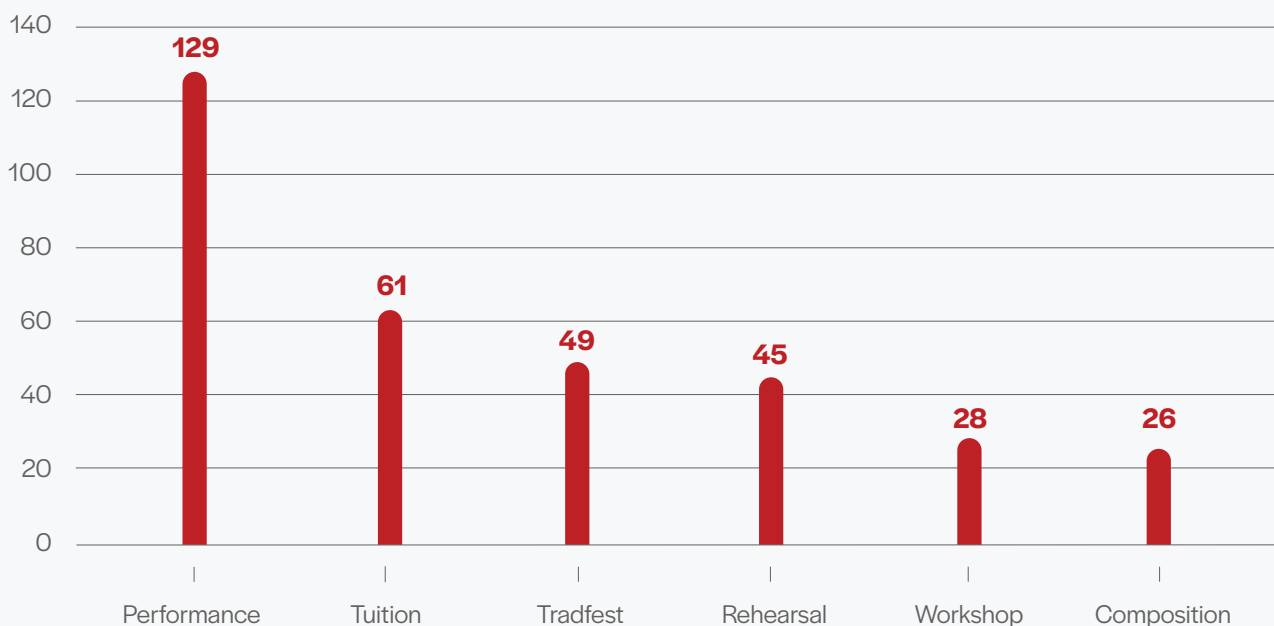
### Workforce

583 Musician Educators actively delivered programmes in 2025. This is an increase of 1.3% compared to 2024. The percentage of Musician Educators on panels who are actively delivering programmes rose from 65% in 2024 to 78% in 2025.

Twenty-four LMEP areas organised visits from 289 Guest Artists/Ensembles, who made a total of 703 visits.

**Music Generation Galway County**  
*The Therapeutic Centre Ballinasloe*  
 Photo by David Cooley

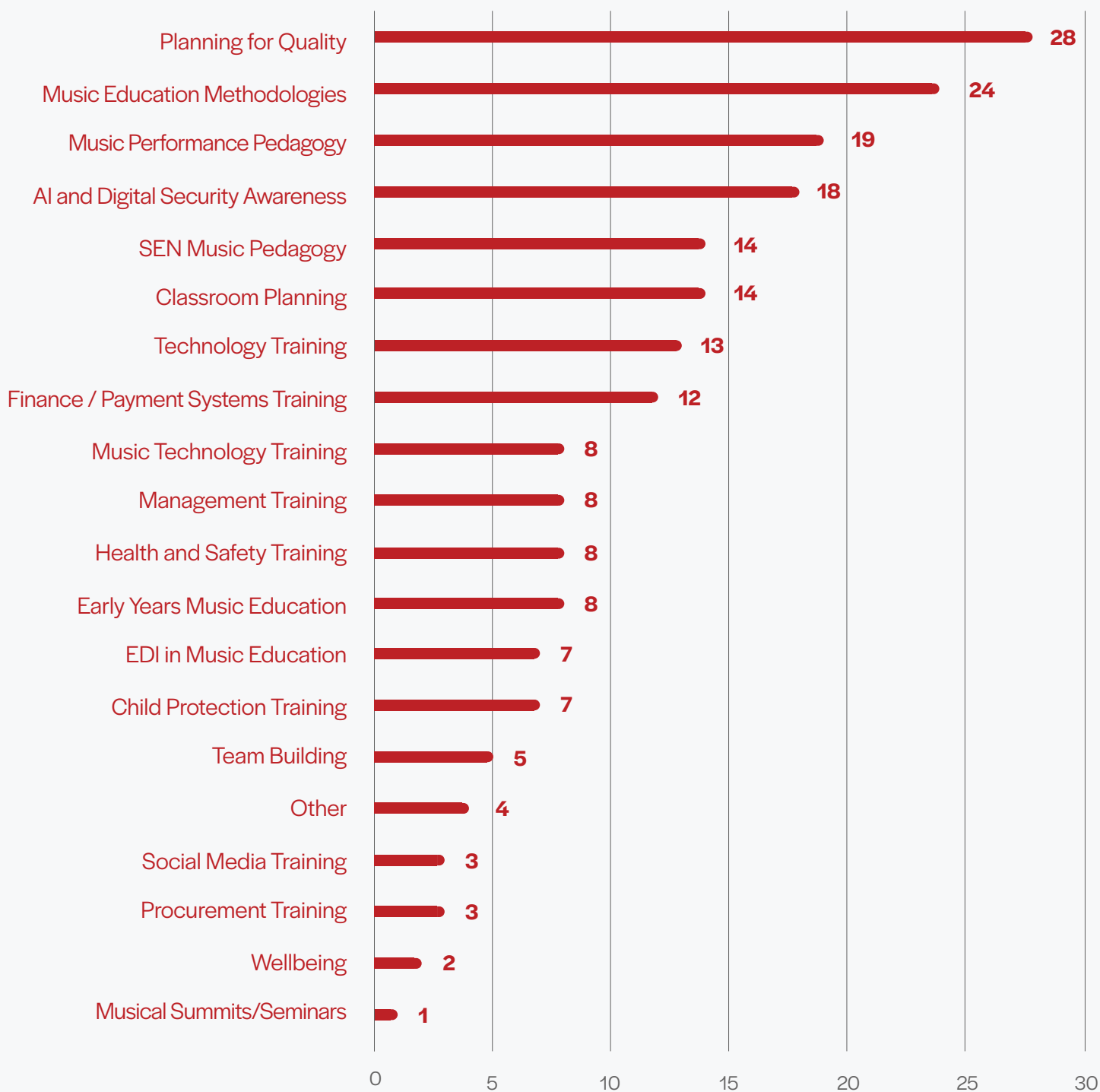
### Purpose of musician visits (most common)



## Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

An estimated 4,335 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training sessions were delivered to Musician Educators in 2025.

### Total CPD Sessions 2025



**Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan**

*Come Sing With Me Choir*

Photo by Sandra McIntyre



“If it wasn’t for Music  
Generation I would never  
have this opportunity.  
It’s unreal to see and we’re  
**having loads of fun.”**

Young Musician, **Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan**



# Programme Highlights from Across the Country

**Music Generation Carlow**  
*Rock the Tower 2025*  
Photo by Davi Matheson

## Carlow

[Music Generation Carlow](#) presented “Rocks the Tower”, a large-scale, live music event for emerging young bands. It took place at Dinn Rí music venue in Carlow and built on the success of the 2024 “Band Development Programme”. The event gave young musicians a chance to perform their own music and develop their individual style. Professional musicians supported them in improving their sound and building confidence on stage. They were joined by bands from Music Generation Kilkenny, Music Generation Waterford and Music Generation Wicklow. Over 250 people attended the performance. [See photos from the event here.](#)

## Cavan/Monaghan

The [Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan](#) Cross Border Folk Orchestra performed at the Technological University Dublin Concert Hall and the Ulster Hall in Belfast. The concerts were part of Dublin’s St. Patrick’s Festival and Belfast TradFest. Over 100 young musicians took part in this cross-border collaboration. They came from many different musical backgrounds including traditional, folk, and classical genres. Composer Michael Rooney developed new music arrangements inspired by the music of renowned Galway accordionist Máirtín O’Connor. Máirtín performed with the orchestra at each concert, along with renowned musicians Zoë Conway and John McIntyre. [Find out more about their experience here.](#)

## Clare

[Music Generation Clare](#) held its second annual “Folk Festival”. The festival brought together young musicians and professional musicians to celebrate music and culture across two days. The programme included concerts, workshops and performances.

The festival opened with an intergenerational concert in St. Columba’s Church in Ennis. The Music Generation Clare Harp Ensemble and Senior Trad Group performed alongside renowned musicians. Over 100 young musicians took part in the festival’s instrumental and vocal workshops. These workshops promoted creativity, confidence and a shared appreciation for traditional Irish music. The festival ended with a second collaborative concert in the Temple Gate Hotel. [View photos from the festival here.](#)

### Music Generation Clare

*Folk Festival 2025*

Photo by Sadhbh McLoughlin



## Cork City

[Music Generation Cork City](#) hosted a youth-led music festival called “Rock the Block” for Cruinniú na nÓg 2025. The festival included music, performances, beatboxing, breakdancing, and open-mic sessions.

More than 100 children and young people took part in workshops and performances during the event. Guest artists included Cian Mulcahy (All-Ireland Champion Breakdancer), Lamar (Beatboxer/Producer), and headliners Mankyy and Hazy Haze. Now in its fourth year, the 2025 festival included an extended programme called “Cruinniú Late”. This was designed to support creative participation for older teens and young adults. The event was presented by Music Generation Cork City, The Kabin Studio, and Musical Neighbourhoods. [See more about Rock the Block here.](#)

## Dún Laoghaire — Rathdown

[Music Generation dlr](#) worked with Southside Traveller Action Group to run a 10-week rap and music production programme. It was developed in collaboration with the young participants. The project gave young people the opportunity to write and record their own rap pieces. It concluded with an end-of-term performance. The programme provided supportive spaces for young people to express themselves and create. It also introduced participants to the basics of music production. It reflected Music Generation dlr’s commitment to working in partnership with local organisations to design programmes that respond directly to young people’s musical interests.

## Dublin City

[Music Generation Dublin City](#) launched a new partnership with The Bohemian Football Club “Oasis” jersey project. The limited-edition jersey, inspired by the internationally acclaimed band Oasis, was released by local football club Bohemian FC. A portion of the profits from jersey sales was allocated to support programmes in six Music Generation areas: Mayo, Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Laois, and Waterford. This supported the delivery of inclusive music programmes that directly benefited children and young people in diverse local settings. It demonstrated the potential of cross-sector collaborations to create meaningful community impact for children and young people. [Read more about the project here.](#)

## Fingal

[Music Generation Fingal](#) hosted a “Song in 60-Minutes” event in the Chapel at Swords Castle. The one-hour workshop invited participants to compose and record an original song in a limited timeframe. The event brought together over 50 participants of all ages and took place on Culture Night. The workshop was facilitated by two Musician Educators who supported and guided the group through the process of writing and recording a song. Participants collaborated through creating lyrics, vocals and instrumental elements to the song. They named the track “The Lonely Wolf”. It was premiered on RTÉ Radio 1.

[Listen back to the interview here.](#)

## Galway City

[Music Generation Galway City](#) led “Bright Notes”, an inclusive music programme delivered in three International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) centres in Galway City. It supported children and young people aged 6 to 18. The programme gave participants a safe space to express themselves, build confidence and feel a sense of belonging through music. The weekly music sessions were designed to be welcoming, flexible and responsive to the needs of the young people taking part. Activities were planned by age group to support learning and engagement. Young people were supported to progress to Music Generation Galway City’s after-school music hubs free of charge. This helped remove barriers to access and provided continued support for young musicians beyond the IPAS setting. [See more about “Bright Notes” here.](#)

## Galway County

[Music Generation Galway County](#) focused on children and young people with additional needs at the heart of its 2025 programme planning. The launch of their Music “For All” Hub created inclusive music-making opportunities for children and young people in Oranmore.

Their “SEnergy” programme and partnership with Down Syndrome Galway supported children and young people with a wide range of disabilities and complex needs through music. “SEnergy” programmes were run in Special Schools and with autism classes across the county. [See more about the “SEnergy” project here.](#)

## Kerry

[Music Generation Kerry](#) “Instrument Tryout Workshops” brought music-making into libraries across the county. About 336 young musicians participated in workshops across five libraries in Tralee, Listowel, Killarney, Castleisland and Kenmare.

The young musicians explored strings, brass, wind and percussion instruments with support from the Music Generation Kerry Musician Educators. The workshops created an accessible and engaging introduction to instrumental learning. The programme received positive feedback from teachers, participants and library staff for its educational and inclusive approach. Libraries reported an increase in instrument lending and donations after each workshop.

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

## Kildare

[Music Generation Kildare’s](#) “Teen Spirit” continued to develop and expand in 2025. This specialised ensemble programme engaged with young musicians aged 12–18. Participants met monthly across rock, pop, and jazz styles to arrange and rehearse music. They performed at festivals and local community events throughout the year. They hosted two showcase concerts at Riverbank Arts Centre in June and December. In 2025, a new, similar programme called “Band Camp” was introduced for a younger age group. “Band Camp” helps young musicians build group-playing skills and prepares them to move into the “Teen Spirit” programme. The three-day camp formed three new bands, one of which joined “Teen Spirit” later in the year. [View highlights from Music Generation Kildare’s programmes here.](#)

## Kilkenny

[Music Generation Kilkenny](#) delivered “FROM SCRATCH”, a free DJ’ing and rapping programme for young people aged 9–18 across County Kilkenny. Participants attended four workshops at The Drum Youth Centre. They learned to write lyrics, create beats, and develop DJ and performance skills. They were supported by a team of professional DJs and rappers and Musician Educators. The programme offered structured, creative support. This enabled the young people to build confidence and collaborate with their peers. “FROM SCRATCH” ended with live pop-up performances on Cruinniú na nÓg at venues in Kilkenny, Windgap, and Castlecomer.

## Laois

“Isle of Song” brought together 50 young musicians to create, record and perform original music. In 2025, residential songwriting workshops took place over two weeks in Corrymeela, County Antrim and Castletown, County Laois. The group were guided by mentors from [Music Generation Laois](#) and the Nerve Centre in Derry. They produced 10 original songs with accompanying music videos. Live performances took place in venues across Laois, Derry and Dublin. The project, led by Music Generation Laois in partnership with the Nerve Centre, created a strong sense of collaboration, connection, and shared creative ambition. “Isle of Song” is supported by Creative Ireland’s Creative Youth on a Shared Island Fund. [Discover more about “Isle of Song” in a short documentary here.](#)

## Leitrim

[Music Generation Leitrim](#) delivered their “Secondary School SingUP” led by Patrick Barrett, Director of the Irish Youth Choir in training. Secondary schools from across Leitrim came together to participate in the programme and perform a shared repertoire of songs. It took place at The Island Theatre in Ballinamore.

As part of the programme, two young singers were successful in auditioning for the Irish Youth Choir in Training Summer Camp. Their participation was supported by Music Generation Leitrim. The summer camp took place over one week in June at the University of Limerick. The successful young musicians were from Mohill Community School and Carrick-on-Shannon Community School. [Watch a clip from the performance here.](#)

## Limerick County

[Music Generation Limerick County](#) Music Generation Limerick County launched its largest access project to date in partnership with primary schools, working with 28 schools across East and West Limerick. The programme delivered workshops that support musical development, creativity, and active participation. Pupils took part in singing, rhythm and percussion, instrumental exploration, composition, and group performance, providing a broad and inclusive musical experience. Working across Limerick County helps ensure access for rural and smaller school communities, while fostering a shared musical identity across the region. Feedback has highlighted increased confidence, strong engagement, and enthusiasm for making music together. [Watch a school performance here.](#)

## Limerick City

[Music Generation Limerick City](#) continued its “One Day in May” festival. This annual event celebrated youth music-making in Limerick City and brought together performers of all ages from 12 Music Generation programmes across the country. The festival used public spaces to create an accessible and welcoming platform for creativity for the Limerick City community. For many young performers, it provided a first experience of professional staging, sound production and performing for a large audience, acting as a bridge between participation and further artistic development.

Beyond performance, “One Day in May” supported youth voice, visibility and cultural participation in Limerick. It showed Music Generation Limerick City’s commitment to nurturing creativity from first point access to self-expression and leadership. It also recognised young people as active contributors to their city’s cultural identity. [Watch highlights from “One Day in May” 2025 here.](#)

### Music Generation Limerick City

*One Day in May*

Photo by Robin Parmar



## Longford

[Music Generation Longford](#) hosted Longford Sounds, a two-day event at St. John's Hall celebrating the creativity of local young musicians. Over two days, young performers took to the stage and played a wide range of music. They showed creativity through their own arrangements and fresh versions of well-known songs. The event opened with a performance from the ensemble group, who played together as a large band. Some of these musicians had only been learning their instruments for a few weeks, making their performance especially noteworthy.

BandJam groups also participated in the programme. Over the previous seven months, participants prepared their sets, arranged songs, and worked collaboratively as bands. They also developed practical skills in soundchecks, stage management, and stage presence.

### Music Generation Longford

*Live Sounds*



## Louth

In 2025, [Music Generation Louth's](#) Nós Nua Folk Orchestra performed at major festivals across the county. They opened the year at Carlingford's Féile na Tána festival (Mól an Óige). Music Generation Louth supported the curation of this event, which included performances by our Senior Harp Ensemble and guest artists Ryan Molloy and Fergal Scahill.

In September, the orchestra delivered a standout performance at the Boyne TradFest in Drogheda, premiering "The Sweet Suite". This six-piece collection was the result of a year-long collaboration. The young musicians worked directly with Molloy and Scahill in Dundalk to compose, workshop, and rehearse the new pieces throughout the year ahead of their autumn debut. [Watch some of their performance here.](#)

## Mayo

The [Music Generation Mayo](#) Harp Ensemble travelled to Belfast to perform at a sold-out concert in the Redeemer Church as part of Belfast TradFest. Now in its seventh year, Belfast TradFest is a major celebration of traditional music in Ireland. The festival features concerts, workshops, and performances across Belfast, a UNESCO City of Music.

The young musicians performed alongside harpers from Music Generation Laois, Louth, and Waterford, showcasing collaboration and traditional Irish music in a memorable setting. [Watch part of their performance here.](#)

**Music Generation Dublin City**

*DC Sounds*

Photo by Dylan Scully



“We hadn’t ever had the chance to work with a professional producer and get a proper demo of our songs. It was **really exciting for us**. Obviously we are a little nervous {for the gig} but it’s exciting to have a proper **big audience** to play for.”

Young Musician, **Music Generation Dublin City**

## Music Generation Offaly

Clara Bog Soundwalk

Photo by Paul Moore Photography

## Meath

Over 100 young musicians from [Music Generation Meath](#) programmes in Navan and Ratoath took part in a special public performance at Navan Shopping Centre in March 2025.

The day featured a wide variety of groups, including choirs, banjos, bodhráns, guitars, harps, drums, keyboards, and violins. Many of the students collaborated, performing music they had learned throughout the year. It was a fantastic chance for them to play in an informal setting, supported by their Musician Educators who prepared and performed with them.

Parents, families, friends, and local shoppers enjoyed a continuous programme of live music that ran all day. See photos from the event [here](#) and [here](#).

## Offaly

[Music Generation Offaly](#) launched the “Clara Bog Soundwalk”. Transition Year and Second Year music students from Ard Scoil Chiarán Naofa in Clara worked with composer Fiona Linnane to create a geo-located soundwalk for the Clara Bog Boardwalk. The project brought together music, creative writing, environmental awareness, and digital technology to explore new ways of engaging with place through sound.

The young musicians took part in workshops where they explored creative listening, sound mapping, soundscapes, graphic scores, and field recording. They developed both creative and technical skills while learning more about the bog as a living

ecosystem. The project resulted in a soundwalk combining field recordings, original music, and student poetry. The young musicians wrote poems, including haikus, inspired by local wildlife such as the curlew, otter, and raft spider. They gained experience in recording, editing, and presenting sound on a digital platform. The soundwalk is triggered by GPS points along the boardwalk and can be accessed by visitors by scanning a QR code. [Watch more about the project here.](#)

## Roscommon

In 2025, young people from the Foróige Roma UBU Youth Projects in Ballaghaderreen and Castlerea collaborated with [Music Generation Roscommon](#) to create and release two major original music videos. The Roma Rap group in Ballaghaderreen wrote, recorded, and released their original song and music video, titled “Keep Searching”. [Watch the music video here.](#)

Buidling on this work, the young musicians created a second original song and music video titled "FREE US." The participants took complete ownership of the creative process, writing, recording, and performing the track themselves. [Watch the music video here.](#)



## Sligo

[Music Generation Sligo](#) collaborated with the Office of Public Works, Sligo Abbey, Sligo BID (Business Improvement District), and Sligo County Council to present a “Magical Evening of Music and Christmas Cheer” in December 2025. The event transformed Sligo Abbey into a cultural performance space and showcased the musical talent of young people in one of the town’s most iconic historic locations.

The event formed part of the Sligo Night-Time Economy Pilot, an initiative aimed at bringing cultural activity into the town centre after dark. By reimagining the Abbey as an evening venue, the project created an atmospheric setting that combined heritage and live performance.

Held over two evenings, the outdoor performances offered festive music and a strong sense of community. The event provided a platform for young musicians and gave audiences the opportunity to experience live music in a unique and memorable setting. [See photos from the event here.](#)

## South Dublin

[Music Generation South Dublin](#) partnership with SubSounds culminated in the release of an album in April 2025. The album featured 15 unique tracks that were written, arranged, and performed by 42 creative and talented young participants. These young musicians explored an eclectic range of genres, delivering everything from power ballads and 1960s RnB to heavy metal and punk rock. The album was recorded at Camden Recording Studios, engineered by Conor Brady, and at CONTACT Studios, engineered by Domhnaill Corrigan. On April 12th, the group launched the record with a live performance at The Sugar Club on Leeson Street, Dublin 2. [Listen to the SubSounds releases on their bandcamp here.](#)



**Music Generation Kildare**  
*Kildare Jazz Festival*  
Photo by Luis Mavszak

## Tipperary

[Music Generation Tipperary](#) presented their “Sing for Spring” in April 2025. Over three days, nearly 1,200 children and young people attended performances at the Horse and Jockey Hotel Theatre, as part of primary school vocal programmes across County Tipperary. The event brought together the work developed in weekly sessions into a shared live experience.

The performances combined a live show with workshop elements, with the audience taking part as performers. Participants sang along with a house band of professional musicians and explored group vocal techniques in a practical setting. The repertoire included songs chosen by the children and young people, along with local pieces such as “Slievenamon” and the popular “Sounds of Semple”, which was first featured in 2024. The event highlighted both performance and participation, while celebrating local music and shared musical experiences. [View photos from the event here.](#)

## Waterford

[Music Generation Waterford](#) hosted a night of innovative traditional music in collaboration with the five-piece band 3 on the Bund.

The performance took place at St. Patrick’s Gateway and showcased traditional and harp ensembles from music hubs in Waterford and Dungarvan. The young musicians played their own sets before joining 3 on the Bund on stage for a collaborative, cross-generational performance. Ahead of the show, 3 on the Bund held workshops with the young ensembles to explore collaborative music-making

During the event, fiddle player Rebecca McCarthy-Kent spoke about her musical journey from Waterford to performing with 3 on the Bund. She highlighted how performance music education develops essential collaboration skills, and how being open to new experiences shapes a young musician's path.

[See photos of the workshop here.](#)

## Westmeath

[Music Generation Westmeath](#) led “Westmeath Whisperings”, a collaborative composition project developed through workshops with primary school children across County Westmeath. The project produced two original works, “The Forgotten Song” and “Echoes”, created through an inclusive process that combined music, storytelling, visual art, and sound exploration.

Over 200 children took part in workshops delivered in local schools. Activities included voice, instruments, body percussion, environmental sound, and creative storytelling. These sessions introduced composition as an accessible process and encouraged children to explore how sound can represent images, emotions, and stories. The use of everyday objects and found materials as sound sources helped expand their understanding of how music can be created.

Both compositions drew on ideas from the workshops. “The Forgotten Song” reflected Mullingar’s mythological landscape and hidden stories, while “Echoes” explored the River Shannon and life in the Bronze Age. Children took part as co-creators, contributing ideas through listening, vocal work, rhythm, and creative responses to themes of memory, place, and history. The project supported confidence, collaboration, and creative expression. [Read more about “Westmeath Whisperings” here.](#)

## Wexford

[Music Generation Wexford](#) delivered the Multi-Sensory Music Education Programme (MSMEP), an inclusive music programme developed by musician and composer George Higgs. George worked with two classes of children who are deaf at Sacred Heart National School in Newbawn, County Wexford, supporting their exploration of the fundamentals of music through multisensory techniques. The programme took a whole-body approach to performance music education, incorporating sound, visual rhythm, and vibration. Newbawn National School is the only school in the southeast with a special class for children who are deaf.

In June 2025, the students presented the culmination of their learning through a performance that incorporated vibration, sign language, and spoken word. Approximately 12 young Deaf musicians took part, demonstrating their development over the course of the programme. [Watch more about the programme here.](#)



## Wicklow

[Music Generation Wicklow](#) delivered the “Music in the Glen” Trad Residential in Glendalough in November 2025. The residential brought together 30 young traditional musicians from across County Wicklow for an intensive weekend of music-making and creative exchange.

The programme created a space where young people aged 12–18 could immerse themselves in traditional music outside their usual school or community settings. It welcomed both participants already involved in Music Generation Wicklow programmes and young musicians new to Music Generation activity. This combination supported new connections and broadened the learning experience. Under the guidance of experienced Musician Educators, participants took part in ensemble workshops, informal sessions, and collaborative learning. The residential supported confidence, peer connection, and shared music-making in an immersive environment.

The programme concluded with an informal sharing that highlighted the group’s progress and was shared with families and the wider community. [Watch more about the event here.](#)

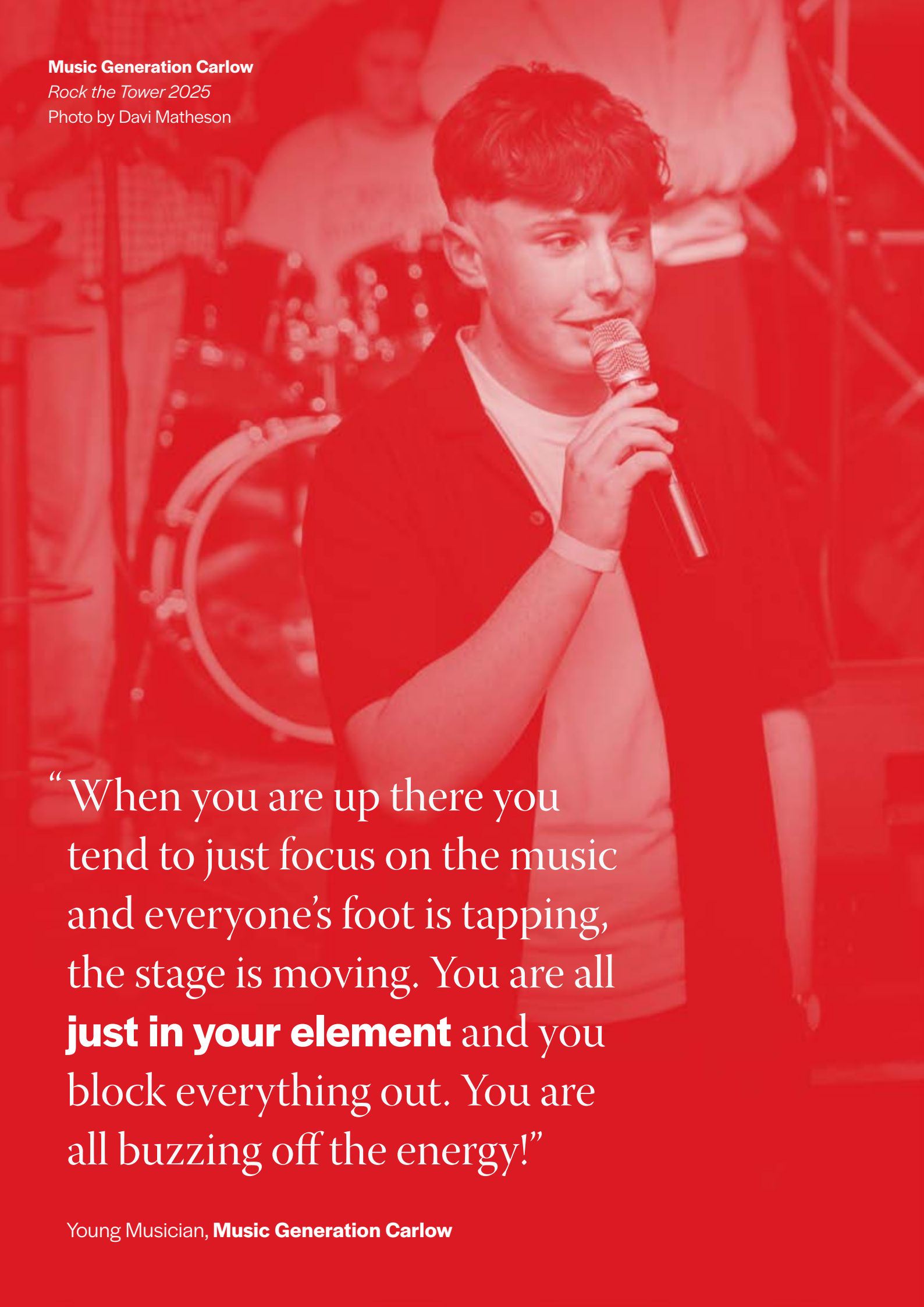
### Music Generation Wexford

*Multi-Sensory Primary School Programme*

**Music Generation Carlow**

*Rock the Tower 2025*

Photo by Davi Matheson

A young man with dark, curly hair is performing on stage. He is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored t-shirt and is holding a microphone to his mouth. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and stage equipment. The entire image has a red overlay.

“When you are up there you tend to just focus on the music and everyone’s foot is tapping, the stage is moving. You are all **just in your element** and you block everything out. You are all buzzing off the energy!”

Young Musician, **Music Generation Carlow**

# Strategic Goals

In 2022, Music Generation published *“Transforming Young Lives Through Music”*.

This plan charts the future direction of Music Generation from 2022–2026 in continuing 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.**

In 2025, progress was made on the strategic goals and objectives of the NDO Strategic Plan Quality Pillar through the development and implementation of five priority actions from the Quality Strategy 2023–2026. These priority actions are:

- Planning for Quality (PfQ)
- Restructured Creativity and Collaboration Fund
- Performance Music Education Research and Learning
- Network Strengthening
- Learning from *We are Music Generation* National Celebration in 2024.

Planning for Quality is reported on under Objective 1 to follow. The Creativity and Collaboration Fund is the key action under Objective 2 of the Quality Pillar (pp. 46-52).

Progression of the remaining priority actions, PME Research and Learning and Network Strengthening, is outlined under Objective 3 of this report (pp. 53-55).

Learning from the 2024 *We are Music Generation* National Celebration is being implemented throughout the progression of the remaining priority actions within the life of this strategic plan.



## Music Generation Laois

*Launch of the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025–2030, Mansion House Dublin.*

## Planning for Quality (PfQ)

In 2025, the Quality Development and Learning (QDL) team advanced the first quality strategy priority, Planning for Quality, in the following ways:

- Completed a Review Report outlining the development of PfQ from pilot stage through to its first year of implementation
- Applied key learning and recommendations to refine and improve the PfQ rollout
- Continued to progress the PfQ rollout, extending it to four additional LMEPs to a total of 13 by the end of 2025.

The Review Report of Planning for Quality (2022–2024), completed in Q1 2025, outlines the National Development Office's (NDO) strategic approach to Planning for Quality as a key priority for quality development and learning in performance music education (PME). The report emphasises the importance of understanding quality in PME and highlights the role of Music Generation NDO in supporting continuous improvement across the network.

The report traces the evolution of Music Generation's approach to quality over time. From the introduction of the Quality Framework Toolkit in 2019, through the quality review process rollout, it outlines the decision to move to a Planning for Quality approach from 2022. The primary aim of PfQ is to support local teams in discussing what quality means in Performance Music Education (PME) and to learn from Musician Educators about their practice. This includes working collaboratively, building trust among stakeholders, and developing a shared language around quality. The report also sets out key objectives, including defining clear, locally relevant programme aims, strengthening the role of Music Development Officers (MDOs), and embedding PfQ within ongoing quality development work.

Looking ahead, the report recommends the continued rollout of the PfQ approach across additional LMEP areas over the lifetime of the NDO Strategic Plan and Quality Strategy. It highlights the need for ongoing engagement with LMEPs on quality and the importance of documenting the PfQ process. Doing so will help capture insights across

the network, support future practice, and encourage continued engagement and knowledge sharing to improve experiences of PME.

In 2025, PfQ ran from May to September, and involved four LMEP areas: Music Generation Kerry, Music Generation Limerick County, Music Generation Offaly, and Music Generation Wicklow. In total, 36 Musician Educators, four Music Development Officers (MDOs), and two administrators took part.

Each LMEP team took part in three full days of continuous professional development (CPD), led by the QDL team, involving Musician Educators, MDOs, and administrative and resource staff. A flexible, action research approach continued to guide the work, supported by clear aims and objectives. In 2025, this included working closely with MDOs to plan PfQ activity, with pre-session planning meetings used to shape each session according to local needs and priorities. Post-session reflections drew on feedback gathered from Musician Educators, which in turn informed the planning of each subsequent session in line with an action research approach.



## Planning for Quality 2025 Feedback

In 2025, the QDL team also continued to engage with LMEPs that had previously completed PfQ.

This involved:

- Supporting Music Generation Carlow's PfQ in building leadership capacity among coordinating Musician Educators through a series of NDO-led workshops, including a session on peer-to-peer observation
- Supporting Music Generation Kilkenny with the progression of the partnership development process explored during PfQ
- Follow up consultation meeting with MDOs from the first seven participating LMEPs to discuss feedback and share learning. This meeting also provided an opportunity for consultation on the ongoing development of PfQ, as well as for the NDO to share its experience and learning from developing the process.

**Music Generation Waterford,**  
*Sound Crowd,*  
Photo by DGM Photographic

**“It has been a reflective journey. Deep critical thinking was inspired through the aid of our peers and NDO team.”**

**“I have been inspired to share ideas with others, to journal and reflect weekly, and to commit to this type of workshop to revive inspiration and motivation.”**

## 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 works with local and national partners is through the dedicated Creativity and Collaboration Fund (CCF). This fund supports national, regional, and local projects, and is designed to create artistic and creative development opportunities for professional artists, children, and young people. These projects give children, young people, and musicians the chance to collaborate and explore creative music making and learning in different ways, alongside their regular music tuition.

In Q1 2025 a comprehensive strategic and process review of the CCF was completed. This review examined the purpose, methodology, procedures, documentation, and overall function of CCF to improve process and communications.

The 2025 CCF round was processed and awarded in Q2, with two funding strands offered. Strand 1 was for new projects, and Strand 2 was for recurring projects. 18 applications were received from LMEPs, and 17 were awarded funding in 2025.



**Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan**  
*Department of Education and Youth  
Cineáltas Showcase 2025*

### 2025 Creativity and Collaboration Fund Projects

#### Live and Lyrical

Music Generation Longford delivered “Live and Lyrical”, a series of songwriting workshops where young people developed their skills across different genres and instruments. They learned how to create beats, write lyrics and compose their own songs. Working with professional musicians who have experience in songwriting and touring, they were supported to develop their ideas and complete original songs to a high standard. The programme finished with the recording of an album, followed by a launch concert where the young people performed their work.

[View photos from “Live and Lyrical” workshops here.](#)

## Piano Workshops

Music Generation Leitrim, Offaly, Laois, Longford and Westmeath delivered a series of piano workshops over four weekends. The programme supported piano students to develop their playing while experiencing the joy of making music together. Workshops were held across all five areas.

## Creative Music Hub

Music Generation Limerick County established a space in Newcastle West for young people aged 13-18 to explore creative musical ideas guided by Musician Educators. This project was a continuation of the collaboration with Foróige Newcastle West in their space in the heart of the town. [View photos from a Creative Music Hub workshop here.](#)

## SubSounds Youth Music Festival 2025

This one-day festival based in Dublin created the opportunity for young musicians to perform on a festival stage to a large audience. Young musicians from Music Generation programmes in Dublin City, South Dublin, Fingal, Meath, Kildare and Wicklow took part, along with participants from the wider hinterland. Three bands from each participating Music Generation LMEP performed on the main stage, with additional acoustic sets on a second stage, offering a wider range of performance opportunities. The festival provided young musicians with valuable experience of performing in a professional festival setting, supported by professional sound engineering, stage management and staging, and in front of a live audience in a unique environment. [Watch a short video about SubSounds Youth Music Festival here.](#)

## Summer School of Rock + Pop 2025

A seven-day immersive creative programme for children and young people aged 10-18 in Laois and the surrounding areas, designed to support the development of original music, participation in masterclasses, and performance opportunities.

The project was developed by a youth voice steering committee and Music Generation Laois Musician Educators. It included small and large band and ensemble workshops, masterclasses with guest musicians, and recording sessions with a music producer. Participants also visited BIMM Institute Dublin and Windmill Lane Studios in Dublin, and took part in busking and performance opportunities at Laois Music Centre and in Portlaoise town.

The programme culminated in a final show at The Fort, a newly constructed outdoor performance space on the grounds of Laois Music Centre. [Hear about the young participants experiences here.](#)

## Corda Connections 2025

Corda Connections is a collaboration between Music Generation Kerry, Music Generation Louth, and the Irish Chamber Orchestra string ensembles. It provides intermediate and advanced players with the opportunity to perform together and take part in workshops with professional musicians.

As part of this project, a summer residential was held at Dundalk Grammar School, offering 48 young string players high-level ensemble training, sectional rehearsals, and recreational activities. The programme was facilitated by a team of 12 supervising staff, including Musician Educators and professional

musicians from the Irish Chamber Orchestra. A Culture Night gala concert at the University Concert Hall in Limerick showcased the ensemble's development and provided a high-profile platform for participants to perform in a professional setting. [Watch their 2025 summer residential concert here.](#)

## Big Band Bop

Led by Music Generation Westmeath and Music Generation Roscommon, this Big Band Pop Fusion initiative brought together children and young people from both areas to develop improvisation skills, co-compose music, and perform as a combined ensemble.

Aimed at young musicians aged 9–18 across a range of instrumental programmes, the project provided a progression pathway into ensemble playing and supported the development of creative music-making techniques. The programme culminated in a joint performance showcasing the work created by participants.

## Composer-in-Residence

Music Generation Louth appointed Elaine Agnew as Composer-in-Residence for the period 2025–2028. In 2025, the residency supported ongoing work on planning for quality and embedding creativity as a shared core value across the programme. It also enabled direct engagement between the composer and children and young people in school-based programmes, ensembles and music hubs.

The Composer-in-Residence programme formally launched in September 2025 with a practical, day-long workshop in creative music-making for the Musician Educator team. The first project brought Elaine Agnew and writer and BBC presenter John Toal together with Musician Educators and children from St. Peter's and St. Paul's Primary Schools in Drogheda. Together, they created lyrics and music for two new Christmas songs, "Budge Up" and "Hurry Home". Elaine Agnew also worked with young instrumentalists at Music Generation Louth's after-school music hub in Drogheda, where participants developed a suite of three pieces: Holly, Reflections and Winter. The project concluded with a Christmas performance, *Hurry Home!*, presented in December. [Watch the finale performance here.](#)

## Midland Rocks

The Midland Rocks Youth Music Festival is a year-long programme to celebrate and support young musicians from Rock and Pop programmes in Music Generation areas Offaly, Laois, Longford and Westmeath. This initiative commenced in 2025 and is open to young people of all backgrounds and abilities. The festival provided a platform for participants to showcase their skills in a series of live performances held at venues throughout the region. In addition to performance opportunities, the festival hosts a diverse programme of workshops over 2–3 days, led by the experienced teams of Musician Educators.

[View photos from Midland Rocks here.](#)

## Music @ Mount Leinster 2025

Music @ Mount Leinster is an annual festival hosted by Music Generation Carlow which provides young traditional musicians with an opportunity to collaborate, share ideas, and develop ensemble and arrangement skills under the guidance of leading professional musicians. In 2025, participants took part in an immersive programme designed to support musical development, encourage cultural exchange, and strengthen connections between Music Generation areas nationwide. The experience culminated in a high-quality public performance in The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, showcasing the participants' hard work. A key focus for 2025 was to further expand professional mentorship opportunities, the deepening of regional partnerships, and the strengthening of Music @ Mount Leinster's role as a national festival of excellence for young traditional musicians. [Watch more about the experience of the young musicians here.](#)

## Féile Fearann Rí

Rooted in a vision of social inclusion, community participation, and intergenerational music-making, Féile Fearann Rí is a platform for traditional Irish music, language, and creativity across the northside of Cork City. Presented by Music Generation Cork City, led by partner provider Creative Tradition, the festival in 2025 featured artist-in-residence John Spillane. The festival featured a diverse programme of events including school performances, intergenerational workshops, storytelling events, community music gatherings, and a flagship Gala Concert. [Watch some of the performance here.](#)

## Music Making in a Virtual World

Music Making in a Virtual World is an innovative music education project that uses Virtual Reality (VR) to connect socially isolated young people with performance music education. This project is a collaboration between Music Generation Galway City and Foróige GO, with delivery supported by local TUSLA staff. It aims to develop a sustainable model for digital music engagement that expands access to creative learning opportunities, supports wellbeing, and fosters meaningful musical participation for young people who may face barriers to in-person provision. [Hear more about the programme here.](#)

## Irish Concertina Orchestra 2025

Music Generation Clare's Irish Concertina Orchestra gives young concertina players challenging and innovative musical experiences, helping them explore what is creatively possible. It offers learning opportunities beyond more traditional local offerings such as Grúpaí Ceoil and céilí bands. It was developed in response to an identified gap in performance-focused and creatively ambitious opportunities for advanced young concertina players. Forty-five young musicians came together to collaborate with artists including NOTIFY, Cormac McCarthy, and the MGCE Concert Orchestra, as well as sean-nós and folk singers from all four provinces of Ireland. Running from September 2024 to May 2025, the project concluded with a series of live performances showcasing the results of this collaborative, cross-genre musical journey. See more about the programme here. [Watch a short documentary about the Irish Concertina Orchestra here.](#)

## Limerick Voices Continued Impacts

Limerick Voices is the ground-breaking teenage composition and performance programme based in Limerick City that has flourished since 2014 and provides significant impact for teenagers across the county. Led by Music Generation Limerick City, the programme aims to create a step change in supporting and promoting autonomous youth creativity across Ireland. [Watch a short documentary and hear from past participants from Limerick Voices here.](#)

## Big Weekend on The Mall

Big Weekend on The Mall builds on Music Generation Mayo's successful youth music festival from 2024. This two-day celebration showcases the vibrant youth music scene in County Mayo while linking in with wider community festivities. The event featured a range of activities, including youth performances on the main stage, pop-up music sessions, an open mic tent, traditional Irish music sessions, and interactive areas where people can explore different instruments. [Read more about the event here.](#)

## The Session

This partnership between Music Generation Kilkenny and Music Generation Tipperary aims to support young traditional musicians in both areas, with a focus on developing their connection to the session as a cultural setting and to local repertoire. The children and young people's group met four times during the year in session-based workshops to explore and learn music from the local area. They developed skills in playing together in a fun, welcoming environment. The sessions were open to all, reflecting one of the key values of traditional music in community settings. Participation also helped build friendships and working relationships between the young musicians and music educators. [See more about The Session here.](#)

**Music Generation Tipperary  
and Music Generation Kilkenny**  
*The Session*



## SoundCrowd

SoundCrowd is a developmental and residential project for young musicians. It is designed to extend their improvisation, composition, and collaboration skills. The project also supports the professional learning of a core team of Musician Educators. It focuses on improving teaching practice while working directly with young people learning brass, wind, and rhythm section instruments. Initiated in 2022, it emerged from strategic reflection on its predecessor “Brass Off” to identify long term future needs to ensure high quality pedagogical growth, meaningful youth development, and performance music education in the area of wind, brass and percussion. [View photos from SoundCrowd 2025 here.](#)

## Singfest

Singfest is a year-long initiative in the Midlands that gives children and young people an inclusive, non-competitive opportunity to take part in group singing. It uses informal, activity-based learning and includes singing activities in schools, a schools concert series, and a large “Big Sing” event. In 2025, Music Generation Westmeath and Music Generation Offaly delivered Singfest, helping to bring high-quality singing into young people’s lives while also supporting the development of musician educators. [View photos from Singfest 2025 here.](#)

## Enhancing Ensemble Practice

As part of this initiative, Music Generation Wicklow launched a mentoring programme for members and former members of the Rithim Orchestra. It also developed new partnerships with Bray Comhaltas, The Boathouse CCÉ Wicklow Town, and Wicklow Miners CCÉ to support young musicians. The project created and tested digital music learning resources for the Charanga platform. Young musicians performed at a range of events, including “Le Chéile”, “Galway Tradfest”, “Music @ Mount Leinster”, “Russborough Garden Show”, “Kaleidoscope Festival”, and “Bí Ann” at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. Workshops and recording sessions were also held across different counties to help young people from different areas work together and make music collaboratively. [View highlights from Kaleidoscope Festival performances here.](#)

## Building Orchestral Pathways

Building Orchestral Pathways is an ongoing action research project exploring ways to develop ensemble participation for young instrumentalists across Music Generation Offaly, Westmeath, Laois, and Longford. The project addresses a gap in ensemble opportunities for young musicians in the Midlands. With a focus on improving access to lifelong music-making, and supporting the sustainability of existing and new ensembles, this project aims to create clear progression opportunities for young instrumentalists at all stages of development.

## Building Orchestral Pathways

### 2025 activity:

#### Music at the Malthouse

Hosted at The Malthouse, Stradbally, County Laois, as part of Music Generation Laois's annual festival, the project resulted in the formation of two collaborative orchestras. A senior orchestra brought together young people and adults from Laois, Offaly, and Westmeath. A junior orchestra was made up of school-aged musicians participating in Music Generation programmes. Both ensembles featured strings, brass, percussion, and woodwind players. Development activities included two large-scale rehearsals held in March and April at Laois Music Centre, including sectional rehearsals and team-building activities. A special event featured Irish Chamber Orchestra violinist Diane Daly as Guest Conductor, facilitating two advance online planning sessions with Musician Educators to co-develop repertoire and rehearsal approaches, as well as directing workshops, rehearsals and the culminating performance. A total of 86 young musicians and ten Musician Educators participated, with transport arranged from each county to support access. [Watch some of the performance here.](#)

#### Fiddle Fiesta

A large-scale regional strings event was hosted by Music Generation Westmeath at TUS Athlone in May 2025. 169 children from Music Generation programmes in Laois, Offaly, Westmeath, and Longford took part supported by twelve Musician Educators. Repertoire was prepared in advance through school-based sessions. Guest artist Verónica Urrego (National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain, El Sistema Scotland, National Youth Orchestra Scotland) led the event bringing all musicians together in a large ensemble experience. School transport was provided to support participation, and this event strengthened cross-county collaboration and laid foundations for future events. [Watch highlights from Fiddle Fiesta here.](#)

## Objective 3

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

Network strengthening is both a goal and a process that runs through the five priority actions of the Quality Strategy. In 2025, the NDO continued to develop and strengthen the structures and support for the network through engagement with Local Music Education Partnerships via Directorate Steering Group (DSG), Music Development Officer (MDO), and Administrator/Resource Worker networks.

A total of 11 national network events were hosted, bringing together groups including the DSG, MDO Network, and Administrator/Resource Worker Network. 114 Musician Educators took part in the National Musician Educator Gathering, an event shaped around Musician Educator-led content, with a focus on sharing knowledge and experiences. The programme featured workshops on topics such as leading creative projects, working with children and young people with additional needs, world music in performance music education, fostering musical autonomy, songwriting, and Planning for Quality. Renowned percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie took part in a live interview, and vocal leader and composer Pete Churchill facilitated a large-scale group music-making experience.



**Music Generation Musician Educators Gathering**  
Photo by Dave Keegan

### **Musician Educator Gathering 2025 Feedback**

Participants highlighted several aspects they enjoyed during the day, including:

*“Absolutely enjoyed Evelyn Glennie’s talk. Amazing and truly inspirational. Also enjoyed the singing together.”*

*“It was nice to have the chance to network with people, not just MEs but everyone involved in Music Generation. Really enjoyed every one of the sessions I attended, each one of them different and carrying its own validity within the industry and creatively.”*

*“Everything, from the informal sessions in between to the great insights into our colleagues work to the great singing and inspirational talks. Great venue and overall experience. Thank you for organising this event.”*

**“I enjoyed the entire day! Each session I attended was excellent. It was inspiring — it was uplifting — it was helpful and beautiful.”**

Throughout 2025, quarterly in-person MDO Network meetings were held. These meetings created opportunities for sharing knowledge and learning, discussing effective practices, planning strategically, and building partnerships. As part of network strengthening, a working group of MDOs and NDO executive members was established to collaborate on developing a shared agenda for MDO network events and meetings, as well as the programme for the annual MDO residential event.

At the MDO Quarterly Meeting on 6 February in Limerick City, Hub na nÓg delivered a workshop titled "An Introduction to the Participation of Children and Young People in Decision-Making."

In June 2025, the annual MDO Network residential event was co-hosted by Music Generation Cork City. A varied programme of networking events, CPD sessions, and site visits was organised, including a welcome reception with the Lord Mayor and members of Cork City LMEP. Young musicians from Music Generation Cork City—including participants from Creative Tradition and The Kabin Studio—also gave performances and presentations. The event was attended by MDOs representing 18 LMEP areas, along with local LMEP partners and NDO executive members, and was co-programmed with input from the MDO working group.

Alongside two online meetings, one in-person meeting for Administrators and Resource Workers took place in Quarter 2, with 16 delegates attending from 12 LMEP areas. This meeting included presentations by network members and activities designed to promote networking, peer-to-peer sharing, and learning.

Training in social media and AI was provided to the Administrator and Resource Worker Network to support their work in the marketing and promotion of local programmes, initiatives, and news.

An MDO–NDO presentation was delivered to the Directorate Steering Group (DSG) on 9 April, jointly with Music Generation Carlow and Music Generation Waterford. The presentation focused on the standing agenda item, "Sharing Effective Practice".

## Performance Music Education Research and Learning

Research integration remained a key focus during network meetings and external knowledge exchange activities.

Throughout 2025, PME enquiry was built into the PfQ process as part of the ongoing work with local Musician Educator, MDO, and administrative teams. Participants' views were gathered throughout, in group discussions, collaborative activities, individual reflection, and surveys. All data from PfQ are collated for ongoing learning, with the aim of building a shared understanding of PME in practice.

Insights from the PfQ process were shared in the following contexts:

**What Quality Looks Like in Performance Music Education** — presentation at the Young Audiences Music (YAM) session, Viljandi, Estonia, 17 September 2025. Presentation by Mairéad Duffy, Quality Development and Learning Manager, Music Generation NDO.

**3,000 Violins: Autoethnography, Community Music Research, and Positive Youth Development** — Joint presentation by Professor Peter Gouzouasis, University of British Columbia, Canada and Dr Margaret O'Sullivan, Director of Quality Development, Research and Learning, Music Generation NDO at the Society for Music Education in Ireland (SMEI) Conference, St. Mary's College, Belfast, 28–29 October 2025.



### Music Generation Roscommon

*St. Patricks Festival*

Photo by Brian Farrell

**Inclusivity and everyday diversity in participatory partnership-based actions in Music Generation** — Joint MDO–NDO symposium presentation at the 17th Cultural Diversity in Music Education Conference, Mary Immaculate College and Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick, 30 September–3 October 2025. Presentations by Dr Aidan O'Donnell, Music Generation Tipperary, Anne-Marie Beaumont, Music Generation Wicklow, and Dr Margaret O'Sullivan, Director of Quality Development, Research and Learning, Music Generation NDO.

## **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 and Youth completed an Independent Review of Department of Education and Youth public funding to Music Generation. In 2024, the Department convened a Steering Group to consider the reports' recommendations. The work of the Steering Group continued in 2025. The Steering Group membership includes Department officials, ETB Directors, and the National Director of Music Generation.

### Music Generation Sligo

*Sligo Youth Voices at Sligo Abbey*  
Photo by Hackett Photography



# Objective 5

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

In 2025, Music Generation continued to nurture partnerships with a range of stakeholders including U2, The Ireland Funds, Bank of America, the Department of Education and Youth, the Department of An Taoiseach, The Arts Council and our national network of Local Music Education Partnerships in which Education and Training Boards, in collaboration with Local Authorities, play a lead role. One of the ways these partnerships were celebrated was through live performance by children and young people at events throughout 2025. These included:

- Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan performance at the Department of Education and Youth Cinéaltas Showcase, September 2025
- Bank of America’s celebration of partnership in November 2025, featuring Music Generation Louth performances
- Music Generation Louth performances at The Ireland Funds Women in Business & Philanthropy Lunch October 2025, Bank of America Philanthropic Partnership event December 2025; Department of An Taoiseach Child Poverty & Wellbeing Summit, Aviva Stadium September 2025
- Music Generation Laois performance at the Department of Children, Disability and Equality launch of the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025–2030, Dublin's Mansion House, September 2025
- Music Generation dlr and Music Generation Waterford performances at the Ombudsman for Children’s Office 2025 Child Talks, November 2025.

(For further details see Advocacy Section pg. 66)



## Music Generation Louth

*Department of An Taoiseach*

*Child Poverty and Well-being Summit*

**“I was so excited for the opportunity and practiced countless hours for it. I saw the Steinway grand piano and I was in awe. I played an original piece. I’ll never forget that day.”**

— Young Musician, Music Generation Louth

We continued to collaborate with the Arts Council / An Comhairle Ealaíon on the further development of our 2025–2026 partnership, which supported 17 Creativity & Collaboration fund projects.

We were proud to participate in the Bank of America State of the Arts All-Island dialogue series in November 2025 which convened cultural leaders for rich discussions on the future of the arts. We also began engagement with the Creative Youth research programme “Children and Young People’s Engagement in Creative and Cultural Activities” – a collaboration between Creative Ireland, the Department of Education and Youth, the Department of Culture, Communication and Sport, the Department of Children, Disability and Equality, and the ESRI.

### **Song Lyrics**

*And wherever you are and wherever I’ll be*

*Your voice I’ll take with me and we will*

*Sing*

*Ní neart go cur le cheile*

*Sing*

*Bí cinealta le Chéile*

*Sing*

*Is treise an grá ná an fu--ath*

# Objective 6

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

Together with ETBs, Music Generation NDO reviewed the resourcing of the Music Generation workforce. Our goal is to understand how staff capacity and human resources can help maintain the sustainability and quality of local programme delivery.



**National Musician  
Educators Gathering 2025**  
Photo by David Keegan

# Objective 7

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

In 2025, the National Director of Music Generation (NDO) was supported by a 9-member team working across Finance and Governance, Operations, Communications and Marketing, and Quality Development and Learning. We met all regulatory, governance, and reporting requirements.

The Audit & Risk committee developed a key person contingency planning document for the National Development Office in 2025, to mitigate against risk.

We continued to support and develop expertise within our team by providing ongoing CPD and training opportunities with 2% of NDO staff costs invested in 2025. We also improved our processes, including our financial systems, Creativity and Collaboration Fund processes, work plans, and statistical reporting. These processes will continue to be reviewed and refined, using the results to drive further improvement in 2026 and beyond.

We also completed work on the development of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy in 2025, in preparation for implementation from 2026.

## Music Generation Fingal

*Culture Night*

Photo by Fintan Clarke



## **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 Plan for 2025 was created to support Music Generation's Advocacy Goals and raise awareness of our mission. We focused on key objectives:

- Deepening awareness of the value of performance music education in the lives of children and young people
- Developing opportunities for the voices of children and young people to be heard
- Support long-term sustainability objectives, continue to nurture strategic relationships and share compelling stories of impact
- Continue to strengthen perception of our offering 'Performance Music Education' and support development of research strategy.

Key elements of the strategy included:

### **Content and Storytelling:**

We began developing a content series, #musicchangedme, for launch in 2026.

The series focuses on personal stories about the impact of music-making on the lives of children and young people. All content, ideas, and edits were workshopped with the young musicians involved.

We continued to collaborate directly with children and young people through our social media storytelling, see examples [here](#) and [here](#).

### **Brand and Website:**

A comprehensive review of the Music Generation brand and website was undertaken in preparation for implementation in 2026.

## Advocacy and Participation:

We continued to seek opportunities to work directly with children and young people so that their voices can influence the direction of Music Generation.

Areas of focus included:

- Focus groups on the development of Music Generation's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy, with young musicians from Mayo and Wicklow
- A communications and marketing focus group with young musicians from Kerry, Louth, and Limerick
- Supporting LMEPs in training and in developing participative processes
- Working closely with the Quality, Development and Learning function to develop collaborative processes for the future research strategy.

## Awareness:

We continued to raise awareness through digital and traditional media:

- We explored new styles of video storytelling in collaboration with young musicians and LMEPs, resulting in a 40% increase in social media engagement
- Total video views reached 89,671
- We continued to build public awareness by securing national media opportunities.

### Music Generation Westmeath

*Wind Ensemble at Music at the Malthouse*

Photo by Alf Harvey



Music Generation Laois and Nerve Centre Derry

*Isle of Song*

Photo by Alf Harvey



# ISLE OF SONG



“It’s really really empowering  
because you get up there and  
you say Yeah, **I just did that.**  
Wow, it’s pure bliss.”

Young Musician, **Music Generation Laois**

## 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.

Throughout 2025 we continued to make progress in including the voices of children and young people in our communications and activities.

This involved coordinating content created by children and young people to share their stories through video and online channels. We also collaborated with national and international partners to create performance opportunities. We continued to build relationships with key advocates, such as the Ombudsman for Children's Office and the Children's Rights Alliance.

### **Advocacy and Young Ambassadors**

Each year, our advocacy is brought to life through our Young Ambassadors, who represent young musicians across our network. They use their platforms to share lived experiences and champion the importance of performance music education to national and international audiences. Music Generation works closely with funders, donors, and partners to create these memorable performance opportunities. Through these opportunities, young people are not only heard, but recognised as powerful advocates for the role music plays in their lives.



**Music Generation dlr**

Child Talks 2025

*Photo by Maxwell Photography*

### **Music Generation Fingal - Danu Community Special School**

Music Generation Fingal's programme in Danu Community school in Dublin 15 was featured by the Irish Independent. This programme, which focuses on wellbeing, is led by Music Therapist and Music Generation Musician Educator Eoghan McGale and involves inclusive music making with young people with communication and learning challenges. The feature explored how access to music has made a hugely positive impact on the children's wellbeing and has helped them develop skills beyond music. [Read the article here](#) and [watch a short video about the programme here](#).

### **Department of An Taoiseach Child Poverty and Well-being Summit**

Jimmy Maguire, from Music Generation Louth, composed two original pieces for the Child Poverty and Well-being Summit held at the Aviva Stadium. His performance received two standing ovations and was highly praised by An Taoiseach Micheál Martin. The Child Poverty and Well-being Summit is an annual

initiative hosted by the Department of the Taoiseach. It aims to accelerate action across government to reduce child poverty in Ireland. [View the performance here](#) and [read the Summit Report here](#).

## Department of Children, Disability and Equality Strategy Launch

Music Generation Laois' Bass Brothers band performed at Dublin's Mansion House for the launch of the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025–2030 by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

The event was attended by Taoiseach Micheál Martin; Tánaiste Simon Harris; Minister for Children, Disability and Equality, Norma Foley; Minister of State with Responsibility for Disability, Hildegard Naughton; and Minister of State at the Department of Transport Seán Canney. [View photos from their performance here](#).

## Department of Education and Youth Cinéaltas Showcase 2025

Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan performed at the Department of Education and Youth's Cinéaltas Showcase 2025. The choir from Annyalla National School in County Monaghan sang a bespoke song for the event titled "We Will Sing". The song was composed by Musician Educator Brioni Gallagher in collaboration with the young singers. It was based on the event theme 'Belonging'. The choir were led by Musician Educators Brioni Gallagher, Sinead Connolly and Shane McVicker on piano.

The Cinéaltas Showcase event brings together school communities to showcase anti-bullying initiatives that promote inclusion, diversity, and wellbeing. The choir were presented with a Certificate of Participation by Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion Michael Moynihan on the day. [View more from the event here](#).

## ETB Week 2025

As part of ETB Week 2025, the ETB Excellence Awards were hosted at Croke Park by ETB Ireland. Music Generation Cavan/Monaghan Cross-Border Youth Folk Orchestra was awarded 1st Place in the ETB Excellence Award for Community for their project and performance "A Deep Ravine: Reflections on a Divided Ireland".

The suite explores life along the border 100 years ago. It was composed by Michael Rooney, scripted by renowned writer Tommy McArdle and premiered at Hilton Park, Monaghan, followed by a performance at the National Concert Hall in Dublin. The Cross-Border Youth Folk Orchestra includes over 100 young musicians from Cavan, Monaghan, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Scotland, and Ukraine. [Read more about the event here](#).

## Child Talks 2025

Music Generation participated in Child Talks 2025, hosted by the Ombudsman for Children at The Helix, Dublin. The event brought together over 1,000 young people to engage with key issues affecting their lives.

Young DJs from Music Generation dlr (DJ Silk and DJ J-Rizz) opened the event. It concluded with a flash mob-style performance by the Music Generation Waterford Wind & Brass Ensemble.

Child Talks is an annual event hosted by the Ombudsman for Children's Office to mark World Children's Day. The event gives young people a platform to share their views and experiences on issues that are important to them. [Watch highlights from the performance's here.](#)

## Cruinniú na nÓg 2025

Cruinniú na nÓg is a national day of free creativity in Ireland. It is an initiative of Creative Ireland. Music Generation areas across the network hosted a variety of events and performances for children and young people. Here is a selection:

- Music Generation Roscommon explored inclusive sound beam technology at their "Sound, String, Sculpture" event in Roscommon town.
- Music Generation Cork City's hosted "Rock the Block" with The Kabin Studio and guest artist Hazey Haze.
- Music Generation Westmeath and Music Generation Laois hosted Open Mic events.
- Music Generation dlr hosted a silent disco.
- Music Generation Galway City were part of a full day music and arts festival. [Watch more here.](#)

[View the full list of Cruinniú na nÓg events here.](#)

## Culture Night 2025

Music Generation areas across Ireland celebrated Culture Night 2025. Events included open mics, early years workshops, outdoor concerts and more for all ages.

- Music Generation Clare hosted "Tradition Reimagined", a collaboration concert with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, and special guest John Spillane.
- "Midland Rocks" was an open mic event for young bands hosted by Music Generation Offaly at Esker Arts Centre.
- Music Generation Tipperary hosted "Enter the Night", a large-scale outdoor concert in Clonmel.
- Young musicians and bands from Music Generation Waterford took over the Theatre Royal, performing in locations throughout the venue.
- Music Generation Westmeath's Ubuntu Intercultural Choir performed a special concert at Tuar Ard Arts Centre.

[View the full list of Culture Night events here.](#)

## The Seán Shannon Music Foundation

Music Generation National Development Office commenced a partnership with The Seán Shannon Music Foundation. The foundation was established in memory of the late Seán Shannon, pianist, and is

dedicated to supporting young musicians facing socio-economic challenges. The Seán Shannon Bursary concerts took place in The Royal Irish Academy of Music and Glór in Ennis in June 2025. Young musicians Jimmy Maguire (Music Generation Louth) and Josh Bagnall (Music Generation Mayo) were awarded bursaries to support their musical journeys.

[Read more here.](#)

## Youth Voice

Focus Groups were led throughout 2025, to create opportunities for young people to be heard and to influence the work and direction of Music Generation.

Ten young musicians from Music Generation Wicklow and Music Generation Mayo participated in a Focus Group to share their views on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The young musicians were aged between 12 and 17. This focus group has informed the development of Music Generation NDO's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.

Young musicians discussed their views on:

- Barriers to access
- Inclusion
- Local facilities for their music programming
- Musician Educators.

The young musicians workshopped and designed their vision of an inclusive music programme.

A group of 17 young musicians from Music Generation Kerry, Music Generation Louth and ICO Youth Limerick participated in a dedicated focus group to share their views on Communications, marketing, social media and branding. This focus group has informed developments in Music Generation NDO's website strategy, brand development and social media planning for 2026.

Young musicians discussed their views on:

- Participation and experiences creating content in collaboration with Music Generation NDO  
[See example here](#)
- Social media and online content they enjoy
- What the Music Generation identity means to them
- Artists and organisations they like online.

The young musicians workshopped and designed their own storyboard and direction of a Music Generation video piece of their story.

We continued to create content for social media in collaboration with children and young people and Local Music Education Partnerships.

## “Rocking December Nights”

Music Generation NDO collaborated with Music Generation Offaly to create a meaningful opportunity to profile local creativity in Tullamore and create an exciting and collaborative experience for young musicians.

The “Rocking December Nights” project involved over 370 students from St. Philomena’s NS and Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa, under the guidance of Musician Educators Aoibheann McKnight and Emma Goulding. Over a series of workshops, participants were introduced to all aspects of songwriting and music production. Young musicians helped create the tune, write the lyrics, record the song, and make a full music video. The workshops were set up so everyone could take part, work together, and feel supported. This helped build creativity and confidence, and made sure each child’s ideas were listened to and brought to life.

The song was created as a celebration of the festive season, drawing on the ideas, energy, and imagination of the young musicians involved. They explored aspects of songwriting such as rhyming lyrics, matching words to melodies, and making sure the song had a joyful Christmas feel. This process encouraged problem-solving, creative thinking, and teamwork.

The track was released on Spotify, YouTube Music, BandCamp, and iTunes, along with a video uploaded to YouTube.

[Watch “Rocking December Nights” here.](#)

[Hear from the children and young people involved here.](#)

**Music Generation Offaly**  
*Rocking December Nights*  
Photo by Eimear Quinn



# Objective 10

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

In 2025, our research focused on action learning, particularly through the development, strengthening, and documentation of our PfQ review and processes (see Quality Pillar, pg. 43). During this period, NDO also developed its DEI Policy and Action Plan, informed by both internal and external qualitative research, including a focus group with children and young people. These initiatives will contribute to and shape the continued development of our research plan in 2026.

## Music Generation Wicklow

*Wicklow Sings Festival*  
Photo by Wayne Polley





**Music Generation Mayo**  
Music @ Mount Leinster  
Photo by DGM Photographic

# 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 2025** were:

### Leo Blennerhassett

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

### Pat Burke (up to June 2025)

Former Assistant Secretary General at the Department of Education. Chair of the State Examinations Commission.

### Joseph Gilhooly (from April 2025)

Chief Executive, Leitrim 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

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

### James Morris (up to July 2025)

Founder of Windmill Lane Studios, Windmill Lane Pictures, The Mill (London), and Lead Promotor in the establishment of TV3.

### Dr Méabh Ní Fhuartháin

Associate Professor, Centre for Irish Studies, University of Galway

### 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 2025** were:

**Rosaleen Molloy**

National Director

**Rebecca Murphy**

Communications and Marketing Officer

**Laura Drake** (from Sept 2025)

Finance Officer

**Dr Margaret O'Sullivan**

Director of Quality Development, Research and Learning

**Mairéad Duffy**

Quality Development and Learning Manager

**Maura Philpott** (until March 2025)

Finance Assistant

**Cathriona Grange**

Operations Manager

**Helen Shyne**

Strategic Communications and Marketing Manager

**Helen Grant**

Director of Finance & Governance

**Paul Markey**

Quality Development and Learning Co-ordinator



**Music Generation Offaly**

*Clara Bog Soundwalk*

Photo by Paul Moore Photography

# Governance

## 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:

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.

**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 Waterford**  
*Primary School Brass Programme*



## Frequency of Board and Committee Meetings

Board Meetings are held one–two times per quarter, throughout the calendar 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 Cavan Monaghan

*Music on Wheels*

Photo by Sandra McIntyre





# Financials

**Music Generation South Dublin**  
*SubSounds Youth Music Festival*  
Photo by Dylan Scully

## Summary of 2025 Figures

Music Generation DAC's total **income for 2025** was **€7,809,526**.

Core funding of €7,485,000 was received from the Exchequer through the Department of Education and Youth and €233,163 was received from The Ireland Funds.

Music Generation also received €75,000 through its partnership with The Arts Council.

Other income of €16,363 included deposit income and funding to support performance opportunities for young musicians.

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 €8,196,238 raised by LMEPs in 2025, €1,393,591 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.

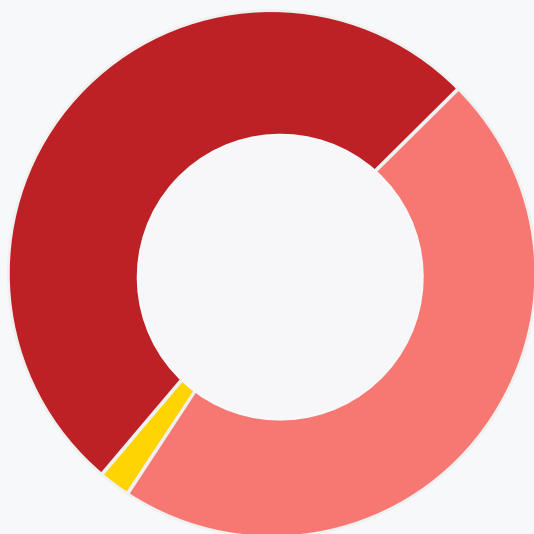


**Music Generation Fingal**  
*Summer Camps*  
 Photo by Conor Healy

### Total income for Music Generation programmes

**51%**

Local Music Education Partnerships



**2%**

The Arts Council,  
 U2 and The Ireland Funds,  
 Other

**47%**

Department of Education  
 and Youth

### 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 11	Apr 1	Jun 6	Aug 13	Sep 23	Nov 18	Dec 9
<b>Leo Blennerhassett</b>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Pat Burke</b>	●	●	●	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Joe Cunningham</b>	●	●	●		●	●	●
<b>Joseph Gilhooly</b>	N/A	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>John Kelly</b>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Deirdre McCrea</b>	●	●		●	●	●	●
<b>Mel Mercier</b>				●	●	●	●
<b>James Morris</b>	●	●	●	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Méabh Ní Fhuartháin</b>	●	●	●	●			●
<b>Chantal O'Sullivan</b>	●	●	●	●	●		●

### Membership and Attendance at Board Committee Meetings

Audit & Risk Committee	May 27	Nov 18
<b>Leo Blennerhassett</b>	●	●
<b>Joseph Gilhooly</b>	N/A	●
<b>Pat Burke</b>	●	N/A

HR Committee	Feb 21	Dec 3
<b>Joe Cunningham</b>	●	●
<b>Deirdre McCrea</b>	●	●
<b>James Morris</b>	●	N/A

### Creativity & Collaboration Fund Committee

	Jan 27	Feb 19	Mar 3	Mar 12	Nov 13	Dec 9	Dec 17
<b>Deirdre McCrea</b>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Mel Mercier</b>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Méabh Ní Fhuartháin</b>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

## Appendix B

### Board Member Fees and Expenses 2025.

No fees were paid to Board Members in 2025. The figures to the right include Board Member expenses for attendance at Local Music Education Partnership events and attendance at committee and Board meetings.

<b>Méabh Ní Fhuartháin</b>	€550
----------------------------	------

Cover photo:

**Music Generation Carlow**

*Music @ Mount Leinster*

Photo by DGM Photographic



**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 Youth and Local Music Education Partnerships



An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Óige  
Department of Education  
and Youth

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