

YOUTH MUSIC

IMPACT REPORT, NOVEMBER 2020



Contents

Foreword: Matt Griffiths, Youth Music CEO	4
Objective 1: Ensuring the diversity, reach and equitability of the funding programme	7
Youth Music funding programme: investment	7
Grants by fund	7
Grants by priority area	7
Leverage	8
Case study: Groundswell Arts, North London	9
Case study: The Music Works, Gloucester	11
Youth Music funding programme: diversity and equity	13
Range of organisations applying for Youth Music funding	13
Equitable investment	16
Case study: Action on Disability, West London	19
Youth Music funding programme: participant demographics	21
Age	21
Gender	22
Ethnicity	22
Region	24
Barriers to participation	25
Collecting demographic data	26
Case study: Music:Leeds	27
Case study: Beat Routes, Slough	29
Funding programme outcomes for children and young people	31
Types of music-making	31
Musical outcomes	33
Personal outcomes	34
Social outcomes	35
Priority area spotlight: Early Years projects in 2019-20	36

Objective 2: Improve the infrastructure for children and young people to make music	39
Workforce and organisational outcomes	39
Exchanging Notes	40
Youth Music Network	41
Promoting inclusion in music education hubs	42
Support through the coronavirus pandemic	44
Emergency Fund	44
Objective 3: be a representative, respectful and resilient organisation	46
Perceptions of Youth Music	46
Organisational development	47
Equality, diversity and inclusion	48
Looking ahead	51
Appendix 1: Methodology	53
Evaluation data – interim and final	53
Funding and application data	53
Web data	53
External research and datasets	54
Case studies	54

Foreword: Matt Griffiths, Youth Music CEO

2019 was a truly momentous 20th anniversary year for our charity. Over the last two decades, thanks to the fantastic support of the National Lottery and Arts Council England, more than 3 million children and young people have regularly made music through the projects we invest in across England, achieving powerful personal, social and musical outcomes as a result.

Our strategic approach to investing is designed to make the music education ecosystem more inclusive and accessible. But to achieve the systemic change that's needed to enable young people's lives in music, we have to be more than a funder. During 2019/20, we held the first-ever Youth Music Awards, created opportunities for young people to be directly part of our organisation (both as freelancers and Trustees), formed new partnerships to bring in additional investment and turned up the volume in our campaigning with and alongside young people.

The projects we invested in nationwide worked with 82,269 children and young people. More than 84% of our funding went to organisations outside London. For every £1 we invested this year, projects levered additional resources for young people's music by generating an additional 91p at the local level. On top of this, we raised an additional half a million pounds to add to the pot!

In May 2019, we published [Exchanging Notes](#), a four year action research programme whereby music organisations and schools work together to co-design new curricula. Our controversial PR hook of 'Stormzy vs Mozart' gained significant traction from local and national press and broadcast media, sparking important debate about the relevance of today's music education curriculum and highlighting the profile of National Lottery investment in this area of work.

To celebrate our 20th year, we launched the Youth Music Awards in association with Hal Leonard Europe, which took place in the amazing Grand Hall at Battersea Arts Centre. The Youth Music Awards celebrated the achievements of young people making music in the projects we fund, together with the dedicated workforce supporting them. There were 12 awards categories, more than 60 music industry judges, 300 audience members, and dozens of young musicians performing live. [Read more about what our award winners are up to one year on.](#)

In 2019/20 we re-structured, adding the new post of Youth Engagement Director to our Senior Leadership Team and bolstering our capacity. Increased income from the People's Postcode Lottery has enabled us to put together an ambitious programme to support young people at the start of their music careers, as we work to bridge the gap between education and industry.

We need to get closer to youth culture for us to remain dynamic and relevant, and have put youth voice and participation at the heart of our future strategy. We've recruited two younger Trustees to our board, relaunched the [Youth Music website](#) with a focus on 18-25 year olds, and launched our [Next Gen](#) freelance employment programme. Indeed, the case studies you read in this report have been written by our talented Next Gen team. With young people hardest hit in the labour market, we're providing as many paid work opportunities as we can.

We were excited to see Arts Council England's 10 Year Strategy, [Let's Create](#), launch in January 2020, promising an increased focus on culture emerging from communities, youth-led work, and a commitment to diversity and transformation – all values close to our hearts.

Equality, diversity and inclusion drives everything we do. We continue to champion underrepresented people and voices. Paying a fair and real living wage is one important, practical step to removing barriers to employment for young people. We were very proud to be recognised as a Living Wage [Funding Champion in 2019](#).

In June this year, Black Lives Matter protests swept the globe due to continued devastating acts of racism and violence. We worked hard to amplify the voices of Black young people and music professionals. We published a blog on [Important Information & Resources](#) which has gained over 4,000 page views, and [a letter to our Next Gen](#) has over 8,000. This tells us that we need to continue to inform and debate issues of racial injustices in the music industries, and importantly to reflect on and commit to further action within our own organisation.

In July, our [Blueprint for the Future](#) report – which highlighted inequalities preventing young people from pursuing music industry careers – was backed with our [Incubator Fund](#), offering investment for music industry organisations keen to make practical changes to support and nurture the next generation.

In October, our [Reshape Music](#) report set out the significant barriers faced by Disabled musicians to access music education and music-making. The input of the co-researchers (Disabled musicians, the majority aged between 18 and 25) into every part of the report content, publication and distribution was invaluable, providing a model of how we can approach similar work in future. We now need to build on the important recommendations of

the report, working alongside our partners to remove barriers faced by Disabled people in their musical progression.

Bringing young people from diverse backgrounds to support funding assessment and decision-making was a milestone for Youth Music this year, a practice we need to develop further.

Since March 2020, we have seen radical upheaval and change across music education and the music industries. Where available, we have incorporated data, learning and key activity from April 2020 in this report. At the start of the pandemic, the entire Youth Music staff switched to working from home, allowing the seamless continuation of our operations. Youth Music was one of over 350 funders that pledged to [‘stand with the sector’](#) to support it through the coronavirus pandemic, and we reacted quickly to launch an emergency response fund.

And now, with the country a long way from returning to ‘normal’, we all face an uncertain future. What *is* certain, however, is Youth Music’s commitment to providing support and campaigning for change over the next year. We will continue to invest in organisations nationwide, supporting the workforce that are so vital in enabling young people’s development. We will continue to work in partnership with a variety of businesses and funders, shoring up investment to help organisations in financial need. And we will continue to campaign for change on social justice issues, supporting young people to speak out and make change on issues that affect their day-to-day lives. We will be adaptable and flexible in our approach, responding to data and the ever-evolving situation.

We know that future times are going to be tough for many people, as we inevitably enter a period of recession. Embedding the principles of care and wellbeing at the heart of our operations will guide what we do and how we do it. But as an investor, we will be required to make difficult decisions in the months and years ahead. Supporting children and young people facing the biggest barriers will be a driving force in our actions and decisions.

This seminal moment presents us with a real opportunity not only to reflect but to act. In both music education and industry, there’s a deep desire for transformation. Music has always been a force for inclusion and revolution, helping us imagine a better future. Collectively, we can create the change that’s being loudly called for.

Matt Griffiths

Objective 1: Ensuring the diversity, reach and equitability of the funding programme

Youth Music funding programme: investment

Grants by fund

In 2019/20 Youth Music invested a total of £9,491,841 across 189 organisations, supporting 191 projects.

- 33% of the overall investment went on 116 Fund A grant awards. The average grant size was £26,602 and the average duration was 16 months.
- 42% of the overall investment went on 40 Fund B grant awards. The average grant size was £98,849 for an average duration of 29 months.
- 21% of the overall investment went on 13 Fund C grant awards. The average annual Fund C annual grant size was £155,780 and the programme runs for four years between 2018 and 2022.
- 4% of the overall investment went on 22 Music Education Hub (MEH) Development Fund grant awards. The average grant size was £19,404.

Grants by priority area

Investment in each priority area is roughly in line with the targets we set ourselves for the year. The highest demand is work for youth-led and culturally relevant programmes for young people who face barriers to music-making due to their characteristics, location or life circumstances. We have begun to track investment in organisations and the workforce as a separate area – this year the investment was made up predominantly of MEH Development Fund grants.



2019/20 INVESTMENT BY PRIORITY AREA

The case studies throughout this document provide a flavour of the type of work we fund in each priority area.

Leverage

The organisations we supported leveraged an estimated additional £8,597,731 towards the delivery of their projects. For every £1 Youth Music invested this year, projects generated an additional 91p from other sources. This figure increases to 97p for every £1 of National Lottery investment. This was a significant increase from the previous year, where projects leveraged 76p for every £1 we invested.

Case study: Groundswell Arts, North London

Groundswell Arts is a Fund B 'Early Years' grantholder

Interview by Lily Fontaine, Youth Music Next Gen. Read the full version at

<https://youthmusic.org.uk/groundswell-arts-beata>

Groundswell Arts is a community arts organisation that provides interdisciplinary education projects intended to encourage learning and exploration, and play and sharing, while supporting children's wellbeing and communication.

Beata took part in the Sing Our Story project to create two tracks - one for her youngest son, and a song for the whole family.

Lily: Tell us a bit about yourself and your family?

Beata: I moved from Poland in 2008. I was a single mum with one child already, and now I'm a single mum again with four children: the youngest, Alex, is four

Did you make music before getting involved with Sing Our Story?

I love singing and I love dancing. I don't do it in public because I don't think I'm good enough. When I was a child, I always wanted to play the piano, that was my dream. There was always music in our life because I always listened to it.

How did you first get involved with Groundswell Arts and Sing Our Story?

I was invited when Alex started school. When I first heard about Groundswell Arts, I wasn't very interested because I didn't understand what it was about. I thought he was just going to learn how to sing some songs, and I would be there to just support him. I also wasn't sure if I had to pay something, and I wasn't sure if I could afford it.

What was the songwriting process?

We were asked simple questions like what Alex likes and what kind of friends he has, and from these simple questions came a really beautiful song.

I'm happy that Alex's teacher was with us in the session because she helped me to say more about Alex. Of course, he is my child and I know him, but I don't know how he is at school. She helped me with my English and how to say what I was trying to say. We also did a sharing session with all the other families and that was amazing because everyone got an individual song for themselves - no song was the same.

What has been your favourite experience as part of Sing Our Story?

Listening to the song for the first time, I was in tears a little bit, but there were lots of people so I couldn't really show how emotional it was. Life might be hard for me, but when I listened to the song it just melted my heart because it was about us - even my language is included because Alex knows how we say *I love you* in my language.

What has working with Sing Our Story meant to you?

I always worry that I'm doing badly as a mother. I don't feel good enough. Listening to them made me realise I'm not that bad; every family has problems. Life can change because of the song - our song made me realise that actually, I am important.

I could say to my child 'I believe in you' and my kid would just think, yeah, I know, because you are my Mum. But, when he heard it in the song, and that it is actually about him and lots of people can hear it, it is different.



Photo: The music leader from Groundswell Arts asks questions and makes notes as he sits with Beata, Alex, and Alex's teacher.

Case study: The Music Works, Gloucester.

The Music Works is a Fund B 'Youth Justice' grantholder.

Interview by Jordan Pepin, young Trustee of The Music Works. Read the full version at <https://youthmusic.org.uk/conversation-cubsnocap-gloucester-based-artist-music-works-upsurge-programme>

Jacob is a Gloucester-based rapper/singer, part of the collective NoCapBoys. He also takes part in The Music Works' UPSURGE project.

Jordan: How did you first get involved with The Music Works?

Jacob: I went through quite a challenging period with family and my life in general. Music was my therapy at that point. I would write and listen to music, that would always be something that pulled me through. Kirsty, from my supporting accommodation, asked to put me on GFM [a local radio station], but at the time I was not confident enough to do that. Malaki [music leader at The Music Works] had heard that Kirsty was trying to put me on GFM and from there we started to talk.

I went to the studio at Guildhall and we spent the next few sessions creating beats and seeing what engineering was like. From there Malaki said I needed to build my confidence and get stuck in. He said, "you can do this, and you got an ear for it."

How has The Music Works improved your ability as an artist?

I had a belief that I wanted to do it, but having the resources and places where you can record, and people to record with, and all the things that I didn't have access to... I don't even think I could narrow it down.

It opened my eyes to the world of music because it's not just dropping songs. The Music Works definitely helped me see the other aspects to [the music industry] and what parts people have to play.

The Music Works put my mind in the right place when I went through a tough period in my life. I feel like I lost my way.

Can you explain what Gloucester is like?

I would say there isn't much to it regarding opportunities and things to do. There's definitely a lot of musical talent in Gloucester, but there is a lack of belief. So those artists that want to go somewhere aren't really doing anything.

That's why The Music Works are really doing a mad thing. A really good thing. It's not just providing opportunities, it's showing people that stuff is possible.

What are your plans are for the future?

I want to build my name enough across the board for people to know this is a serious guy. I want to bring my own sound. As an artist I want people to rate what I'm doing and just have a good following as an artist. The same thing with production and the same with being a sound engineer.

I could see myself being involved in anything and everything that The Music Works do. My long-term plan would be to help people and bring people through and that's exactly what they do. They help the younger generation.



Photo: Jacob's press shot

Youth Music funding programme: diversity and equity

Youth Music invests equitably: focusing our funding on reaching areas and people most in need. The importance of 'equity' for funders is highlighted in the image below and is informing much of our current and future funding practice.



Why we need to stop talking about equality. Credit Mandy Johnson from Sketchnotes UK

Range of organisations applying for Youth Music funding

New applicants (successful and unsuccessful)

We track the number of new applicants to our funding programmes to assess the diversity of our applicant pool. The chart below shows the proportion of new applicants¹ by region. Yorkshire (84%) saw the most significant proportion of new applicants, followed closely by London (78%) and the South West (77%)

¹ Had not applied to Youth Music in the last three years

PROPORTION OF FIRST TIME APPLICANTS TO FUND IN LAST 3 YEARS BY REGION



In our funding decisions, it is important that we get the right balance between sustaining good work and enabling innovation. We set a target of a minimum of 50% of all Fund A and 25% of Fund B awards to go to new applicants. We met this target for the year – 59% of Fund A awards and 27% of Fund B awards went to new applicants.

Success rates

In 2019/20 we bolstered our annual National Lottery Arts Council grants budget by over half a million pounds of additional fundraised income. This meant that we were able to fund half (50%) of organisations applying to us for Fund A and Fund B grants, an increase from 40% in 2018/19.

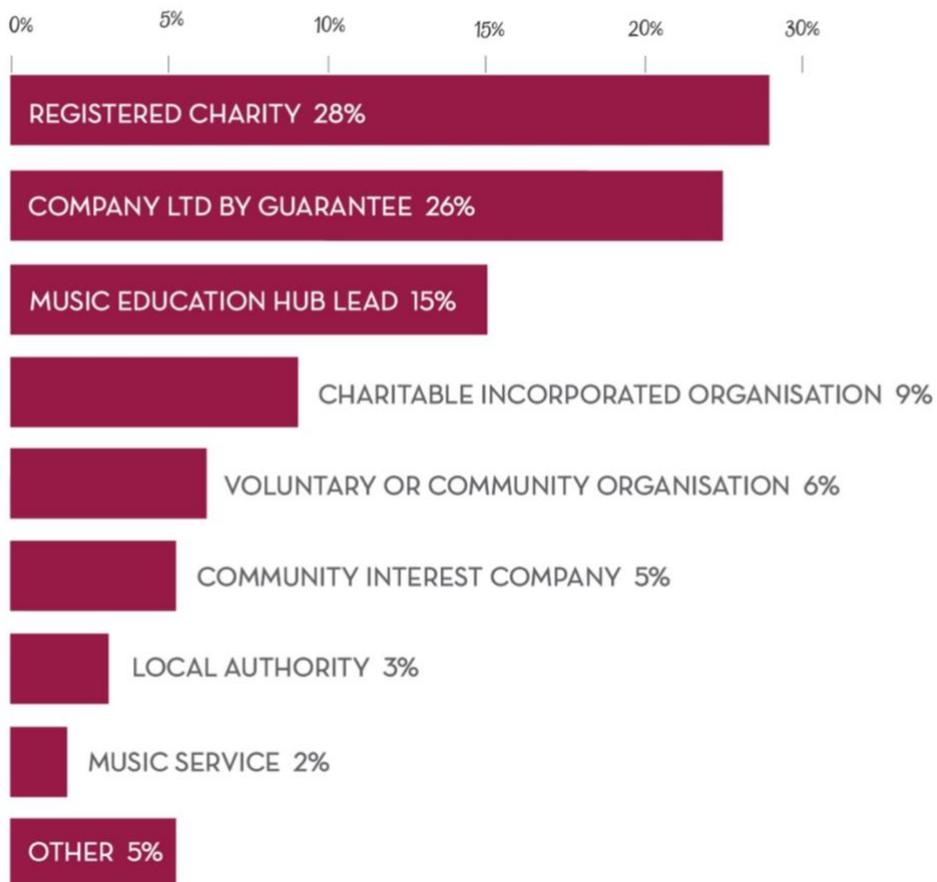
Diversity of organisations funded

Funding a diverse range of organisations is a high priority for Youth Music, and issues of historic inequities and funder bias have been highlighted in the funding sector this year. 43% of Fund A organisations and 48% of Fund B organisations identified as diverse-led.

The broad definition 'diverse-led' doesn't allow for a more nuanced analysis of the range of diverse organisations we reach. We have refined our data collection fields this year. This means that in the future we will be able to track numbers against different diversity facets. We can then use this data to reach underrepresented organisations by targeting our engagement strategies accordingly

Small to medium-sized organisations make up the majority of our portfolio. 23% of grant awards in 2019/20 went to organisations with a turnover of £100,000 or less, and 59% were made to organisations with a turnover of £500,000 or less. The chart below shows the types of organisations that were awarded funding.

FUNDED ORGANISATION TYPE - 2019/20



Equitable investment

The geography of Youth Music investment is an important driver in our decision-making process, as we aim to invest in places of highest need. We use our portfolio-balancing process to distribute funding equitably across the country. We do this by adjusting regional success rates based on demand, demographics, deprivation and existing arts investment.

More than 84% of Youth Music's investment was allocated outside of London (£7,535,590), with no region receiving less than 7% of the total. 4% of investment (£624,832) was allocated towards programmes delivering on a national level.

PROPORTION OF OVERALL INVESTMENT ALLOCATED ON REGIONAL BASIS (EXCLUDING NATIONAL GRANTS)



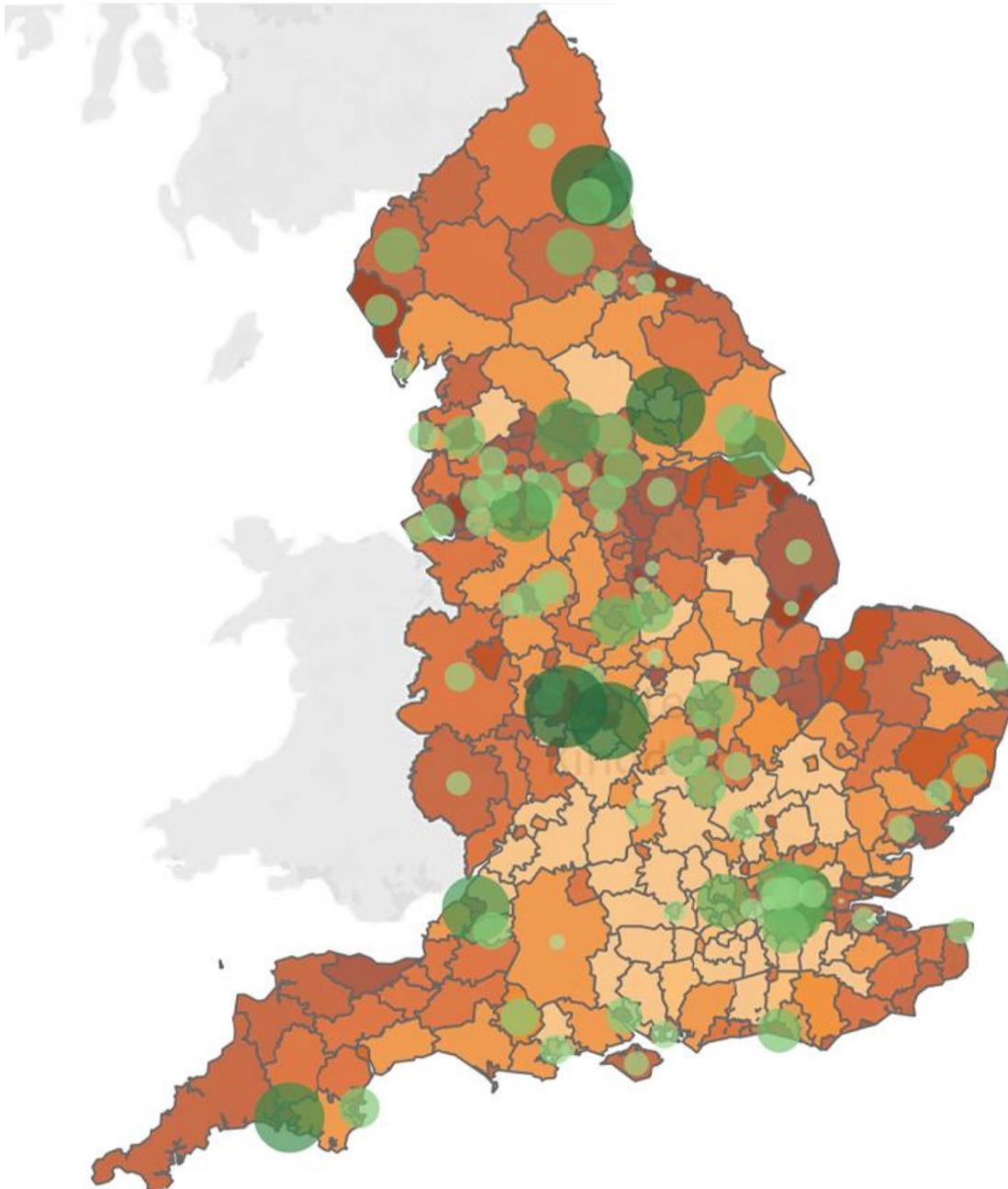
Aligning funding to need

69% of Youth Music's investment (£6.5m) supported activities targeted within a particular local authority area ("targeted funding")².

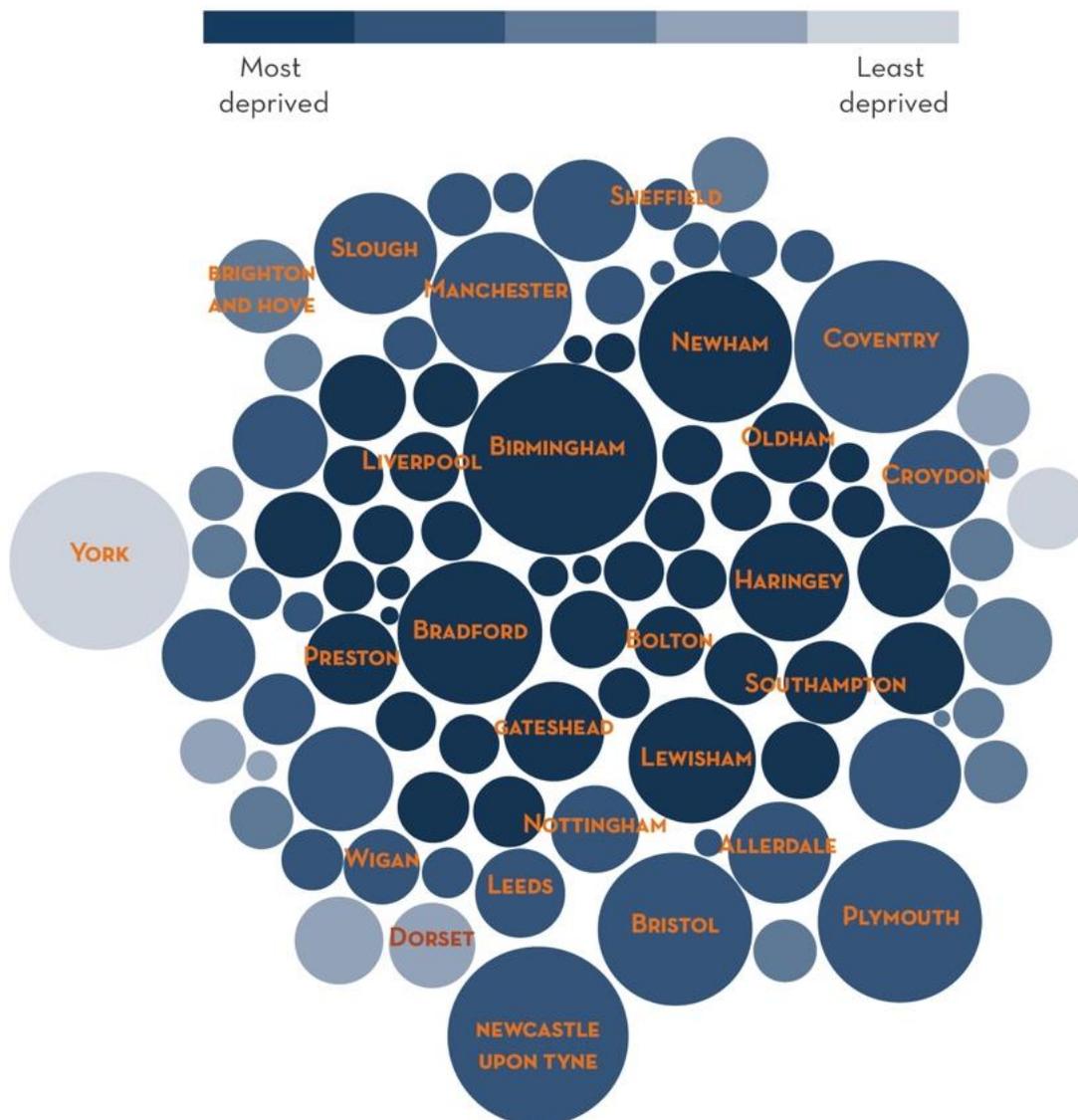
² Projects delivering across multiple Local Authority areas have been excluded from the analysis in this section.

39% of targeted funding was invested in the 20% most deprived local authority districts (as defined by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019). 72% of targeted investment went into the 40% most deprived local authority districts.

The map below shows Youth Music targeted investment across England mapped against areas of deprivation. The darker red the map is, the higher the deprivation. The larger the green circles, the higher the investment.



In addition to investing in areas of high deprivation, we align our funding to complement existing initiatives. 34% of targeted investment was delivered in areas of low educational attainment, including £1.8m in Department for Education category 5 and 6 areas (28%) and £0.4m in [opportunity areas](#) (6%). 79% went into areas where Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPS) were active. The chart below maps investment against local authority area. The larger the bubble, the higher the Youth Music investment. The darker the bubble, the more deprived the local authority.



Case study: Action on Disability, West London

Action on Disability is a Fund A 'Disabled young people' grantholder.

Interview by Lily Fontaine, Youth Music Next Gen. Read the full version at <https://youthmusic.org.uk/volunteer-turned-music-leader-shannon-discusses-working-action-disability>

Action on Disability removes barriers for 11 to 25-year-olds by providing access to a variety of opportunities. Shannon was 15 when she started volunteering with Action on Disability. Now 23, she is employed as a support worker and learning to play the bass guitar.

Lily: How did you first get involved with the Action on Disability music project?

Shannon: My brother started going to Action on Disability before I did, and one summer he invited me along to an open day to see how everything is run. They needed help with setting up this music performance and I was like, well I'm here, I might as well help.

I became a volunteer and spent a good several years helping out with activities and assisting the music staff. A couple of years ago I got a job working on the Friday Club as a support worker, and then when the Tuesday music project started, I was offered the position to help out.

What have been your favourite experiences as part of the project?

Shannon: Seeing how everyone developed; at the beginning of the project, some of the members didn't talk or interact very much with the group. But then, months later, I was able to see the difference from who they were before we started. After several weeks, the first group members had created songs and come up with lyrics. When we went and performed, it wasn't us leading them anymore, it was the members leading each other. It was really cool to see them so focused on just this one thing that all of them had come together to create out of pretty much nothing.

When I was younger I had major stage fright. I think joining in with music has gotten rid of that fear of being up on a stage, or in front of anybody. When we're playing music I'm not focusing on the people who are watching me, I'm listening to everyone else playing and singing along. It blocks out all the negativity of standing in front of people.

What impact has the project had on you?

I never saw myself helping to lead a music project so I think it helped my confidence in leading groups as well as setting up music equipment. It's perfectly fine to mess up because you know that everyone around you is not going to judge you.

I would love to continue doing music and developing the skills that I've already learned, as well as learning more - especially about the technical side. Being behind the scenes or just helping out with the bands is still pretty good because you know that you're part of something.

It's helped me to understand different people's personalities, to develop my skills as a group leader and to step up and come out of my comfort zone. It's so beyond words what has come from doing music.



Photo: Shannon playing bass in a band with other young people at Haringey Shed

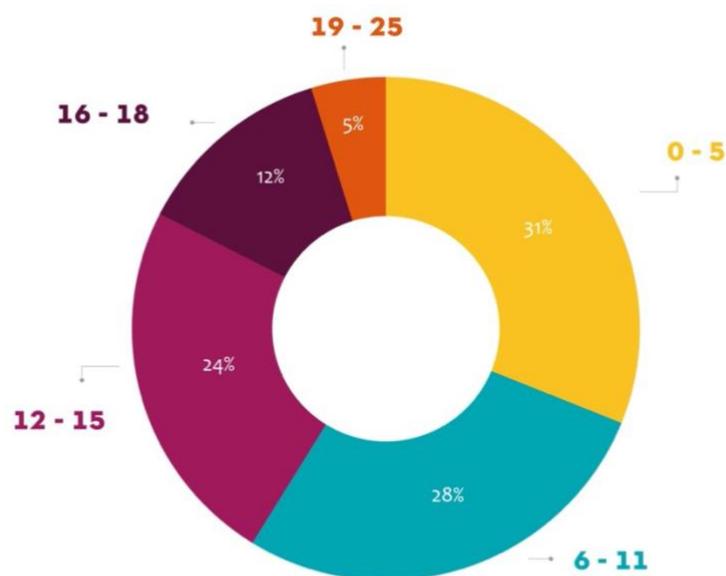
Youth Music funding programme: participant demographics

Over the course of 2019/20, projects funded by Youth Music reached 82,269³ children and young people. 46% of all participants went on to become core participants engaged in sustained music-making

Detailed demographic data is collected for core participants at the end of a grant⁴.

Age

The age range was collected for 99% of core participants recorded in evaluation reports (n=44,702). This year's reporting saw a significant increase in children aged 0-5 (up from 22% last year).



DISTRIBUTION OF AGES OF CORE PARTICIPANTS IN EVALUATION DATA

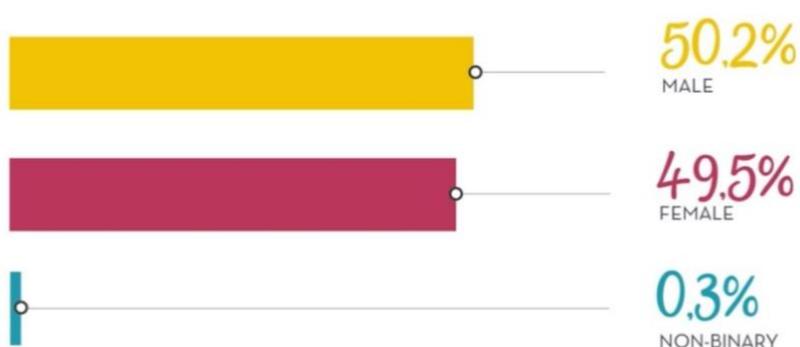
³ Due to Covid-19 furlough, three Fund C organisations have yet to submit evaluation data for 19/20. This figure includes an estimated based on last year's data for these three Fund Cs. Estimated figures are only included for these three in this reach number (no estimates were made on demographic data, barriers, etc. information below).

⁴ In 2019/20 this represents data from 45,226 children and young people.

Gender

Just over half (50.2%) of all participants were male, which is consistent with previous years. The proportion of participants reported as identifying as transgender or non-binary represented 0.3% of core participants recorded in evaluation reports (n=144). This represented a marginal increase from 0.1% last year (n=60).

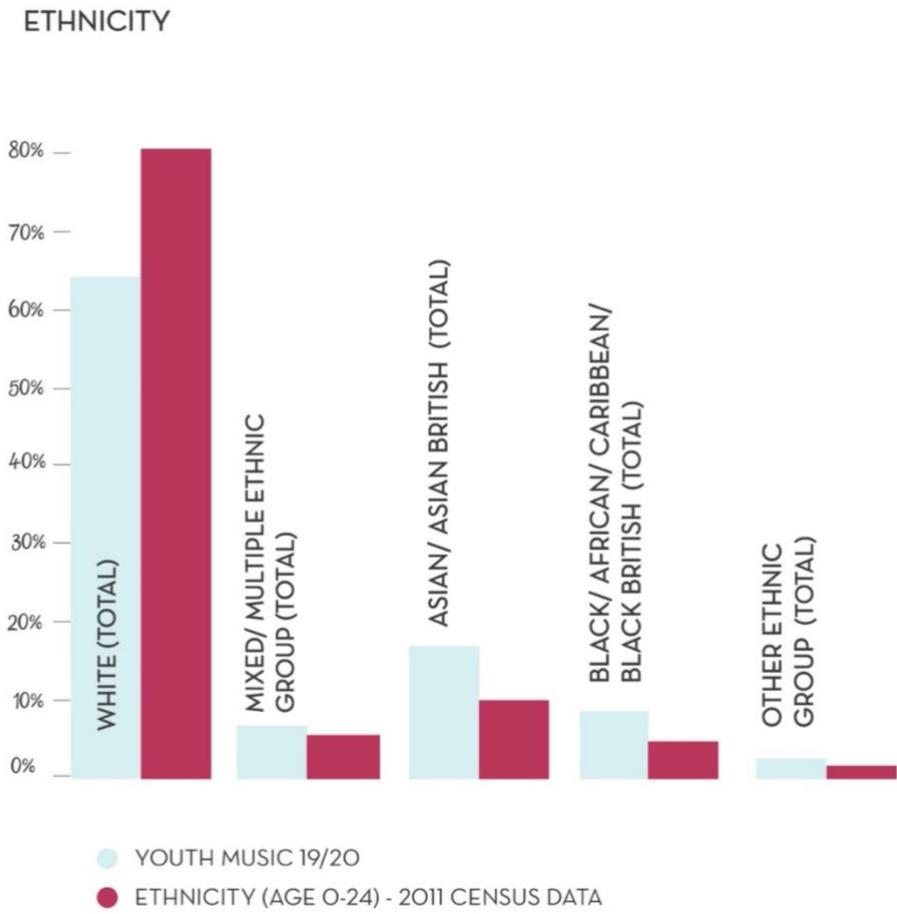
GENDER IDENTITIES OF CORE PARTICIPANTS IN EVALUATION DATA



Ethnicity

We want to reach children and young people from of a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds in line with our priorities to support communities who are under-represented in music education.

Projects reported the ethnicities of 77% of core participants, an increase from 63% last year. 63% of participants were white. This is significantly below the national average in census data for the age range, which of 79%. All other ethnic groups were above the national average for 0-24 year olds, including Asian/Asian British participants for the first time.

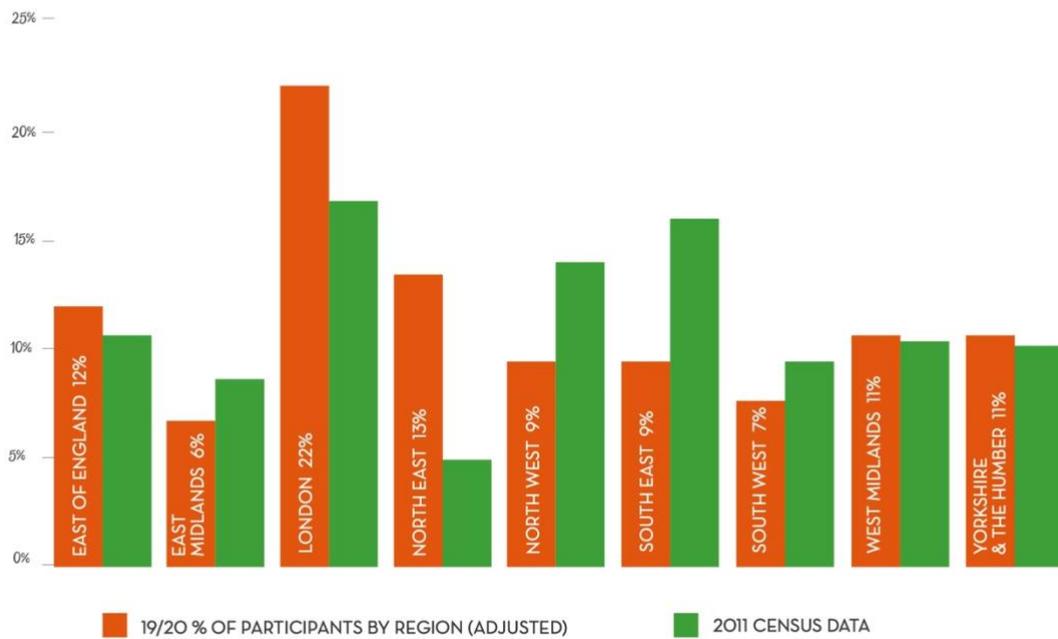


Ethnicity of Youth Music core participants plotted against national census data for 0-24 year olds (2011)

Region

The graph below shows the number of participants across the different regions, plotted against the percentage of children and young people from the 2011 census (note the Youth Music participant data has been adjusted to remove an outlier project that worked with 15,000 young people).

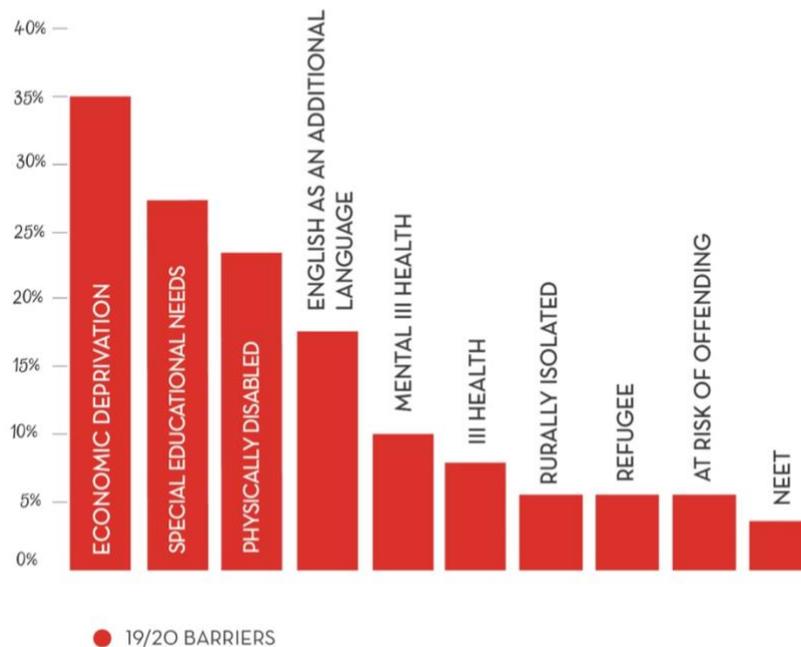
REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS RECORDED IN 2019/20 EVALUATION DATA VS 2011 CENSUS DATA FOR 0-24 YEAR OLDS.



Barriers to participation

This year 92% of participants were recorded as experiencing barriers to participation, an increase from previous years. The majority of participants experienced more than one barrier.

PROPORTION OF CORE PARTICIPANTS FACING SPECIFIC BARRIERS 2019/20



- Two in every five participants were experiencing ill health. This is in part, due to a project delivering music in hospitals at significant scale, reaching over 15,000 participants. In order to facilitate year on year comparisons, adjusted figures are presented in the graph above.
- 35% of participants were experiencing economic deprivation.
- The number of core participants recorded who were refugees increased fivefold between 2018/19 and 2019/20 from 1% to 5%. This is primarily due to a project that worked with more than 950 refugees and asylum seekers across London and the North West over a three-year period.

Collecting demographic data

In some circumstances, it was not appropriate or possible for grantholders to collect demographic data from all participants. Youth Music has undertaken a data consultation with grantholders with a view to streamlining grantholder data collection and making it more user-friendly for both grantholders and young people. Some of the comments we received as part of the consultation are as follows:

It can feel intrusive or damage trust-building to ask a lot of personal questions, especially at the start of a young person's involvement, [but] we always ask about medical conditions and access needs (as these are part of keeping young people safe while in our care).

[barriers data] collection doesn't sit well with our approach. It's intrusive, it Pidgeon holes and it's often difficult to see why it's useful data to collect

Collecting data about categories of challenging circumstances with younger participants (under 11) during brief interventions can be difficult and not always appropriate.

Economic circumstances, just feels really intrusive. Sometimes we know because the young people are referred, but if they just come along then we don't ask about their economic circumstances.

The people we work with often spend their lives being categorised, numbered, asked questions. Unless we can see a very definite benefit to asking questions and collecting prescriptive data, we don't.

Clearly there are lots of complexities attached to collecting demographic data, particularly in relation to the barriers faced by young people. We don't want data collection to be a barrier in itself. As such, we will be considering these comments with a view to rolling out a simplified and less intrusive data collection framework in 2021/22.

Case study: Music:Leeds.

Music:Leeds is a Fund A 'young adults' grantholder.

Interview by Lily Fontaine, Youth Music Next Gen. Read the full version at

<https://youthmusic.org.uk/eskimoh-musicleeds>

Music:Leeds is a not-for-profit organisation established to support, promote, develop and grow cross-genre music-based activity within Leeds and the wider region. 23-year-old electronic music producer Jessie Pigott, a.k.a. Eskimoh, takes part in Music:Leeds's emerging artist support programme, Launchpad.

Lily: How did you first get involved with Launchpad?

Eskimoh: I went to Leeds Beckett University to study music production and Whiskas [founder of Music:Leeds] did some lectures where he mentioned it. He built up my confidence actually because he knows more than anyone that I have mega-bad imposter syndrome.

The music I make is kind of varied genre-wise; I've just released the first track of an ambient, melancholy, floaty-piano, all-instrumental EP. I've also released a drum 'n' bass track, so my music is diverse in genre! But it all has sad undertones - that's how people know that it's me.

How has support from Launchpad helped you to develop?

I applied for mentoring and I've had two meetings now with Scott [[Come Play With Me's](#) label runner]. He's so good - he knows what he's talking about.

I didn't know what phrases like 'press release' meant, but now I know how to make a press release. Planning a release is like 50% of being a musician; anyone can make a tune but getting it heard is a completely different story, it's really hard. Going to uni, you learn a lot of things but you don't know what real life is like as an artist in the massive pool of artists. So, in that way, it's helped me massively.

They also provide loads of opportunities: I was asked to play for the virtual Salemango Festival and I did my Untitled EP with a short film.

Personally it's helped my confidence. I feel like that's a huge thing for me; just having people listen to my music at first was daunting, but now I'm past that I want everyone to hear it.

I've had a few replies from blog writers recently which is confidence-boosting, so I want to keep sending my stuff out to people that will enjoy listening to it. That's where my satisfaction comes from: people enjoying what I make.

What has working with Launchpad meant to you?

As a solo female artist in the music industry, I do think it can sometimes be a little bit, not *harder*, but different. I remember, when I was at college, I did digital music production and I was the only girl there and then I came to uni and it was the same - there were a couple of other women, but they were in different tutor groups.

Being on the Launchpad project made me realise that actually, my music is enough, that me as an artist alone without like a guy around me, is fine. It's fine to just do me, to just do Eskimoh.



Picture: Eskimoh's EP, Untitled 01.

Case study: Beat Routes, Slough.

Beat Routes is a Fund B 'young people facing barriers' grantholder.

Interview by Lily Fontaine, Youth Music Next Gen. Read the full version at <https://youthmusic.org.uk/beat-routes-rebecca-devonte>

Beat Routes provides a space for the nurturing of artistically-inclined young people. Devonte (a music producer) and Rebecca (a spoken word performer) are two of their students-turned-apprentices.

Lily: What's living in Slough like?

Devonte: Slough is unlike anything you've ever seen. It's so diverse with so, so many cultures clashing and coming together. And all these different cultures are kind of inspiring each other to the point where you can hear it back in the music. It's so underground but there's definitely a music scene in Slough that needs to be brought up more.

Rebecca: Slough is kind of like Marmite. I feel like everyone could learn to love it, but it doesn't have the best name or reputation. But there's such a strong community because the things that happen here create a stronger bond within the people. For example, there's quite a lot of youth crime within the town, but that means that the groups that we have are quite strongly bonded, because we know that the things we are doing are really necessary in a place where things could go so differently.

Lily: How did you first get involved with Beat Routes?

Devonte: I was referred to Beat Routes by another music organisation at the local library. Rebecca and I would be involved in a lot of the encouragement side of things, and I guess they saw the love and passion for music in us and tried to give us a chance to do it.

Rebecca: I got involved with Beat Routes through my youth worker at the time. I wasn't in school but I was looking into after-school and youth activities to go to. It was originally advertised as a song-writing session, and I'm really into writing so I thought - that looks like good fun. As time progressed and there were more sessions, I eventually got hired as an apprentice too.

Lily: What impact has Beat Routes had on your life?

Devonte: Before joining Beat Routes I was quite a shy person - I'd never sung in front of anyone before. The guys at Beat Routes encouraged me so much that in two weeks I was singing in front of a room of people.

Rebecca: I used to hate group sessions because I'd worry that nobody would want to hear what I have to say. Once you get comfortable at Beat Routes, it opens your eyes to the fact that not everybody is judgmental, and there are so many good people out there who are willing to just accept you.

Devonte: Beat Routes is more than just music now, it's like a family.

Rebecca: As somebody that didn't have a big group of friends before Beat Routes, I feel like it has such a community feel and introduces you to so many people. You go to a Beat Routes session and you see all these people who have these ideas and put their heart into them, and it makes you think: if they can do it, so can I!



Photo: Beat Routes participants at a Soho Radio takeover in 2019

Funding programme outcomes for children and young people

All projects funded by Youth Music are required to use our outcomes approach to help plan and evaluate their activities. Grantholders select outcomes at the outset of their programmes and then report back to Youth Music at the end of their grant. We analyse these reports and synthesise the findings.

Types of music-making

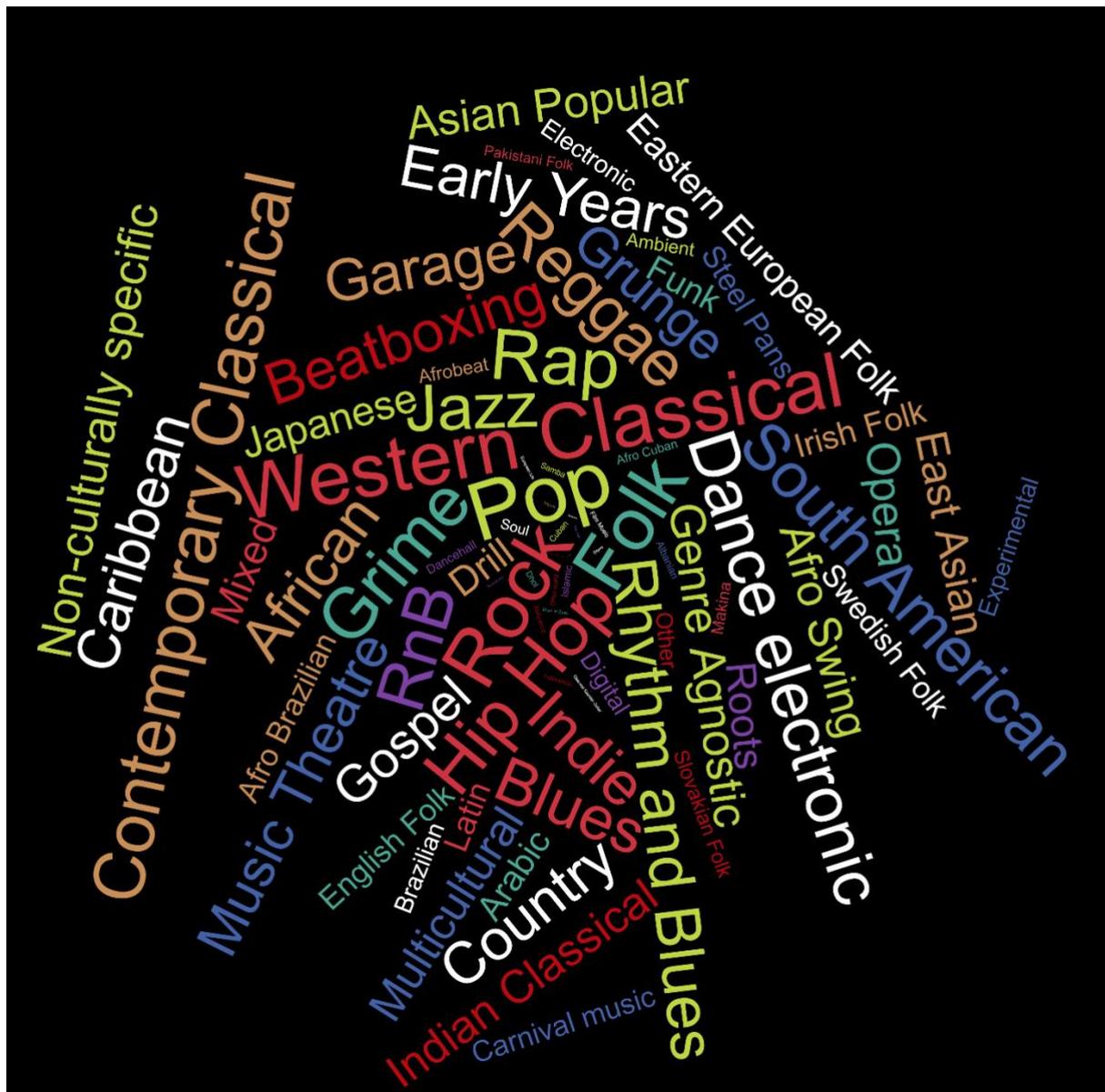
Youth Music projects are creative, and the nature of activity is led by the needs of young people. Overall, 128,966 activities were delivered by projects (with most sessions involving multiple types of activities). Instrumental and vocal sessions occurred most frequently. Just over one-quarter of all sessions were in composition, reflecting the creative participatory nature of the work.

PROPORTION OF ACTIVITIES IN SESSIONS RECORDED IN 2019/20



This year, Youth Music worked with Charanga to offer free access to VIP studios, an online learning environment that young people can access at home and with their music provider. To date, 50 organisations are signed up.

Projects that completed their funded activity in 2019/20 delivered 50,054 music-making sessions. The majority (64%) were core sessions, with the same group of young people regularly attending. 29% were one-to-one sessions, providing a more tailored and supportive way to meet the needs of young people. Just under 7% were taster sessions. A wide range of musical genres were explored.



Range of genres covered in Youth Music projects

Musical outcomes

For many participants of Youth Music projects, this was the first time they had ever taken part in any musical activity.

- A quarter (26%) of core participants had never made music before.
- 47% were new to the organisations delivering music activity.

Positive outcomes most commonly reported included improvement in musical skills and learning about different elements of music, leading to a better appreciation for how to play, create and perform.

For many participants, communicating their own experiences through original music and lyrics was valuable.

“First of all you’ve got to have a good topic to rap about. Cos if you listen to a song and think that’s a banger, that’s a good song, it’s always got a good meaning to it, like you really believe that what the person’s trying to tell you... if someone talks about their struggles and maybe their ups and their downs, or maybe tells a story through it, or has a meaning to do it then that’s where it becomes good I think.”
(6329)



Photo of a songwriting workshop at 20Twenty Productions CIC

Participants' non-verbal communication through music improved in several projects, with reports noting how participants listened to each other, kept time, and sang/played with a sense of togetherness. In many cases, improvisation became noticeably more sophisticated.

Projects reported that young people were shaping musical identities as listeners/audience members as well as performers. Participants were not only made aware of musical genres that had been previously unknown to them but were able to experience their own and each other's musical cultures. They also became aware of the many different musical careers and further education pathways available to them, with a sense of the realities of working in the music industry.

8% of core participants (3,448) received some sort of accreditation through the programme they attended. 63% of the accreditations (2,157) were Arts Awards.

Personal outcomes

Projects reported on a wide variety of personal outcomes for the young people they worked with. These encompassed many intrinsic personal outcomes that influence young people's overall wellbeing (such as confidence, self-esteem and general life satisfaction) as well as extrinsic developments (such as engaging or re-engaging with education or employment and learning transferable skills).

A seventeen-year-old trans male... arrived at the start of the project with very low self-esteem and [his] voice contributed to his gender dysphoria. He was a keen poet, centring around his life experiences, but unable to sing in front of others due to being so uncomfortable with his own voice. The [project] workers... enabled the young person to edit his poetry and transform it into songs but also used a stepping-stone method to teach him good performance skills.

(6083)

One main benefit of taking part in music-making for young people is about simply enjoying themselves and having fun. It's often a good distraction from the other things going on in their lives:

I have a lovely memory of Mila telling me about her music sessions...

and singing 'Havana'. She was so happy when singing. Due to the nature of her illness Mila was often fatigued and understandably frustrated. It is clear how important these music sessions were as they gave Mila time to engage in an activity she enjoyed and provided distraction.

(6471)

Many young people developed transferable skills as a result of participating in a Youth Music project. These included (but were not limited to) leadership, event management and facilitation skills. Other skills built included literacy and numeracy.

In projects where the majority of participants were aged 16 and above, 23% of participants engaged/re-engaged with employment, education or training as a result of the project.

Social outcomes

Music-making led to a number of social outcomes including feelings of belonging, bonding with like-minded people and making/sustaining friendships. Reports also provided evidence of speech and language development, engagement with the community and external services, and improvement of behavioural issues. There were also many instances of participants learning and developing confidence to use interpersonal and social skills.

As well as individual change, social changes can happen on a group scale. Several reports talked about how a community of musicians and young people has been created within the project. Music-making also helped form social bonds with wider communities.

It became apparent that many of these families don't visit other groups or services as they don't feel safe outside this bilingual, refugee and migrant setting. Given the current climate around issues of migration, using music as a means to create more united communities seems especially important.

"When we make music as a group it unites us all regardless of background and nationality."

Parent (6155)

Priority area spotlight: Early Years projects in 2019-20

In this section of the report, we explore the outcomes for children aged 0 – 5 in recognition of the uniqueness of Early Years projects and outcomes. Projects reported on a number of musical skills and ideas being developed by children through their participation.

Fundamental knowledge and understanding of musical concepts such as “*pulse and pitch*” (6526) were seen to be developing through some projects. Projects also saw children developing other musicianship skills such as listening, “*recognis[ing] and repeat[ing] key rhythms*” (6619), and the ability to “*wait and play when counted in*” (5950).

Building response to musical rhythm was one of the most commonly-reported musical skills attained. Many projects working with babies and toddlers reported participants moving, bouncing and dancing instinctively to the music, while projects working with the older end of the 0-5 age range noted a growing understanding of rhythms, and an ability to imitate rhythms and sequences upon hearing them (5950).

We observed one of our participants respond[ing] to music by bouncing in the bouncer, while another started rocking and pushing one of our leader’s hands down, in time with the beat of the music.

(6067)

Early Years projects used musical songs and games to develop transferable skills: for example, counting, spelling, and identifying and naming objects or people in the room.

We used a hello song to help the children learn each other’s names. The nursery staff in particular observed that more children were using other’s names in conversation.

(6720)

We had conversations about things that were important to them and played games involving counting, spelling and addition.

(6067)

Interpersonal skill such as turn-taking, sharing and listening were all frequently mentioned by projects. Participatory songs and musical games often used in Early Years projects lend themselves well to teaching young children how to interact with one another:

Children initially found it difficult to share toys and take turns, dance in time to music, count to ten, and learn songs by heart as some of them had little or no home-based experience in these, particularly the sharing. By the end of the project, staff were able

to observe progress in all of these areas and reported this during our regular discussions. (6143)

Many Early Years projects involve parents and carers too. They began to feel more confident in the use of music with their children, both in the setting of the project and at home:

Parents: "I like to use it as a distraction for him, especially before bed, learning new songs and getting to know things has helped me use it as a chill out"

"She slept for 7 hours and I'm sure it is to do with singing."

"I know the English rhymes more now so I feel more confident, and we mix them up like you did in the sessions where we count in our language and then in English."

"I've gained more confidence to sing with her, I don't care anymore what others think."

(6155)

Most projects encourage musical interactions between parents/carers and their children in the home, supporting developments in family relationships:

We received many positive comments about music in the home and how it has become part of everyday interaction with their child. "We sing together constantly and enjoy learning new songs together" – Adoptive family parent

81% of parents responded with "always" when asked if music often features in their everyday home life. 86% of parents also stated that they "strongly agree" that attending the music making sessions has had a positive effect on their relationship with their child.

(6526)

Members of the workforce in Early Years settings reported increased "awareness in the role of music in early education" [6708]. Practitioners reported increased motivation to further their understanding of music, "with some also taking ukuleles home, looking up chords for favourite songs and sharing these with colleagues" (6180).

An increase of Early Years practitioners' confidence in using music was reported by several projects. Some practitioners reported increased skill in a particular musical instrument or technique. Others reported a shift in attitude towards their teaching style:

Staff attended semi-formal sessions on how to use the ukulele and the Musical Express materials to widen their own practice and introduce music into curriculum

areas not previously considered such as maths, and learning about people from other cultures. There was genuine interest expressed in changing the traditional teaching methods and incorporating more fun and joyful activities to achieve the set aims.

(6143)

'It's ok to just let go and follow the children's lead, even if it takes the children to an unplanned direction' [...] Preschool practitioner feedback (6720)

Resources for Early Years music-making projects

Youth Music has developed a tailored version of its [quality framework to support Early Years music-making](#), that embeds creative and inclusive approaches.

A highly popular resource on the Youth Music Network is [Music Development Matters in the Early Years](#), which has received almost 9,000 page views. This resource was developed through a Fund B grant delivered by the Tri-borough Music Education Hub working alongside Early Years music specialist Nicola Burke. It provides a wide range of materials to support all aspects of musical learning and development for under 5s.

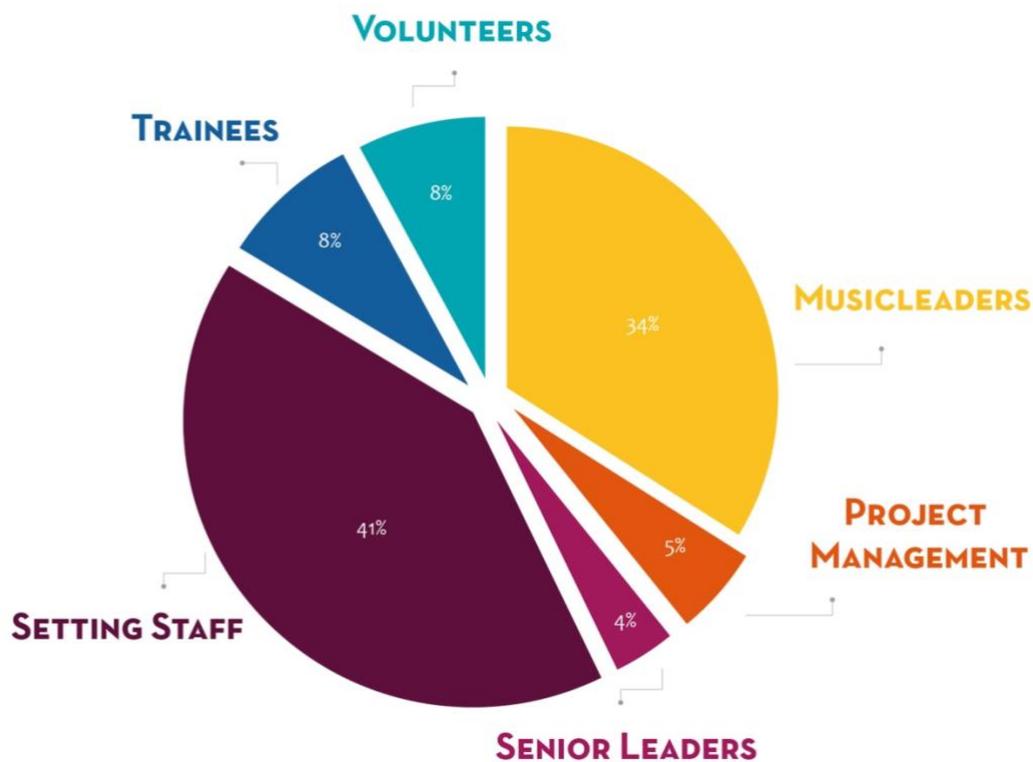
Objective 2: Improve the infrastructure for children and young people to make music

For several years, Youth Music has been working to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in music education.

Workforce and organisational outcomes

Youth Music investment supports a wide range of people in the workforce, both through employment and training.

- 4,430 people were involved in delivering music making activities at projects funded by Youth Music.
- 3,583 people accessed continual professional development (CPD) opportunities.



Team roles involved in delivering music-making activities in 2018/19

This year, there was a notable increase in the proportion of setting staff involved in delivering music-making activities from 26% in 2018/19, to 41% in 2019/20. ‘Setting staff’ are people who work in places where Youth Music work takes place, such as youth centres, children’s centres or pupil referral units. It is common for Music Leaders to work in partnership with setting staff, who have more regular contact with the young people and who provide support for their pastoral and other needs. Often, they are trained up to deliver a basic level of music activities so they can support the young people when the music leaders are not present.

Across the portfolio there is a wide variety of mentoring and trainee programmes, supporting new entrants to the workforce and helping to develop local music leading capacity.

We hadn’t expected to attract such specialised music leaders with training skills – it was really successful working with them to develop the CPD programme, and to incorporate their skills... It has helped to establish our local network of practitioners and to showcase the pool of local talent to partners and providers.

(6155)

Many organisations discussed how they shared their expertise, resources and learning through presentations at All-Party Parliamentary Groups, conferences and events, and likewise learnt new things through speaking to and hearing from other organisations in the sector.

Exchanging Notes

In May we launched our [Exchanging Notes report](#). This four-year action research programme with Birmingham City University examined the impact of secondary schools, music education organisations and industry-facing charities co-designing and co-delivering music lessons and activities together. This research illustrated what a reimagined, innovative music curriculum in secondary schools could look like. An [open letter](#) was sent to the Education Secretary and the research was covered in 280 different media publications and broadcast channels (including breakfast TV and all the major tabloids and broadsheets), with 5.2 million Twitter impressions.

Allowing pupils to study grime and hip-hop in class can improve attendance of pupils at risk of exclusion, study finds

Schools should swap Mozart for Stormzy in music lessons to boost engagement, charity says

Eleanor Busby Education Correspondent | 4 hours ago |

 Click to follow The Independent



Young people say the music curriculum doesn't reflect their existing musical lives and passions (Getty)

Excerpt from Exchanging Notes media coverage

The research launch sparked important debate about the relevance of today's music education curriculum and highlighted the profile of National Lottery investment in this area of work.

Youth Music Network

The Youth Music Network is our online community for people working in music education. The site is designed to connect people, projects and practice. It has over 10,000 registered users and 4,000 newsletter subscribers.

The content produced by Youth Music has an inclusion focus and in 2019/20 we launched the [equality, diversity and inclusion self-assessment toolkit](#). This is designed for organisations to measure their existing practice and consider ways in which they can improve. Over 1,000 people have visited the page and many music education hub lead organisations have used to tool to benchmark their practice.

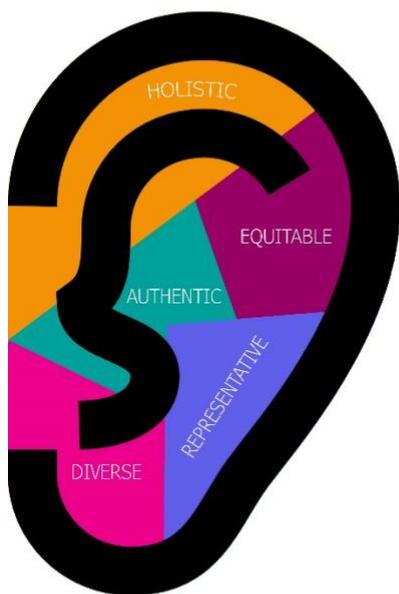
The [Youth Music quality framework](#) continues to be a well-used resource, with over 2,500 page views during the period. The framework provides a list of criteria for music-making sessions, taking into account both musical and personal development, with an emphasis on reflective practice.

Shortly after lockdown we facilitated a series of online sessions to promote peer support and shared learning to help navigate new ways of working. Most were attended by 20 – 30 delegates and covered themes including [supporting wellbeing](#), [safeguarding](#), [engaging young people offline](#), [working with Disabled young people online](#), and [singing for health](#).

Promoting inclusion in music education hubs

Improving inclusive practice in Music Education Hubs (MEHs) is central to Youth Music's ambition to make music education more accessible and inclusive. In addition to funding inclusive programmes through Fund A and Fund B grants, there are two Youth Music programmes that have a more specific focus on this goal. These are the Music Education Hubs Development Fund and the Fund C programme. In 2019/20, 13 Fund C partners were delivering their second year of grant activity.

Fund Cs work to increase inclusive practice and improve the quality of music delivery for children and young people through forming strategic alliances with MEH lead organisations. The Fund C organisations work together alongside Youth Music through the [Alliance for a Musically Inclusive England](#). The alliance is a movement for change in music education, promoting equity and helping others to do the same. In 2019/20 [an inclusion resource hub was established on the Youth Music Network](#) as a means of sharing practice within and beyond the AMIE network. Bristol Music Trust, Youth Music and the wider AMIE partnership have developed a framework to consider inclusion in Music Education Hubs. The principles, shown below, provide a useful starting point to consider what we mean by an inclusive Music Education Hub.



Holistic - the personal, social and emotional benefits of music drive our vision and mission.

Equitable - people facing the biggest barriers receive the most support.

Authentic - the work is designed in collaboration with the people it's for.

Representative - the people we work with reflect our diverse society.

Diverse - all musical genres, styles, and techniques are valued equally.



The HEARD inclusion principles

In 2019/20 we launched the Music Education Hub development fund. The fund was targeted at those music education hubs that had benefited the least from Youth Music funding. 22 grant awards were made in March 2020, supporting MEHs to improve their inclusive practices. Inevitably, there have been some delays to programmes as a result of COVID-19. Youth Music will work with MEH grantholders to adapt their plans and share practice as their programmes evolve.

A recent report authored by Youth Music reflects on distance travelled with regards to inclusive practice in MEHs and offers recommendations to key stakeholders. Overall, the direction of travel is positive, with many Hub leaders considering inclusion as central to their working practices. There have been developments in:

- Taking a strategic approach to improving inclusion across hubs by writing it into business plans and inclusion strategies
- The range of activity available to young people (both musical and youth voice)
- Knowledge, skills and understanding of inclusive practice

Diversifying the workforce and providing a more representative and music industry-focused curriculum are two areas that would benefit from increased attention to speed up the development of inclusive practice. In addition, treating inclusion as a practice to be developed across a whole hub will help to bring organisational and cultural change to Hub Lead organisations.

Support through the coronavirus pandemic

We published our policy for grantholders before the official lockdown. This outlined our flexibility with grant requirements, and messaged the importance of supporting staff and freelance incomes. This was appreciated by grantholders, many of whom provided positive feedback in our stakeholder survey:

The response of Youth Music in asking organisations to support freelance contractual commitments and supporting adapted budgets had an enormous impact on strengthening the workforce and allowing new ways of working to evolve both within youth music project teams and the wider workforce.

Re Covid-19, Youth Music was the first organisation to be in touch to say they would be flexible and supportive re what this would mean to funded programmes - a shining example.

We were able to process grants payments as usual to support organisational cashflow. Our funding rounds continued to go ahead. Applicants now need to demonstrate their COVID-related contingencies when they make an application to us. They are asked (?) to incorporate items within the programme budget to support additional safeguarding and inclusion costs related to COVID-19.

Emergency Fund

In April, Youth Music launched an emergency fund. Grants of up to £10,000 were available under two priority areas:

- Organisational sustainability – covering funding to bridge the gap where organisations' income had been affected by COVID-19.
- Adapting and staying inclusive – providing funding to enable organisations to adapt their services for young people, in order to continue reaching young people facing barriers.

We held a series of consultations with grantholders and this needs analysis informed the fund criteria.

We revised our usual application process to reduce the time taken to make decisions and payments. For those awarded funding, it took on average less than one month between submitting an application and receiving the grant payment.

We received a total of 190 applications and funded 67 of them. A 35% success rate funded to a total value of £551,309 and an average grant amount £8,228. 54% of organisations that both applied and were funded are working towards 'adapting and staying inclusive', with the remaining 46% dedicated to 'organisational sustainability'.

Over half of organisations that were awarded an Emergency Fund grant did not hold an existing Youth Music grant. 30% of grants were awarded to organisations that have never applied to us before. Around 60% of organisations that both applied and were funded defined themselves as diverse-led. 75% of grants were awarded to organisations outside of London.

Much of the 'adapting and staying inclusive' funding supported organisations to take their delivery offer online, often alongside equipment and mobile/internet data packages for young people to overcome issues of digital exclusion. The purchase of online platforms, staff equipment and training was vital in helping organisations respond quickly to the needs of young people in their communities.

Funding was targeted at those organisations with existing demand or who were best placed to reach children and young people. In total, 5,896 children and young people were engaged through the period as a result of the funding. 363 freelance posts and 154 salaried posts were also supported.

The emergency fund budget was made up of Youth Music's fundraised income from the People's Postcode Lottery, PayPal giving and the Atherton Trust. Core funding from the National Lottery via Arts Council enabled its delivery.

Objective 3: be a representative, respectful and resilient organisation

Perceptions of Youth Music

Every year we conduct a stakeholder survey to capture external perceptions of our work. This is sent to all applicants (successful and unsuccessful) and existing grantholders. The results of this year's survey were very positive. When asked to rate Youth Music as a funder, 91% of respondents rated Youth Music as above average, with 68% selecting the highest point on the scale. 91% of stakeholders reported that Youth Music had above average impact on their organisation.

90% of respondents rating Youth Music's impact on their wider field of work as above average. All of these figures had increased from the previous year. Analysis of the qualitative data in the survey suggests that these increased perception are tied - at least in part - to Youth Music's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also asked organisations about their relationship with Youth Music staff. 90% of organisations agreed that Youth Music staff respond to their queries effectively and 87% agreed that they felt comfortable approaching Youth Music staff with a problem.

Answer options	Not at all			Average level of support			To a great extent	
Enhancing your organisational sustainability	9%	5%	9%	10%	16%	28%	24%	
Sharing practice with your peers	7%	7%	3%	9%	40%	19%	16%	
Measuring the impact of your work	0%	3%	5%	12%	19%	36%	24%	
Improving the quality of your work	3%	2%	9%	7%	26%	31%	22%	
Facilitating collaboration with other organisations	9%	5%	7%	12%	24%	34%	9%	

There were positive additional comments given in relation to a range of areas of our work:

Youth Music's support, both financially and practically, has significantly shaped us as an organisation over the years. Thanks to Youth Music, we've grown in our understanding of outcomes, evaluating impact and most importantly Youth Music have given us a language to describe the transformational power of music.

The fact that I, the Managing Director of our charity, was once a 15-year-old girl who couldn't afford guitar lessons and went along to a Youth Music funded project [at the] start of my journey into music as a career, speaks about the long-term, transformational impact of Youth Music on us as a charity. We can't thank you enough.

I think Youth Music are the most sensible funder. They 'get it', are supportive, understand the real barriers young people face, understand flexibility, learning and growth that come from projects, are theory and outcome driven rather than activity driven and all of these elements come together to create real change for young people and for the sector.

The main irritation for stakeholders about Youth Music's approach focussed on the application and reporting requirements, deemed to be much higher than other funders:

We find however that the application and reporting processes are very onerous when compared to other funders

This is something that is currently being addressed as we streamline all application and reporting processes.

Organisational development

In August 2019 we became one of the People's Postcode Lottery Promoting Societies, receiving a significant increase in investment. The funding will be used to expand our work with young people aged 18 upwards to progress their music and careers, particularly those facing the biggest barriers. Youth voice and participation is at the heart of our organisational strategy and we have undertaken a number of activities across the year to advance our practice in this area. Central to this has been a restructure, which positions youth engagement as core to our brand development and future operations.

Evidence from a variety of sources is telling us that young adults have been hardest hit in the labour market as a result of COVID-19. Alongside the Youth Music Awards in October 2019, we launched our [Next Gen programme](#), offering paid opportunities for young people to get involved with every part of our work. In doing so, they support their own career progression. In May 2020 we relaunched the [Youth Music website](#) with a focus on supporting 18-25 year olds developing music-related careers. This was in response to the findings in our Blueprint for the Future report. Knowing what music industry opportunities exist, and inequities in accessing these opportunities, are two issues heavily informing our website strategy.

The [Careers](#) section on the Youth Music website was the most popular page during the period May-September 2020 and our [opportunities board](#) and NextGen newsletter continue to grow in popularity.

We undertake an annual staff survey to measure staff perceptions of Youth Music as an employer. As with previous years, staff ratings are generally very positive. Capacity and workload has been an issue for some staff this year, as we have increased our output and brought forward project timelines in response to COVID-19.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Youth Music has an equality, diversity and inclusion plan which is monitored and updated annually. A number of significant milestones have been achieved this year. This includes:

- The launch of Youth Music's Access Fund, whereby small grants are given to support Disabled applicants with the cost of making an application. Tied to this, there is now a more explicit access statement within our applicant guidance notes. We are auditing all our funding application and monitoring processes (including the website) and are making improvements such as simplifying of the user journey, using plain English and making guidance materials more accessible.
- A review of the diversity monitoring of applicants and grantholders, leading to the establishment of a new diversity monitoring framework that can be reported against year-on-year. In 2020 we also introduced new questions into our own equal opportunities monitoring around gender, neurodiversity and social class, which will enable us to track progress in future years.
- Recruiting young advisors to support us to assess and make decisions for the Incubator Fund. We will seek to develop our participatory grant-making practices across all our funds over the next couple of years.

- The introduction of our pronouns in email signatures as a signal to others that we are gender inclusive. As we made the change, [we published an article explaining the latest thinking in gender inclusivity](#).
- Diversification of the workforce. We have made good progress in diversifying the ethnicity of our staff team. In 2017, 80% of the team was from a White British background. By 2020, this figure had fallen to 55% which is broadly reflective of the London population. Whilst some progress has also been made in relation to gender, disability and sexuality, these areas remain below where we'd like them to be. The management team is also less diverse than the rest of the staff team. In 2020/21 we will start to systematically capture the diversity of our freelance team.
- Diversification of our board. We recruited two new Trustees under the age of 25, further diversifying the gender of the board and reducing the average age. We will seek to further diversify as current Trustees serve their term and new positions become available in 2021. Trustees have benchmarked our diversity and inclusion practices against the criteria for large charities in the [good governance code](#).
- Refining our recruitment practices by expanding our recruitment networks, explicitly seeking to attract people from underrepresented groups (and identifying these areas of underrepresentation within recruitment packs). We have also made our job/role descriptions more accessible. We are currently exploring whether our current system of anonymised shortlisting should be revised to allow for greater positive action to be taken.
- Training for all staff in Mental Health First Aid and less formalised learning sessions in teams and at Trustees away days.
- A focus on staff wellbeing. We have established a fortnightly staff newsletter and staff social activities to maintain connections as we work remotely. We have supported staff with equipment to work from home and embedded wellbeing questions into our annual staff survey. We have offered flexibility in working hours and purchased a staff service which offers health and wellbeing support.
- Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion with our partners and stakeholders.
 - Youth Music is as a Living Wage champion and promotes the Living Wage Employer and Funder accreditations to all our external partners and suppliers. This has resulted in a number of new sign ups and an award for Youth Music from the Living Wage Foundation.
 - We submitted a written response to the Department for Education's consultation on the National Plan for Music Education, using our data and evidence to advocate for a more inclusive revised plan.

- The launch of our Blueprint for the Future report explored the barriers faced by young people in entering the music industries, exposing deep-rooted exclusionary practices. The Incubator Fund was our response to this, offering funding to music industry organisations to nurture young talent from underrepresented groups.

Looking ahead

In October [we published a report bringing together a range of data sources to analyse and reflect on how COVID-19 has affected youth music work in England.](#)

The findings of the report laid bare the reduction in opportunities for children and young people during lockdown and their worsening mental health. Having a musical outlet is more important than ever to many young people. We will continue to fund dynamic organisations who are best placed to reach children and young people and particularly those in the most difficult situations. We also have a responsibility to the workforce, with increased redundancies and the cancellation of freelance contracts another finding of the report. With a major recession looming, we will evolve our grant-making policies to support the sector as best we can in response to the changing external circumstances. This is likely to have an increasing focus on core funding, which is so vital to organisations at the present time.

The pace at which organisations responded to lockdown meant that their new practices did not always have inclusion embedded; and poverty and digital exclusion came to the fore as young people's learning environments transferred to their own homes. We will continue to advocate for inclusion with all our stakeholders and build it into our funding and assessment criteria.

Our investment in digital infrastructure over the past few years enabled us to transition seamlessly to working from home. During COVID-19, the profile and reach of digitally-savvy music organisations has been elevated. Music education has historically been slow at embedding digital technologies, yet this is an area that can bring great inclusion benefits. We will continue to invest in our own digital infrastructure at the same time as promoting its use in music education.

Responding to coronavirus is leading us to embrace a more flexible and open funding culture with greater investment in relationships and utilisation of our networks. We have reached new audiences, collaborated more with other funders and are seeing a greater role for the Youth Music Network. Youth Music funding will be a lifeline for many over the next few years, and we will take our strategy and investment decisions with care and integrity. Increasingly, this will involve more participatory grant-making practices, co-designing funds and making decisions alongside the people they are intended to support.

The economic and social impact of the pandemic is likely to hit young adults the hardest. Amongst the 18-25 age range, the impacts will be disproportionately felt by the groups who face the biggest barriers. Poverty, ethnicity, location are just some of the factors that will

affect young people's abilities to progress from education into employment. Youth Music will continue to open up opportunities to young adults through our own employment channels, the Incubator Fund, and our industry partnerships. In 2020/21, we will launch our first-ever fund for young adults, backing them with finance to realise their ideas and take the next steps in their careers.

In responding to COVID-19, Youth Music has shown itself to be agile and dynamic. Our staff team have performed beyond expectations working under pressured circumstances. Our board of Trustees have been highly engaged throughout the year. We are mindful of our own recommendations around staff wellbeing and the potential for burnout. We will continue to monitor capacity and to embed good wellbeing approaches into our working patterns. As we work more closely with children and young people, we need to evolve our practices around safeguarding and wellbeing. And closely monitor the environmental impact of our activities and encourage others to do the same.

Like any charity, we face financial risks. There are changing lottery regulations affecting promoting societies and increased pressure on Arts Council England funding. Yet the need for Youth Music's work is higher than ever, and we have an excellent track record of delivery. We will use our increased profile to build strategic partnerships to leverage more investment, to bolster young people's lives in music. And refine our business plan to provide a flexible yet focussed framework over the coming months.

This report has provided the opportunity take stock of the situation for young people: their lives in music and the current political, social and environmental uncertainty we all find ourselves in. Amazing music continues to be made across the country by children and young people, supported by a brilliant, committed, empathetic workforce. But we need to fight alongside young people to advocate for those who are missing out, to drive investment where it's needed most, to protect existing opportunities, and to campaign for change in the music industries and education.

Appendix 1: Methodology

We review and analyse a mix of data sources to draw the conclusions in this report.

Evaluation data – interim and final

- 216 reports were submitted between April 2019 and March 2020, comprising 148 final evaluation reports and 68 interim reports.
- Evaluation reports are submitted at the end of a project and contain a full breakdown of participant demographics, accreditation, workforce statistics and activity content. Grantholders also report against each of their outcomes, usually drawing on a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. The data from these reports can span periods of up to three years of work. Fund Cs report to this format on an annual basis.
- Interim reports are submitted by Fund B and Fund C grantees partway through their grant. They contain interim reporting against outcomes and headline statistics on numbers of participants, sessions and accreditations achieved.
- Quotes from evaluation reports have been anonymised, with each project given a four-digit reference number.
- No evaluation data has been received from Music Education Hub Development Fund grants.

Funding and application data

- We use information about applications received and grants awarded to analyse our investment, and to review and reflect on our funding priorities.
- Each year we send out a stakeholder survey to current Youth Music grantees, as well as all applicants for funding in the past financial year (both successful and unsuccessful). In 2019/20, the survey was sent to 510 people and received 116 responses (23%). This year's survey asked a number of additional questions in relation to the impact of COVID-19.

Web data

- We use a variety of web-based tools to measure the impact of our communications channels, including Google Analytics.

External research and datasets

- We use existing datasets and other published research to understand the impact of our work in a wider context.

Equality, diversity and inclusion data

We use data from our own equality, diversity and inclusion action plan as well as that of the Fund C organisations.

Case studies

We have included case studies of individuals and organisations in this Impact Report. These are drawn from interviews conducted by Youth Music Next Gen – 18-25 year olds we have commissioned as freelancers to produce communications content for us. Participants have final sign-off on the stories (as well as parents or guardians of those under 16) and have given permission for Youth Music to use their stories in our communications for three years.

The National Foundation for Youth Music

Studios 3-5 Swan Court, 9 Tanner Street, London, SE1 3LE

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