



Youth Music in Scotland

**A guide to Scotland's
youth music sector**

#YMusicMatters



YMI Bookbug, Greenock Watt Library. Photo: Cameron Brisbane

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Welcome

Scotland has a vibrant youth music sector supported by a host of organisations, individuals and services working across the length and breadth of the country to bring exciting opportunities to our children and young people. For this guide we've gathered together some of the organisations from the sector, showcasing a flavour of what the country has to offer.

We celebrate the dedicated tutors and inspiring organisations who nurture through music making, champion confidence, resilience and expression, and encourage the next generation of artists.

Music develops confidence

Music creates communities

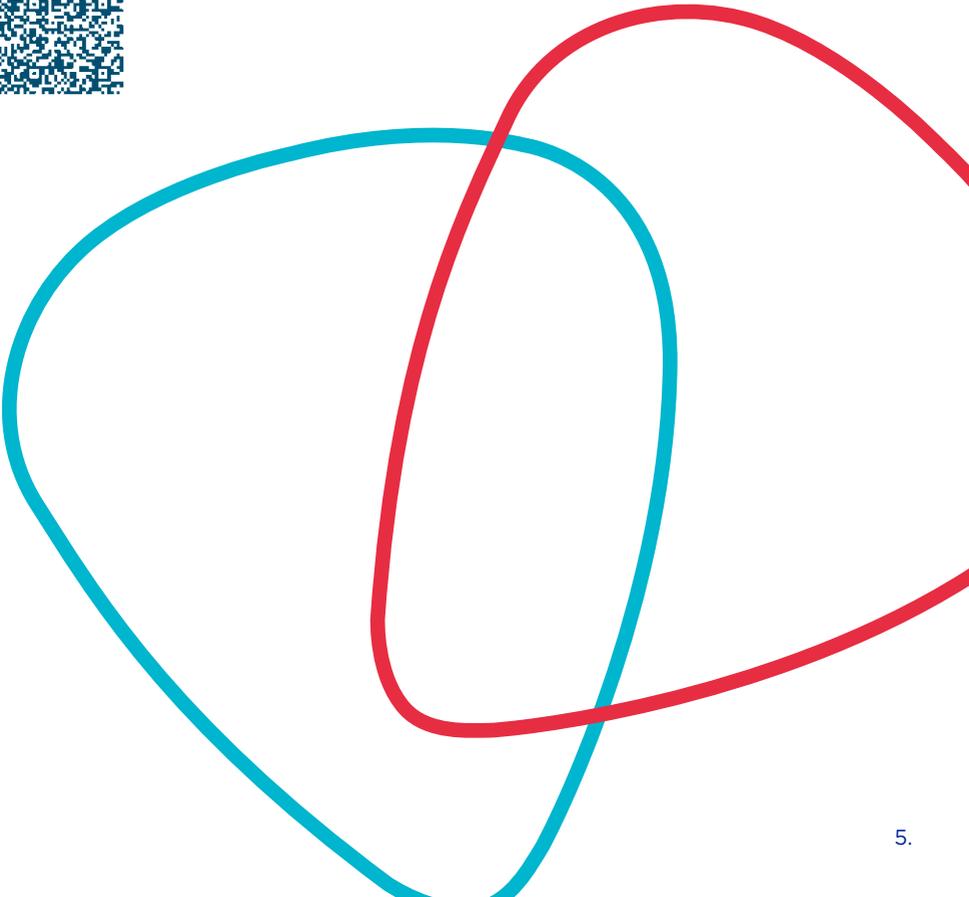
Music makes us feel good

This is #YMusicMatters

Sound of #YMIScotland

Listen to the sound of the Youth Music Initiative – a music education programme funded by the Scottish Government that puts music at the heart of children and young people’s lives and learning. This playlist features tracks from participants and tutors of #YMIScotland funded projects both past and present, and is the perfect soundtrack to your day.

[Listen on Spotify](#)



Youth Music Organisations in Scotland

AC Projects

Experimental / Glasgow

AC Projects produces a range of new music events across the UK, including Counterflows, an internationally acclaimed Glasgow-based contemporary music festival that celebrates challenging and thought-provoking work in the context of what might be called experimental music. A feature of Counterflows is Music Space, a year-long bursary programme and open series of sessions for young people who are based in Glasgow and who are interested in exploring sound, music and creativity.

www.counterflows.com

Ando Glaso

Roma / Glasgow

Ando Glaso was established informally in 2016 to encourage greater understanding and participation in the cultural heritage of the Roma people in Scotland. They aim to stimulate and advance community cohesion built on respect for celebrating diverse cultural identities. Ando Glaso provide arts and music programmes, educational workshops, conferences and events at local and national level.

www.andoglaso.org

A.R.Ts Afternoon (Pulse of the Place)

Community / Edinburgh

A.R.Ts Afternoon is based in Leith and runs arts activities primarily for young people across Edinburgh and the Lothians. Inclusivity is at the beating heart of what they do and shapes the delivery of their vibrant youth samba band Pulse of the Place.

www.artsafternoon.org.uk

Artsplay Highland

Early Years / Highland

Artsplay Highland delivers training, workshops and interactive projects in Inverness, the Highlands and beyond. The organisation works directly with children in toddler groups, nurseries, and early years school children. Groups have regular music sessions, sprinkled with guest artists, with delivery in both English and Gaelic.

www.artsplay.org.uk

Benedetti Foundation

Classical / National

The Benedetti Foundation delivers transformative experiences through mass music events and provides equal access to music participation and appreciation for all. Led by Nicola Benedetti CBE and a tutor team comprising of exceptional educators and performers from across the globe, they unite those who believe music is integral to life's education.

www.benedettifoundation.org

Bookbug from Scottish Book Trust

Early Years / National

Scottish Book Trust has been bringing the benefits of reading and writing to everyone in Scotland for 21 years. Bookbug is Scotland's universal early years book gifting programme and aims to inspire a love of stories, songs and rhymes from birth. Bookbug sessions are free, friendly and fun, delivered within libraries across the length and breadth of Scotland. They are for babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers and their families and carers to enjoy together.

www.scottishbooktrust.com

Born to be Wide

Conference / National

Born to be Wide produces music business seminars and events including their annual two-day conference and showcase Wide Days, which has served as a springboard for numerous acts including Honeyblood, PAWS, Kathryn Joseph and Fatherson. They reach out to young people in communities across Scotland through Off the Record, a series of daytime events for young musicians and those who want to work in the industry.

www.borntobewide.co.uk

Chamber Music Scotland

Classical / National

Chamber Music Scotland commission and create new works and projects in collaboration with artists. They work with Scotland-based musicians to support their creativity and well-being, helping them develop sustainable careers creating and performing chamber music. Their Learning Programme offers community events, workshops, interactive performances, masterclasses, collaborations and more.

www.chambermusicscotland.com

Children's Classic Concerts

Classical / National

Children's Classic Concerts provide children and families with a unique, fun-filled introduction to live orchestral music, reaching over 13,000 people every year. They create hour-long concerts jam-packed full of popular classics and are the only organisation in Scotland solely dedicated to delivering tailor-made concerts for children and families.

www.childrensclassicconcerts.co.uk



Berta Kennedy, The SAY Award. Photo: Cameron Brisbane

Drake Music Scotland

Inclusion / National

Drake Music Scotland put disabled musicians, creative artists, ensembles and learners at the heart of their work, creating transformational opportunities for them to have their voices heard and achieve their musical ambitions. They run an internationally recognised music education programme and are a source of expertise in inclusive approaches to learning and teaching. Their Digital Orchestra is the world's first disabled youth orchestra, creating new music using inclusive music technologies.

www.drakemusicscotland.org

Dumfries Music Conference

Conference / Dumfries and Galloway

Dumfries Music Conference (DMC) is a platform for the music industry in Dumfries and the surrounding area. DMC run a programme of music education and showcase events throughout the year, including their flagship conference in October, which are attended by music industry figures.

www.wearedmc.co.uk

Dunedin Consort

Classical / National

Under the musical direction of John Butt, Dunedin Consort has established itself as the leading Scottish Baroque ensemble, performing at the nation's major festivals and internationally. Every year they take their music outside the concert hall and into the community, offering inspiring participatory workshops to children from deprived areas, where access to first-class music-making really does have the power to transform lives.

www.dunedin-consort.org.uk

Fèisean nan Gàidheal

Trad / National

Fèisean nan Gàidheal was established in 1991 as the independent umbrella association of the Fèis movement. It is a membership organisation that offers a range of services including grant-aid, training, insurance and instrument loans. It supports 47 tuition-based Fèisean that offer tuition in traditional music, Gaelic song and Gaelic drama to young people across Scotland.

www.feisean.org

Fèis Rois

Trad / National

At the forefront of high-quality traditional arts education, Fèis Rois provide an extensive programme of music tuition to over 100 schools in Scotland. They also support young musicians to tour Scotland, the UK and internationally, and offer a range of music activities including cèilidh trails, instrumental classes and online learning.

www.feisrois.org

Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra

Experimental / Glasgow

Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra is a large improvising ensemble of around 20 musicians from diverse artistic backgrounds. They perform across the UK and Europe, host an annual festival of improvisation and run regular events. Alongside their composing, recording and performing activities they are committed to an ongoing programme of education and outreach including workshops, lectures and master classes.

www.glasgowimprovisersorchestra.com

Hands Up for Trad

Trad / National

Hands Up for Trad work to increase the profile and visibility of Scottish traditional music through information, education and advocacy. They promote excellence and support talent through a range of projects including the Scots Trad Music Awards, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year, Scotland Sings, Tinto Summer Schools and FolkWaves.

www.projects.handsupfortrad.scot

Hope Amplified

Community / Glasgow

Hope Amplified are a community-led organisation working and supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged families, children and young people in Glasgow and South Lanarkshire. Their music and arts initiatives help participants make their lives better for the future, improving perceptions of each other by providing opportunities for interaction through culture and between cultures.

www.hopeamplified.org.uk

Intercultural Youth Scotland

Black and People of Colour (BPoC) / National

Intercultural Youth Scotland is Scotland's leading charity for young Black and People of Colour (BPoC). They are a community, a service and a voice for BPoC young people, providing a safe space to nurture their talents. Intercultural Youth Scotland provide a range of services, including youth work, employability and mental health programmes. They run weekly youth groups, including Block Beats, Scotland's first BPoC youth-led recording studio.

www.interculturalyouthscotland.org



National Youth Pipe Band, Celtic Connections. Photo: Cameron Brisbane

Limelight Music

Inclusion / Glasgow

Limelight Music is a Scottish equalities professional music training and production company with a workforce which consists of Scotland's first generation of professional musicians with impairments. These musicians train the next generation of young people, from both mainstream and Additional Support for Learning backgrounds, in inclusive music-making. Limelight Music also has extensive experience in delivering fully inclusive, community music and research projects for young people and vulnerable adults.

www.limelightmusic.org.uk

Live Music Now Scotland

Classical / National

Live Music Now Scotland gives outstanding young artists the opportunity of performing at the start of their careers and enables high-quality live music to reach people throughout Scotland's communities, especially those who wouldn't normally have access to it. They offer bespoke workshops and performances for children and young people including those whose access to live music might be restricted due to additional support needs, rural isolation or challenging circumstances.

www.livemusicnow.scot

Love Music Productions

Singing / Edinburgh

Love Music create and produce a portfolio of adventurous participatory projects and new music through which young people and communities can come together with musicians in a professional setting and participate in inspirational music making. Their portfolio includes Love Music Community Choir and Love Music Junior choir.

www.lovemusic.org.uk

Making Music

Membership Organisation / UK

Making Music is the UK's membership organisation for leisure-time music, with over 4,000 groups representing around 220,000 music makers across the UK. The organisation produces Make Music Day, an annual international celebration of music held every year on 21 June, now involving 125 countries and over 1,000 cities.

www.makingmusic.org.uk

musicALL

Inclusion / Glasgow

musicALL work to enable disabled children and young people to access and participate in music on a regular and consistent basis through their workshops, tuition, rehearsals and performances. They aim to break down barriers, change perceptions and tackle the exclusion young people with disabilities frequently experience.

www.musicallscotland.org.uk

Music Broth

Community / Glasgow & Edinburgh

Music Broth is an inclusive social enterprise dedicated to shared equitable access to restored musical instruments and connecting people through music learning opportunities. They aim to divert instrument and equipment waste from landfill by catalysing community exchange of instruments, accepting donations of instruments, renewing their usefulness, and redistributing them to their members.

www.musicbroth.org

National Piping Centre

Trad / National

The National Piping Centre in Glasgow is the international centre of excellence for the bagpipe and its music. The centre incorporates a school, rehearsal rooms, a performance hall, a museum, an information centre and a reference library. The Centre is home to The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland and offers tuition, gatherings, immersive courses and further education opportunities.

www.thepipingcentre.co.uk

National Youth Choir of Scotland

Singing / National

The National Youth Choir of Scotland (NYCOS) is the organisation dedicated to encouraging singing for young people in Scotland. They provide opportunities for young people, teachers and choir directors to support and develop choral singing across the country. Their three choral ensembles – National Youth Choir of Scotland, NYCOS National Boys Choir and NYCOS National Girls Choir – have appeared on the stages of the Edinburgh International Festival and the BBC Proms.

www.nycos.co.uk

National Youth Orchestras of Scotland

Classical / National

The National Youth Orchestras of Scotland is unique in providing a complete orchestral experience for its students aged between 8 and 25, through its comprehensive pathway of orchestras, training ensembles and an ever-expanding outreach programme. In addition to organising residential training programmes, intensive rehearsals and national and international concert tours, the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland is committed to introducing musical experiences to Scotland's young people through workshops in communities across the country.

www.nyos.co.uk



namesbliss at PITCH. Image: Alice Hadden

Oi Musica

Community / Edinburgh

Oi Musica uses the music of street bands to bring people and communities together. Founded in 2011 to deliver music projects with social benefit, Oi Musica is an ambitious, artist-led organisation which celebrates all aspects of group music making, generating positive shared experiences, celebrating collective success and finding common ground between players from different backgrounds.

www.oimusica.co.uk

Paragon Ensemble

Inclusion / Glasgow

Two key principles – equality and inclusion – guide Paragon’s work in creating music, dance and performance opportunities. Through learning and performance environments, people from all walks of life and with a wide range of additional support needs come together, develop new skills, meet new friends and discover their true potential.

www.paragon-music.org

PITCH

Conference / National

Pitch is Scotland’s annual conference of hip hop and underground culture, presented by the Scottish Alternative Music Awards (SAMA). The conference hosts panel discussions, workshops, exhibitions, music showcases, DJ sets, live graffiti, and Pitch360 – a community networking space specifically for 16 to 21-year-olds.

www.pitchscotland.com

Red Note Ensemble

Classical / National

Since its formation in 2008, Red Note Ensemble has taken up a leadership position as Scotland's contemporary music ensemble, performing and developing an extensive, highly varied and critically acclaimed programme of new music. Red Note's Access, Engagement and Participation programme covers a wide range of projects for a wide range of people, from workshops for school pupils to developmental courses for young musicians, composers and conductors all at different stages of their professional development.

www.rednoteensemble.com

Reeltime Music

Music Production / North Lanarkshire

Reeltime Music provide a range of quality services for young people and the local community in North Lanarkshire. Working together with relevant partners, Reeltime Music aims to bring about positive change in the lives of disenfranchised young people through the provision of affordable recording and rehearsal services, workshop and training provision, volunteering, and partnership projects.

www.reeltimeusic.net

Reel Youth Media

Digital Media / Edinburgh

Reel Youth Media is a creative digital music project for young people aged 12 – 19 years old which aims to develop technical and creative production skills whilst supporting young musicians, performers and youth music service providers to create innovative digital media content and live events. The project was established in 2015 and has supported hundreds of young musicians and music technologists across Edinburgh and beyond.

[f/reelyouthmedia](https://www.facebook.com/reelyouthmedia)

Resonate

Conference / National

Resonate is a music industry conference focusing on industry training, business development, accessibility and collaboration. The annual event hosts an array of panels, workshops, demonstrations, round tables and one to one sessions. Founded in 2017 and directed by the team at 23rd Precinct Music, Resonate is an open platform for music practitioners in Scotland and beyond to come together and discuss challenges and opportunities to grow the industry for the benefit of all.

www.resonatescot.co.uk

SambaYaBamba

Community / Glasgow

SambaYaBamba is Glasgow's fully featured samba band and school providing exciting, thunderous percussion and funky brass arrangements, from traditional Brazilian samba through to electrifying drum'n'bass, in the tradition of the famous Rio carnival. The organisation's mission is to spread the love of Brazilian street music by providing access, performance and progression opportunities to all comers. This is achieved through constant beginner adult classes, brass taster sessions, dance workshops and a thriving and vibrant Youth Band.

www.sambayabamba.com

SAY Award (Sound of Young Scotland)

Awards / National

The Scottish Album of the Year (SAY) Award is Scotland's national music prize, produced by the Scottish Music Industry Association (SMIA). It celebrates Scottish music and the cultural impact and contribution of outstanding Scottish albums. In 2021, The Sound of Young Scotland Award was introduced to recognise the talent of an emerging young Scottish artist and support them to create their debut album.

www.sayaward.com



St Brendan's Primary School choir in Motherwell celebrating 20 years of Youth Music Initiative. © Wattie Cheung

Scottish Brass Band Association

Classical / National

The Scottish Brass Band Association (SBBA) have been looking after the interests of Scotland's brass bands since 1895. Leaders in youth music development, SBBA are proud to offer the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland (NYBBS), catering for the finest young brass and percussion players the country has to offer. NYBBS offer young brass and percussion players aged from 9 to 22-years-old an opportunity to perform challenging, exciting and diverse brass repertoire while receiving guidance from an expert tutorial team.

www.sbba.org.uk

Scottish Music Centre (Hit the Road & MusicPlus)

Industry / National

Scottish Music Centre is an excellent music resource, and home to a collection of over 30,000 items including rare scores and recordings in Glasgow and online. The Centre is also a key player in encouraging talent both locally and internationally through programmes, training sessions and a range of services. These include MusicPlus, a free mentoring scheme offering young people one to one experience with music industry professionals, and Hit The Road which takes musicians and songwriters aged 14-19 on their first professional tour.

www.scottishmusiccentre.com

Sistema Scotland

Classical / National

Sistema Scotland is a social transformation charity based in five communities in Scotland. They are committed to improving lives and strengthening communities through music and nurturing relationships. Through their local Big Noise orchestra programmes, children are immersed in music to help foster teamwork, confidence and aspiration.

www.makeabignoise.org.uk

sound

Classical / Aberdeen

sound is a new music incubator based in north-east Scotland, encouraging new music creation and discovery. They present the annual soundfestival and aim to give composers the opportunity to experiment, develop and create new works, and to have these works performed and heard. sound offer a wide range of year-round opportunities for young people to take part in new music making, including composition workshops, masterclasses, technology workshops and projects for schools.

www.sound-scotland.co.uk

Soundplay Projects

Inclusion / Glasgow

Soundplay Projects use technology, sound, sensory materials and art to make accessible interactive installations, objects and events to enable serious engagement through play. They work with people of all abilities, creating environments which allow them to experiment and have fun with music and sound.

www.soundplayprojects.com

Soundwaves

Community / Argyll & Bute

Mull Music Makers is a community project managed by Sound Waves SCIO, which aims to increase the musical opportunities available to the island's children and young people. Offering a range of experiences, including musicianship training, instrumental tuition, ensembles and performance opportunities, the organisation brings young people together to experience the joy of music making.

www.soundwavesscio.org.uk

Station House Media Unit]

Digital Media / Aberdeen

Station House Media Unit (shmu) is one of the core cultural organisations in Aberdeen, and is at the forefront of Community Media development in Scotland. It supports residents in the seven regeneration areas of the city in radio and video production, traditional and on-line publications, music production and digital inclusion. The organisation also supports other disadvantaged communities with an employability and training arm and programmes for adults facing personal challenges.

www.shmu.org.uk

The Sound Lab

Music Production / Glasgow

The Sound Lab is a grassroots, volunteer-run charity which helps young people and other communities to access and fulfil their creative potential through free music, media, digital and arts tuition. Their projects cover a wide range of experiences, including singing, song writing, electronic music production, samba drumming, DJ skills, MC skills, filmmaking, photography and graffiti art. They believe that music and creativity should be available for all.

www.thesoundlab.org.uk

The Soundsystem Project

Music Production / National

A truly innovative youth-led organisation working across Scotland supporting young people to develop skills for life through exploration of soundsystem culture. The project supports young people to learn DJing, MCing, music production, branding and marketing, and nurtures teamwork and collaboration. Young people are empowered to design, build, and run their very own soundsystem, with performance opportunities at Scotland's festivals.

[f /TheSoundsystemProject](https://www.facebook.com/TheSoundsystemProject)



Make Music Day, Edinburgh. Photo: Mihaela Bodlovic

Tinderbox Collective

Community / National

From grassroots youth work to award-winning arts productions, Tinderbox offer a range of creative workshops, orchestra courses, arts residences and apprenticeship programmes. They provide a year-round programme working with hundreds of children and young people aged 10-25, from complete beginners to young professionals. Tinderbox aim to create high quality and original work, with a drive to be genuinely inclusive and foster active and creative participation from everyone involved.

www.tinderboxcollective.org

Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra

Jazz / National

The Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra (TSYJO) provides access for talented young jazz musicians to develop and perform on a regular basis in an exceptional youth jazz orchestra. Tommy Smith set up the TSYJO in 2002 to compete with the student paid organisations and offer a place where talented musicians could be part of a first-class big band for no financial cost. TSYJO attracts some of the best young jazz musicians in the country who effectively constitute the youth wing of the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra (SNJO).

www.snjo.co.uk

Orchestras and National Performing Companies

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (BBC SSO)

The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (BBCSSO) is Scotland's national broadcasting orchestra and performs throughout Scotland and beyond. Working in schools across Scotland with young people of all ages, the BBC SSO inspires them to get excited about music and creativity through residencies and their fantastic BBC Ten Pieces programme.

www.bbc.co.uk/bbcSSO

Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO)

The Royal Scottish National Orchestra is one of Europe's leading orchestras with a rich history stretching back over 125 years. It is one of Scotland's leading cultural institutions and an orchestra with a variety of work that is almost unparalleled among its British peers. The RSNO supports and develops the musical education of children and young people with activity that fosters lifelong relationships with music.

www.rsno.org.uk

Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO)

The internationally celebrated Scottish Chamber Orchestra is made up of a unique collection of talented musicians who inspire and connect with people of all ages. The SCO makes a significant contribution to Scottish life both on the concert platform and beyond, working in schools, universities, hospitals, care homes and community centres through its award-winning Creative Learning programme.

www.sco.org.uk

Scottish Opera

Scottish Opera's mission is to entertain, inspire, surprise, educate, challenge and delight audiences old and new by delivering high quality, powerful opera throughout Scotland and beyond. The Company's Education and Outreach programme, includes an annual Primary Schools Tour, bringing children the opportunity to perform their own specially commissioned piece alongside professional singers.

www.scottishopera.org.uk

Sector Bodies

Music Education Partnership Group (MEPG)

MEPG was set up to promote and celebrate the life-long benefits of a music education and to advocate that the transformative potential of music should be experienced by everyone in Scotland. They advocate for excellent music education in Scotland in all its forms, and bring together a wide range of partners from young people and music teachers to schools and local authorities, universities and higher education, freelance music tutors, community music groups and other music organisations.

www.wemakemusicscotland.org

Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland (HITS)

HITS is the sector body which represents the managers of Instrumental Music Services in Scotland. Its primary function is to act as a support organisation for Music Service Managers. HITS also enables the effective sharing of good practice, professional dialogue and opportunities for career long professional learning for members. Alongside managers, associate members include many of the main national bodies that contribute to the music education landscape in Scotland.

[🐦@HIT_Scotland](https://twitter.com/HIT_Scotland)

The Scottish Association for Music Education (SAME)

SAME is the professional association which represents all those involved in music education. They work with and for a wide range of stakeholders including nursery, primary and secondary class teachers, specialists and instrumental instructors, additional support teachers and those within education authorities with responsibility for music. They have strong links with further education providers, community education and education in prisons.

www.same.org.uk



THE GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL

Make Music Day, Glasgow.
Photo: Cameron Brisbane

Funding Bodies

Help Musicians

Help Musicians UK is the leading UK charity for emerging, professional and retired musicians across all genres. From tailored schemes for individuals and groups to development opportunities with partner organisations, the charity helps musicians develop their career and alleviate the financial difficulties faced by those working within the music industry.

www.helpmusicians.org.uk

PRS for Music Foundation

PRS Foundation supports the creation and performance of new music across all genres throughout the UK. Through open grant schemes and partnership programmes, the organisation has supported thousands of new music initiatives and played a significant role in supporting pioneering musical activity. PRS Foundation leads the charge to create a stronger, fairer and inclusive music sector and is home to the Women Make Music fund, funds to support those at early career stages and the POWER UP initiative to tackle anti-Black racism in music.

www.prsfoundation.com

Youth Music

Youth Music is a UK based charitable funder which believes that every young person should have the chance to change their life through music. They give grants to other organisations – small charities, arts venues, music businesses, youth clubs, music education hubs, housing associations, nurseries and more – to run music making projects or create career progression opportunities in music. Youth Music's insights, influence and investment in grassroots organisations and to young people themselves mean that more 0–25-year-olds can make, learn and earn in music.

www.youthmusic.org.uk

Further Information

There are many other organisations, services and individuals playing a vital role in the youth music ecology not listed in this guide. These include community groups, freelance practitioners, youth orchestras, arts organisations, festivals, local authorities, trusts and foundations, music schools, colleges, conservatoires, academies, accreditation bodies, youth orchestras, groups and bands.

If you would like to find out more about these organisations and opportunities available in your region, please contact ymi@creativescotland.com



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