



## HELP MUSICIANS

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**Help Musicians** is an independent UK charity for professional musicians of all genres, supporting and empowering musicians through all stages of their lives, from training and beginning a career, through to retirement.

Supporting Help Musicians through Project 48 is really important to me: so many friends and colleagues have had their entire **livelihoods wiped out** during the last year, with music venues closed and travel and performance forbidden: Help Musicians has been a lifeline to them and many like them.

The **financial impact of the pandemic** has been severe and widespread. In 2020, Help Musicians provided over 19,000 musicians with Financial Hardship Funding, also offering advice, mental health help and isolation support to many more.

For those musicians still able to work, the charity rolled out its largest-ever **creative funding programme**, alongside opportunities to improve business skills and broaden career options within the music industry: with over a third of musicians reported to be considering changing career completely, these opportunities are critical to retaining the expertise and skill for which the UK music scene is known.

But the work Help Musicians carry out was vital even before the pandemic, and these other branches of their work are ongoing. The charity is '**passionate about creating a world where musicians thrive.**' They do help at times of crisis - for example if someone has an injury which means they're unable to work - but they also help create or realise opportunities, with a range of **creative development funding**, supporting professional growth, creative ideas, research projects, instrument costs, or (fearsomely expensive) postgraduate studies. The charity has had a dedicated **talent development programme** since the early 1980s and currently invests more than £600,000 a year in helping emerging artists; musicians helped include leading lights of the classical profession such as Dame Evelyn Glennie and Tasmin Little OBE. They also run an incredibly popular **hearing health scheme** which aims to prevent hearing problems that would otherwise bring musicians' careers to an untimely end.

In 2017, Help Musicians launched a free **mental health service** for everyone working in the UK music industry - **Music Minds Matter** - in which BACP accredited counsellors

with understanding of the music profession are available on the phone 24 hours a day to offer practical advice and emotional support on topics ranging from debt or employment law to performance anxiety and career concerns.

Help Musicians prides itself on **kindness and compassion**, and was born out of tragedy. In 1921 the English tenor Gervase Elwes was killed in railway accident in Boston, USA, whilst on tour. Throughout his life, he had shown compassion and kindness to musicians and composers, counting Ralph Vaughan Williams and Edward Elgar as his friends, so following his death, his friends set up a fund for musicians in his name. In 1930, this became the Musicians Benevolent Fund, renamed in 2014 as Help Musicians. During the Second World War, pianist Myra Hess donated the proceeds of her famous concert series, which ran throughout the War at the National Gallery, enabling the work of the charity to continue and grow. For 100 years, Help Musicians has been providing help, support and opportunities to empower musicians at all stages of their lives.

## YOUTH MUSIC

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Youth Music works to **break down barriers** so that all children and young people are able to have musical lives. 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 for children and young people** aged 0-25, or to create **career progression opportunities** in music, knowing that these opportunities allow youngsters to develop personally and socially as well as musically.

They work particularly with those who don't get to make music, because of who they are, where they live, or what they're going through, enabling those in **challenging circumstances** to **transform their lives**. Youth Music funds around 300 projects across the country every year, supporting more than 80,000 children and young people to make music, develop their skills, and progress on their chosen paths.

I'm conscious that it was sheer accident of birth that meant I grew up in a family where music surrounded me from a young age, and where there were the resources to support my musical activities as a child. I'm also conscious that for every young person who is on that gradually unfurling path - with a regular teacher, a supported practice routine, an instrument in the house, leading perhaps to a summer course, leading to a chance meeting, leading to a scholarship audition, leading to the next and the next and the next steps of educational and professional development, in turn opening a sequence of doors and connections and opportunities later in life - there are others whose circumstances are holding them back from even the first rung of that ladder. That is a deep injustice: the transformative possibilities of music - as a career, as a passion, as a way of being - should be available to everyone.

Youth Music campaigns alongside young people to advocate for those who are missing out, and to drive change in the music industries and education. They work to **influence policy** so that inclusive, relevant, long-term **music education** is standard practice, working to affect not only how music is taught but how it is perceived. With 'Exchanging Notes' they explored what happened when young people at risk of disengagement, low attainment or exclusion from school had access to a creative and inspiring music curriculum that was sustained over four years. Investing in 10 new partnerships, appointing a team from Birmingham City University to research the impact, and working with almost 1,000 young musicians, they demonstrated that music in schools has the potential to re-engage young people in education, develop their confidence, resilience and self-belief, and create a more positive attitude to learning.

Youth Music works to ensure that the music education workforce is skilled, valued and fairly paid. They work to form links between music education and the music industry, and ensure young people are supported to take their next steps, whatever they might choose to do. Alongside their research they create practical solutions: **'Youth Music Next Gen'** offers 18-25 year olds freelance work for Youth Music to help them take those first crucial steps in their career, while the **Incubator Fund** supports creative employers to innovate and incubate new and diverse talent within that same age range.

Youth Music campaigns for diversity and widening access; they commission research and provide resources to help workplaces make real commitment around inclusivity. Their recent report 'Reshape Music' includes the first-ever national survey into **disabled people's experiences of music** education and music-making, setting out the significant barriers they face. They argue that this is a moment not to be missed: "the upheaval of 2020 provides an opportunity for music education, retail and the wider industries to build inclusivity into the recovery."

## LIVE MUSIC NOW

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Live Music Now facilitates thousands of **interactive music programmes** every year in **care homes, hospitals, special schools**, and other community and healthcare settings. They work with a diverse range of people that rarely, if ever, have the opportunity to experience live music - some of whom are very disadvantaged. LMN selects young, professional musicians, who combine exceptional performing skills with special qualities of insight and spirit; they enhance the musicians' skills through training and a distinctive and sensitive approach to performance, and send them out into the community to perform for older people and children with special educational needs across the UK.

Taking part in regular music-making is not only enjoyable for children, but has been proven to make a **major contribution to their learning, social and personal development** - from developing conversational skills and teamwork, to improving concentration, motor skills, creativity and self-confidence. Live Music Now is one of the few music organisations to offer **bespoke activities** for children and young people whose access to live music is restricted due to **special educational needs and disabilities** (SEND). Everyday activities which others take for granted can pose major challenges: communicating with people around, expressing feelings, joining in a group activity. In each of these respects music can transform people's ability to respond, and for many of the children LMN works with now, the performances and workshops will have been their first experience of live music.

When I'm not on a crazy nation-wide Bach project, one of the other hats I wear is running the New Paths Music festival. One of our proudest achievements at New Paths has been our collaboration with Frederick Holmes special school in Hull: the euphoria of the children there in performing music they had created alongside our professionals; the pride they and their families took from being at the heart of a large music festival; and the skill and dedication of the staff at the school were utterly inspiring. It brought home to me the critical importance of music in these children's lives, and the very real practical and educational barriers that often prevent this. The need for expertise and training in working in this environment is so apparent. So, from my own fleeting experience in this field, I wholeheartedly support the incredible work that Live Music Now does.

LMN also works in mainstream schools that don't easily have access to live music, perhaps because of geographical isolation or economic barriers, as well as in a range of Early Years settings, and with music hubs across the country. But their work is not all with young people. The charity has been working for years to bring joy to **older people** through music sessions in hospitals and hospices, and in the community at large, combatting **loneliness** with programmes such as 'Songs and Scones'. For patients living with **terminal or life-limiting conditions**, a regular programme of interactive music sessions can have therapeutic benefits and enhance quality of life; for people with mental health problems the experience of engaging with live music can be life-affirming and stimulating. The simple joy of listening to music can take the stress and worry out of hospital visits or give the morale of hospital staff a boost. The neurochemical benefits of music can boost the body's immune system, reduce anxiety, and help regulate mood; the professional and scientific understanding of music's power to influence body and mind is growing all the time.

Live Music Now works with around 320 musicians each year, and has undertaken over 80,000 workshops reaching over 2.8 million people. At the heart of LMN's work is the **training of young professional musicians** to work in these fields: soloists or small groups are selected from a range of musical traditions - classical western music, world music, jazz, rock and folk - to join the scheme. The selected participants

receive invaluable training and professional development in the field of music outreach, as well as paid performance opportunities across the country and the outset of their career, and experiences which are perhaps amongst the most musically enriching that there are. The charity states, “It is our role to inspire young professional musicians to use their talents for the benefit of those who are otherwise excluded from the joy of live music.” Live Music Now was dreamed up by legendary violinist **Sir Yehudi Menuhin**, combining his experiences performing during the Second World War with his abiding concern for the development of our most talented young musicians. Menuhin said, *“Music, amongst all the great arts, is the language which penetrates most deeply into the human spirit, reaching people through every barrier, disability, language and circumstance. This is why it has been my dream to bring music back into the lives of those people whose lives are especially prone to stress and suffering... so that it might comfort, heal and bring delight.”*

## FUTURE TALENT

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**Future Talent** operates two programmes supporting **gifted young musicians** from **low-income backgrounds** across the UK. These programmes aim to support the aspirations of the young musicians, and listen to their needs, providing a range of **development opportunities** such as masterclasses and workshops, one-to-one mentoring sessions with relevant and encouraging experts, and crucial performance opportunities. With over 4.2 million children living in poverty in the UK and thousands of children with exceptional musical abilities failed by society every year, Future Talent wants to achieve an equal reality where all gifted young musicians from low-income backgrounds flourish.

Future Talent’s ‘Development Programme’ nurtures musicians aged 13-18, whilst their new Junior Programme supports musicians at an earlier stage of their musical development who show potential to grow. In 2020 Future Talent successfully moved their entire programme of support **online**, in response to the pandemic. Their most recent Virtual Residential offered workshops, classes and lectures led by a host of educators, professional musicians, practitioners and speakers, delivering 2,500 hours of support and impact to all 94 of their young musicians. At a time when opportunities to collaborate with friends and peers are hard to come by, this space for young musicians to **create, learn, and also have fun**, is more valuable than ever.

Alongside these opportunities, Future Talent also provides their young musicians with **financial support** towards musical costs such as instrument purchase or maintenance, sheet music, tuition, or exam/audition fees. Furthermore, the charity’s **Relationship Team** are on hand throughout to provide guidance, advice and support to the young musicians and their families. Future Talent prides itself on its refreshing and optimistic spirit. They believe in being present to celebrate the good days and offering comfort

and kindness on the bad days, with consistent and unconditional love and a door that is always open.

The charity is entering an exciting period of planned growth, beginning their ambitious expansion with a new Liverpool office in addition to their London headquarters: this permanent presence in the **North of England** will enable them to better reach and support young musicians in the North and beyond.

This commitment to the North is part of what drew me to select Future Talent for support by Project 48. Having lived most of my life within striking distance of London, and having more recently taken up honorary citizenship of the East Riding of Yorkshire, I am struck by the inequality of opportunity and resources available to young people in different parts of the country. My own festival in Beverley - New Paths - has always strived to play its part in redressing this balance, and one of the youngest audience members at our very first festival has since gone on to be supported by Future Talent in her own journey as a capable and exciting young musician. I have seen directly the impact of this charity's work on her journey, and know how equally vital it is for youngsters in all the regions of the UK.

Performance opportunities created for Future Talent's musicians have ranged from a series of **Virtual Concerts** during lockdown, to spectacular in-person concerts hosted at **Buckingham Palace** by the Duchess of Kent, who founded the charity in 2004. Having taught music herself at a primary school in East Hull for 13 years, she saw first-hand how low parental expectations, financial instability and limited guidance combined with lack of opportunities for the musically gifted child in state education meant that countless young people were missing out on a career in music. Future Talent works to break down these barriers, create opportunities and **harness the power of music to transform the lives of young musicians** across the UK.