

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

Music Strategy 2013–2018

Introduction

Northern Ireland is rightly proud of its musical heritage, one that boasts institutions and individuals (not only performers, but composers, directors, impresarios and others too) that have made a significant impact on the world stage. Apart from their talent, the people working in the sector here have shown themselves to be highly committed and resourceful in an environment where funds have historically been over-stretched and the market-place is increasingly competitive and globalised. Some of the challenges they face, of course, are endemic to the nature of this ever-evolving artform. Others are more directly determined by the local infrastructure.

Since its foundation, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) has been the sector's main ally and supporter, recognising that quality music provision is an essential ingredient for any healthy society, informing its entire culture and contributing to the enrichment of the lives of all who are touched by musical activity, whether as participants (professionally or just for fun) or audience members.

In 2011, a comprehensive Music Review commissioned by ACNI and part funded by the British Council was carried out by Judith Ackrill and Nod Knowles (Ackrill & Knowles 2011). This Review, the first in many years, tells the fascinating story of the hard-won achievements of a vibrant sector and its inspired personnel. At the same time it exposes a range of urgent developmental needs, and suggests ways in which ACNI can do more to help.

Completion of the music sector review required a detailed analysis of the Ulster Orchestra (UO), ACNI's largest and longest-standing music client, which was also carried out by the consultants in close collaboration with UO and ACNI, and informs a separate piece of work. This has prompted UO to undertake an ambitious change-management process, currently underway.

The purpose of the present, more general music strategy is to provide a clear statement of what developmental priorities, aims and objectives ACNI has set itself for the next five years. It illustrates how ACNI plans to enable the development of music creation and provision in Northern Ireland to meet its overall Arts Development objectives. The rationale and arguments that follow have been developed from the findings in Ackrill & Knowles 2011, and refer closely both to the evidence it presents and the recommendations it makes; the two documents are to be read as complementary. The concluding agreed action plan is the result of consideration of those recommendations and reflects ACNI's commitment to the ten priority areas for development they highlight.

ACNI regards the development of its music strategy as a moment of special opportunity in its ongoing efforts to enhance music-making in Northern Ireland, but it seems wise to sound a note of caution, if only to avoid fostering unrealistic expectations. Inevitably, ACNI's action plan is circumscribed by financial forecasts for the next five years, and by the overall operational context. The good news is that, although additional financial resources would undoubtedly help achieve results more quickly and sustainably, the extensive review process has helped ACNI focus on better ways to deploy the resources it already has at its disposal.

But if few of the challenges detailed here demand costly solutions, all of them demand a great deal of innovative energy, sensitive developmental work coupled with a willingness to listen closely to clients and the sector generally, and informed advocacy at both public and policy-making levels.

A strong vision for Music in Northern Ireland

The vision of ACNI for the development of the sector in Northern Ireland is a comprehensive one. In fact, given our privileged position in the musical life of the region, it is nothing less than our duty to take this inclusive overview. It must inform our approach to musical production on the one hand, and to administrative facilitation, across various devolved government departments and arm's-length bodies, on the other.

We recognise the historical value of music in its constituent cultural and social traditions and acknowledge the powerful contribution it makes in diverse community contexts, where it is one of the most powerful vehicles for promoting the expression of values and identity. On the other hand, we also celebrate music's unique ability to bring people together and to break down the barriers to communication between those contexts. Therefore in recent years we have widened our remit from the relatively limited approach of the past to embrace all musical styles. We are firmly committed to enabling people in Northern Ireland to experience the best music, in any form: from classical to jazz, from traditional and folk to rock and pop, from world music to electronic and contemporary music. However, the findings in Ackrill & Knowles 2011, together with those arising from the recent development of our first ever Intercultural Arts Strategy, and of new Youth Arts and Community Arts Strategies, have highlighted the need for a far more inclusive approach to the diversity of genres and distinctive musics. This has already caused repercussions throughout all areas of our work. Through this strategy we want to define how best we can be involved with the increasingly rich variety of musical worlds in Northern Ireland, across the different spheres of music activity: from education to participation, from composition to performance.

Similarly, we recognise that our music strategy needs to be open and responsive to an ever-changing music scene. Our way of working must include in-built mechanisms for taking soundings from practitioners and audiences on an ongoing basis, and must remain focused on how best to build up the more sustainable infrastructure needed for a whole variety of music-making in Northern Ireland. The most visible way in which we support the music sector is through a range of grant schemes, directly and through partnership programmes with other organisations (British Council, Performing Rights Society Foundation for Music, and other UK Arts Councils), which are regularly available to musicians and organisations. Further, our specialist knowledge of the artform and our understanding of its representation locally mean that our support is seen as an indication of quality and, latterly, innovation; and one that can lever additional funding. But grant-making is only one of the ways in which we can help the sector develop. Our unique perspective enables us to assist the organic development of music-making throughout the region. Ours is the body best placed to facilitate partnerships and collaborations among artists within the music sector and across all artforms, and between the sector and other agencies. Ultimately, our knowledge and our creativity (especially in the face of financial constraints) are strengths we can offer the sector. Therefore we want to address the current situation of provision and the resource-base for music in a broader perspective that takes into account the common interests of other agencies. Some work has already begun with the appropriate partners to address the needs and gaps in the music sector,

but more co-ordination on the ground is crucial if the sector is to benefit fully from an effective multi-agency approach.

We acknowledge, then, the responsibilities that come from our privileged viewpoint, and we recognise that we have a crucial role to play as a networker, initiator, broker and facilitator in fulfilling our mission to stimulate and support the creation and performance of music throughout Northern Ireland and to ensure that this music is enjoyed by a wide audience, across the region and all the groups, traditions and communities within it.

Strategic priorities, objectives and actions

Working with the Sector

As part of our commitment to act as a proactive development agency in the music sector, respecting all kinds of music, and working towards equity of opportunity, we undertake to increase our regular contact with those working in the sector across the region, including by means of convening group discussion. This will involve keeping a comprehensive register of music support across all ACNI portfolios and initiatives and, in particular, maintaining the strategic coherence of that support. Specifically, we will identify organisations within the music sector that are currently funded via non-music ACNI portfolios, and involve them and our other clients in contributing to the continuing evolution of this music strategy. Similarly, we will ensure that ACNI's internal policies are fully informed by the music priorities set out in this strategy.

Looking beyond our own organisation, we will ensure that strategic agreements with other agencies, current and future, also reflect the agreed priorities. We will work to develop existing and new partnerships, especially with other Arts Councils, with the aim of promoting collaborative projects and offering new models of good practice. In accordance with the principles and initiatives outlined here, we will identify and explore new co-funding opportunities with other music funders and trusts. We will also liaise further with Arts & Business NI (A&B NI), Audiences NI, Voluntary Arts Ireland (VAI) and other interested agencies to offer bespoke training to music organisations. Mindful of our broader social responsibility, we will work at grassroots level, in new and existing combinations with partners, to grow music's presence where it (in all its diversity) can act in communities in an energising and positively transforming way.

1. Traditional Musics

Notwithstanding our commitment to the artform in all its manifestations, we recognise that the distinct traditional musics of Northern Ireland have a special place in the culture. As repositories of community history, and means for people to express (and in some cases rediscover) their community identity in a positive way, these musics are important to the social as well as the artistic aspect of our mission. They are also important both as tourist attractions, and, as it were, as exports of NI plc. Therefore we undertake, in consultation with a range of people working within the sub-sector, to develop and commit to a long-term programme of support and development. In particular, we will:

- commission a full audit of traditional music to inform both our future planning and our advocacy for increased support and profile;

- draw traditional music organisations into a forum to explore the sector’s own aspirations and proposals for development, and encourage them to act as a cross-community advocacy group for the inclusion of traditional musics in formal music education;
- work with the traditional music sector to facilitate cross-border contact leading to joint projects and/or sharing of resources with the Republic of Ireland, Scotland, the rest of the UK and other relevant territories.

2. Youth Music

Although this is undoubtedly an area where what is happening in certain parts of Northern Ireland is rich by comparison with other regions of the UK, it seems that there is much more we could do to ensure that whatever top-down provision is necessary is equally distributed across the region and fully supported by the infrastructure. The positive effects of targeting youth music are clear: not only does increased participation at grassroots level provide the best chance of increasing the number of people progressing to professional levels of performance and ultimately national and international excellence, but getting as many people across a range of communities to engage, experience and enjoy music on a regular basis has proven social benefits too. But to know how to target our work we need to know in comprehensive detail what is already going on; there is in other words a clear need for an overview of the sum total of youth music activity in Northern Ireland, focusing on the quality of what is on offer and on what gaps and opportunities there may be. Accordingly, we undertake to do the necessary research, and to begin our practical activity with the education sector: by bringing together the public-facing aspects of music education in schools, Higher and Further Education in Northern Ireland to ensure broader geographical and social coverage; by advocating strongly for an entitlement to music in education and lifelong learning; and by engaging with youth music providers to ensure high quality and to explore professional development and training opportunities for teachers and tutors. We also undertake actively to broker and facilitate sustainable partnerships for youth music activities beyond formal education, especially in the area of community-based project work. In particular, we will:

- establish a forum in partnership with the Education and Library Boards (ELBs)—and Education and Skills Authority (ESA) when established—, music educators and relevant arts organisations to examine mutual issues and interests, and with a view to building a co-ordinated approach to the organic development of youth music in Northern Ireland;
- through this forum, advocate for and contribute to a comprehensive audit of youth music in Northern Ireland (in all genres, state and private education, formal and informal contexts) leading to collaborative regional strategic planning and the development of pathway-structured provision for youth music;
- explore as a matter of urgency the relevance of youth music initiatives in the UK and RoI, such as the results of the National Plan for Music Education, and encourage productive liaison and exchanges of ideas with stakeholders across the regions and borders;
- guided by best practice (as identified through the measures above), embed across the sector mechanisms to connect youth music activity with the wider music sector, and with the industry above all, with a particular focus on collaboration, training and funding opportunities for the development of creative and cultural skills.

3. Regional Touring and Audience Development

Conscious that the excellent work being done in the music sector, by our existing clients and others, is not always fairly distributed geographically, and furthermore that this is disproportionately the case with certain kinds of music, we are committed to supporting a more ambitious, dynamic and cohesive approach to under-represented genres (such as jazz, world music and contemporary music) and to the development of year-round programming across Northern Ireland for the benefit of local artists and audiences alike. In order to achieve this, we will:

- engage in active advocacy for specialist providers and promoters with local authorities and venues to ensure a fully rounded, high-quality programme of musical performance across NI;
- develop a touring scheme with an integrated audience development and marketing strategy which gives priority to jazz, chamber music, world music and contemporary music;
- encourage a structured collaboration between the Forum for Local Government and the Arts (FLGA) and specialist music providers with a view to securing local government commitment to a touring scheme;
- proactively encourage Audiences NI and relevant individuals within the sector to explore the feasibility, potential benefits and resources needed to centralise commonly required audience development services and training.

4. Orchestral Provision

The Ulster Orchestra (UO), by far the largest music organisation in Northern Ireland, consumes a proportionately large share of public resources. We celebrate the orchestra's historical achievements and the place it has earned in the affections of its public, above all in Belfast, and in this document want to renew our commitment to orchestral provision. However, we must also acknowledge the current squeeze on financial resources, one that will surely not be relieved in the near future, and one that threatens the viability of this large, and by its nature relatively inflexible, organisation more than many others. Similarly, we must address the relationship of UO to other parts of the region if we are to turn it into the orchestra that Northern Ireland cannot do without. One area in which we can make steps towards this is by promoting, and bringing under more systematic review, the chamber music and other smaller ensemble activity that members are already involved in: to (among other initiatives) increase the number of opportunities for composers to work with members of the region's flagship professional ensemble, and to create possibilities for collaboration between classical musicians and those from other genres. Fundamentally, in order to achieve sustainability, we must be prepared to contemplate, along with the UO management, radical changes in the way the organisation operates. Initially this will mean we:

- continue to support UO through its ongoing change-management process, and engage with other key funders to monitor progress and assist it in seeking to broaden its income-base;
- proactively engage with other potential stakeholders to advocate the benefits of a collaborative approach to Northern Ireland-wide orchestral provision;
- work with An Chomhairle Ealaíon (AnCE) to open up new opportunities for cross-border collaborations, and to explore the possibility of an island-wide approach to orchestral provision—such as, in the first instance, the establishment of an all-Ireland orchestral forum.

5. Festivals

We recognise the importance of music festivals as focal points and showcases for the year-round activity of the sector. We intend to continue to support music through festivals, but, as part of the present redefinition of our goals, regularly to monitor the relevance of our criteria for funding to ensure: strong artistic vision, distinct identity, need for public funding, audience development potential and integral role in year-round provision. In addition to this monitoring, which will be embedded across ACNI portfolios, we will devote new resources to prioritising key events, especially Derry/Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013. Thus we will:

- develop a mechanism for a joint approach—with other agencies, such as local councils and Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)—to funding for, and promotion of, festivals incorporating music;
- identify existing and emerging stakeholders in Derry/Londonderry to ensure sustainable long-term growth of festivals and other cyclical provision as a legacy of UK City of Culture 2013 by prioritising activity with unique artistic identity, distinctive brand and long-term impact.

6. Participation: the voluntary and amateur sectors

We are keen to continue our support for the proliferation of activity in community contexts, where a multitude of choirs, bands and music-makers are at work developing individuals' expressive capabilities and opportunities for artistic and social fulfillment, and we want to do this by linking up small pockets of similar or complementary work. In particular, we perceive a need for a mechanism for consistent liaison between small local organisations, collectives and influential individuals on the one hand and ELBs/ESA, local government and our larger clients on the other. This may mean expanding the remit of the forum mentioned in section 2 (Youth Music) above; it will also no doubt involve encouraging voluntary and amateur groups, including choirs and bands, to explore musical and artistic development in collaboration with professional music providers, and promoting (directly and indirectly) mentoring and support of community-based initiatives. We intend to signpost the benefits to the voluntary and amateur music sectors of connecting with umbrella and support organisations, both music and community based—particularly, but not only, VAI. In addition, we undertake to:

- prioritise funding for individual artists and specialist organisations who have the skills and understanding to extend their reach within community music-making, and identify potential for dedicated match funding;
- engage in advocacy with departments of devolved government to identify opportunities within their ongoing work for voluntary and amateur music organisations to harness additional support, particularly in relation to social development;
- monitor the success or otherwise of newly introduced schemes for encouraging participation (such as Take it Away) while simultaneously exploring the possibility of introducing new ones that will contribute directly to the aims of this strategy.

7. Professional and artistic development for musicians

This is an area in which, following Ackrill & Knowles 2011, we perceive notable gaps, both infrastructural and cultural. Although we believe we are good at promoting excellence through recognising, encouraging and supporting the work of organisations, we need to do more to ensure the pathways are in place to allow individual musicians to achieve their potential. Certainly we need to ensure that our grant schemes continue to reflect the ever-evolving needs of the music sector in the area of artistic and professional development. But beyond that, what we think is needed is a fresh approach to networking, engaging more directly with initiatives already in place such as the University of Ulster's composers' concerts and composers' symposia, Belfast City Council's forum of commercial promoters, and Dublin-based events at the Contemporary Music Centre (CMC) and the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA), as well as with the ACNI music forums outlined in this strategy. In addition, we need to devise further meaningful platforms to provide networking opportunities for musicians, where composers, individual performers, ensembles and organisations can meet and actively engage in the development of their own music and the sector as a whole. As a matter of urgency, we will:

- improve the mechanisms for accessing the commissioning resources already available to composers/music creators/producers (such as the UK-wide programmes Beyond Borders and New Music Plus..., as well as our own programmes under SIAP) and work with partners to support them in testing and improving standards;
- address the gaps in our portfolio of funding schemes to enable ensembles (across all genres) to apply for SIAP, and individuals to access greater support through SIAP and travel awards in the cause of professional development;
- expand our encouragement and support of exceptional talent (e.g. through the ACNI/BBC Young Musicians Platform) by including genres other than classical, especially traditional musics and jazz.

8. Music Industry

We are keen that our support does not overlap with (or, worse, inhibit) the workings of the commercial music industry. Therefore we need to ensure that the actions of the recently published Music Industry Strategy are accessible and relevant to the wider music sector. More basically, we need to develop our knowledge and understanding of issues facing the music sector as a whole to ensure funded activity, particularly festivals and touring, does not negatively impinge on the sustainability of commercial activity. On the other hand, though, we have a responsibility to all musicians working in Northern Ireland to promote professional development and opportunity. Taking all this into account, we hope ultimately to provide a link between the publically funded and the commercial music sectors. This will involve encouraging supported organisations to build strong links with commercial organisations and where possible to share skills, experience and resources, and to benefit mutually from the available training and mentoring; also, ensuring training or business development initiatives are accessible and relevant to the music sector as a whole. Generally, we want to make it possible for more musicians to be able to base their careers in NI. Specifically, we want first and foremost to improve access to information so that they can do so, through (among other things) the use of new technology and co-operation between agencies (Invest NI, NITB, local councils). Our priorities in this area will be to:

- commit, along with Invest NI and other stakeholders, to a long-term joint strategic programme for the music industry, and ensure our contribution is consistent with our core

purpose of supporting the creation and performance of music and the promotion of that music to audiences;

- support the music industry in achieving the aims of that strategy, in the first instance by contributing to the development of a dedicated online resource which clarifies the different roles of the associated agencies, to which anyone working in the music sector (or thinking of working in it—this should be available to HE and FE institutions too) can turn for information on available support and training.

9. Music and cultural diversity

Across all the areas identified above, but perhaps especially in sections 2, 5, 6 and 7, and across the full portfolio of our funding schemes and existing clients, we are committed to identifying culturally diverse musical activity and ensuring that it enjoys equal respect and opportunity. From this overarching philosophy it follows that we will:

- encourage existing music promoters to present a wider range of music traditions to their audiences, support touring and audience development opportunities which broaden the musical menu in Northern Ireland; —as part of the touring scheme in section 3 (Regional touring and audience development).
- in line with our Intercultural Arts Strategy, actively encourage appropriate community music and educational organisations to work with minority ethnic communities and their musical cultures.

10. International Touring and Networking

In the interests not only of developing markets and audiences for our clients, but also more generally of raising the cultural profile of NI, we will continue to collaborate with the British Council to increase performance opportunities by local artists abroad, and to foster connections with overseas artists performing in Northern Ireland. In addition, we will:

- seek additional match funding from new potential partners to increase the scope for music-specific exchanges and showcase opportunities that are beyond the limitations of our current Artists International Development Fund;
- seek to extend our collaboration with music funders outside NI, such as PRSF and other Arts Councils in the UK and RoI, in order to gain access to existing initiatives (or develop new ones) for the promotion of cross-border touring;
- explore mechanisms to create regular interaction with cultural institutions representing Northern Ireland abroad (e.g. in Brussels) for the benefit of funded artists and organisations;
- increase the circulation to those working in the music sector of information and support for networking with, and learning from, their counterparts in the UK and Europe to further opportunities for contact and exchange, including visits.

Summary: Proactive vs reactive

It will be obvious to colleagues in the sector, and perhaps to others, that the principles and measures outlined above represent a fresh approach on the part of ACNI, one that will enhance its activity as a body for the expert review and (for the purposes of allocating public funding) prioritisation of proposed work by adding a much more explicitly developmental function. The intention is that this be achieved primarily by increased dialogue with clients and partners in the sector, but also through maintaining a comprehensive and active overview of activity, and taking a more decisive role in co-ordination.

Taking into account the current financial context and the fact that ACNI is facing significant pressures on its resources, the detail of this strategy outlines how ACNI intends to increase its commitment to music above all through the development of partnerships with other organisations (from community groups to agencies of the devolved government to European and international bodies) and better exploitation of current mechanisms for encouraging greater access to, and participation in music on the one hand and raising awareness of existing funding streams and mechanisms on the other. Our plan for working in these ten priority areas in the coming five years is, in other words, proactive rather than reactive.

The following table provides a summary:

MUSIC STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Timetable: Year 1 = 2013

Strategic Priorities	Supporting evidence	Actions	Key Partners	Timescale Years 1 to 5
1. Traditional musics				
Give specific priority to traditional musics and commit to a long-term programme of support and development, to be guided by the sector.				
	2.2.1, 2.2.3	Commission a full audit of traditional musics to inform both our future planning and our advocacy for increased support and profile.	Traditional music sector, DCAL, Invest NI.	Years 1-2
	2.2.1, 2.2.3	Draw traditional music organisations into a forum to explore the sector's own aspirations and proposals for development, and encourage them to act as a cross-community advocacy group for the inclusion of traditional musics in formal music education.	Traditional music sector	Year 1 & ongoing
	2.2.1, 2.2.3	Work with the traditional music sector to facilitate cross-border contact leading to joint projects and /or sharing of resources with the Republic of Ireland, Scotland, the UK and other relevant territories.	Traditional music sector, arts councils and agencies	Years 2-5
2. Youth music				
Engage youth music providers and stakeholders to explore more efficient ways of ensuring high quality creative engagement and professional development.				
	3.4.2, 3.4.6	Establish a forum in partnership with ELBs/ESA, music educators and relevant arts organisations to examine mutual issues and interests, and with a view to building a co-ordinated approach to the organic development of youth music in NI.	ELBs/ESA, Youth Music sector	Year 1 & ongoing
	3.4.2, 3.4.6	Through this forum, advocate for and contribute to a comprehensive audit of youth music in NI (in all genres, state and private education, formal and informal contexts) leading to collaborative regional strategic planning and the	ELBs/ESA, Youth music sector	Years 2-3

Strategic Priorities	Supporting evidence	Actions	Key Partners	Timescale Years 1 to 5
		development of pathways of provision for youth music.		
	3.4.2	Explore as a matter of urgency the relevance of youth music initiatives in the UK and RoI, such as the results of the National Plan for Music Education, and encourage productive liaison and exchanges of ideas with stakeholders across the regions and the borders.	UK and RoI arts councils, DCAL, DE, DEL	Year 1
	3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.6	Guided by best practice, embed across the sector mechanisms to connect youth music activity and the wider music sector, and with the industry above all, with a particular focus on collaboration, training and funding opportunities (CIIF) for the development of creative and cultural skills.	Youth music sector, Invest NI, DCAL, PRSF	Year 1 & ongoing
3. Regional touring and audience development				
Commit to supporting a more ambitious, dynamic and cohesive approach to under-represented genres (such as jazz, world music and contemporary music) and to the development of year-round programming across Northern Ireland for the benefit of local artists and audiences alike.				
	3.3.4, 3.3.6	Engage in active advocacy for specialist providers and promoters with local authorities and venues to ensure a fully rounded, high-quality music programme of musical performance across NI.	Specialist promoters of jazz, chamber, trad and world music; venues.	Year 1 & ongoing
	2.3.2, 2.4.2, 2.6.7	Develop a touring scheme with an integrated audience development and marketing strategy which gives priority to jazz, chamber music, world music and contemporary music.	Promoters, Audiences NI, local councils, arts organisations	Years 1-5
	3.3.4, 3.3.7	Encourage a structured collaboration between Forum for Local Government and the Arts (FLGA) and specialist music providers with a view to securing local government commitment to a touring scheme.	FLGA; promoters	Years 1-2
	3.2, 3.3.4	Proactively encourage Audiences NI and relevant individuals within the sector to explore the feasibility, potential benefits and resources needed to centralise	Music sector, Audiences NI	Years 1-3

Strategic Priorities	Supporting evidence	Actions	Key Partners	Timescale Years 1 to 5
		commonly required audience development services and training.		
4. Orchestral provision Renew our commitment to the Ulster Orchestra during its period of change-management, and to orchestral provision generally. Explore further funding and provision partnerships. Promote diversification of offering by orchestral ensembles (chamber music, composition workshops, cross-genre collaborations).				
	2.6.6	Continue to support UO through its ongoing change-management process, and engage with other key funders to monitor progress and assist it in seeking to broaden its income-base.	Ulster Orchestra, BBC, BCC.	Year 1 -3
	2.6.6	Proactively engage with other potential stakeholders to advocate the benefits of a collaborative approach to Northern Ireland-wide orchestral provision.	UO, BBC, NITB, Local councils, ELBs, other Governmental depts.	Years 1 -3
	2.6.6	Work with An Chomhairle Ealaíon (AnCE) to open up new opportunities for cross-border collaborations, and to explore the possibility of an island-wide approach to orchestral provision—such as, in the first instance, the establishment of an all-Ireland orchestral forum.	AnCE, orchestral providers in NI & Rol	Year 2 -5
5. Festivals Continue to support music through festivals, regularly monitoring the relevance of our criteria for funding to ensure the presence of artistic vision, distinct identity, need for public funding, audience development potential and valuable role in year-round provision. Ensure that any strategic approach to festival funding across the ACNI portfolios respects the specific needs and issues of the music sector and the priorities outlined in this strategy.				
	3.3.8, 3.3.9	Develop a mechanism for a joint approach—with other agencies, such as local councils and Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)—to funding for, and promotion of, festivals incorporating music.	Local councils, NITB	Year 2 -5
	3.3.8, 3.3.9	Identify existing and emerging stakeholders in Derry/Londonderry to ensure sustainable long-term growth of festivals and other cyclical provision as a legacy of UK City of Culture 2013 by prioritising activity with unique artistic identity, distinctive brand and long-term	Music sector, DCC, ILEX, Culture	Year 1 & ongoing

Strategic Priorities	Supporting evidence	Actions	Key Partners	Timescale Years 1 to 5
		impact.	Company	
6. Participation: the voluntary and amateur sectors				
Encourage voluntary and amateur groups to explore musical and artistic development in collaboration with professional music providers. Signpost the benefits to the voluntary and amateur music sectors of connecting with umbrella and support organisations, both music and community based.				
	3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3	Prioritise funding for individual artists and specialist organisations who have the skills and understanding to extend their reach within community music-making, and identify potential for dedicated match funding.	Individual artists, music organisations	Ongoing
	3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3	Engage in advocacy with government departments to identify opportunities within their ongoing work for voluntary and amateur music organisations to harness additional support, particularly in relation to social development.	NI Assembly depts.	Year 1 & ongoing
	3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3	Monitor the success or otherwise of newly introduced schemes for encouraging participation (such as Take it Away) while simultaneously exploring the possibility of introducing new ones that will contribute directly to the aims of this strategy.	ACE, NI music traders	Year 1 ongoing
7. Professional and artistic development for musicians				
Devise meaningful platforms to provide networking opportunities for musicians, where composers, individual performers, ensembles and organisations can actively engage in the development of their own music and the sector as a whole. Connect with initiatives already in place, as well as the ACNI music forums outlined in this strategy. In addition, ensure that ACNI's grant system reflects the ever-evolving needs of the music sector and provides support for individual artists, ensembles and arts workers to access support for artistic and professional development initiatives.				
	2.6.4	Improve the mechanisms for accessing the commissioning resources already available to composers/music creators/producers (such as the UK-wide programmes Beyond Borders and New Music Plus..., as well as our own programmes under SIAP) and work with partners to support them in testing and improving standards.	Music sector, PRSF, other arts councils	Years 2 -5
	2.5.1, 2.5.2	Address the gaps in our portfolio of funding schemes to enable ensembles (across all genres) to apply for SIAP, and individuals to access greater support through SIAP and travel awards in the cause of professional development.		Years 1-5

Strategic Priorities	Supporting evidence	Actions	Key Partners	Timescale Years 1 to 5
	2.4.1	Expand our encouragement and support of exceptional talent (e.g. through the ACNI/BBC Young Musicians Platform) by including genres other than classical, especially traditional musics and jazz.	BBC, Ulster Orchestra, other music providers	Ongoing
8. Music industry Encourage funded organisations to build links with commercial organisations and, where possible, to share skills, experience and resources; ensure the actions of the music industry strategy are accessible and relevant to the wider music sector, including training and business development initiatives.				
	2.5.2, 3.6.4, 3.7.1.3	Commit, along with Invest NI and other stakeholders, to a long-term joint strategic programme for the music industry, and ensure our contribution is consistent with our core purpose of supporting the creation and performance of music and the promotion of that music to audiences.	Invest NI, DCAL	Year 1 & ongoing
	2.5.2	Support the music industry in achieving the aims of that strategy, in the first instance by contributing to the development of a dedicated online resource which clarifies the different roles of the associated agencies, to which anyone working in the music sector (or thinking of working in it) can turn for information on available support and training.	Invest NI, DCAL, local councils, music sector	Year 1 & ongoing
9. Music and cultural diversity Identify culturally diverse music activity across the full portfolio of funded organisations and ensure they receive equitable respect and opportunity.				
	2.3.2	Encourage existing music promoters to present a wider range of music traditions to their audiences, support touring and audience development opportunities which broaden the musical menu in Northern Ireland; —as part of the touring scheme in section 3 (Regional touring and audience development).	Music & community arts, Cultural partners	Years 2 -5
	2.3.2	In line with our Intercultural Arts Strategy, actively encourage appropriate community music and educational organisations to work with minority ethnic communities and their musical cultures.	Local Community organisations	Years 1 -5
10. International touring and networking				

Strategic Priorities	Supporting evidence	Actions	Key Partners	Timescale Years 1 to 5
Continue to collaborate with the British Council on furthering opportunities for performance by local artists abroad, and for connecting with overseas artists, and devise new mechanisms to increase the potential for work in this area.				
	2.4.2, 3.7.1.3	Seek additional match funding from new potential partners to increase the scope for music-specific exchanges and showcase opportunities that are beyond the limitations of our current Artists International Development Fund.	Invest NI, BC, NITB, local councils, and RoI partners	Year 1 & ongoing
	2.4.2, 3.7.1.3	Seek to extend our collaboration with music funders outside NI, such as PRSF and other Arts Councils in the UK and RoI, in order to gain access to existing initiatives (or develop new ones) for the promotion of cross-border touring.	PRSF, UK and RoI Arts Councils	Year 2 & ongoing
	2.4.2, 3.7.1.3	Explore mechanisms to create regular interaction with cultural institutions representing Northern Ireland abroad (e.g. in Brussels) for the benefit of funded artists and organisations.	Cultural agencies	Year 1 & ongoing
	3.6.4	Increase the circulation to those working in the music sector of information and support for networking with, and learning from, their counterparts in the UK and Europe to further opportunities for contact and exchange, including visits.	British Council, agencies and partners	Year 1 & ongoing