



Music Generation
Cork City
Chathair Chorcaí

Strategic Plan 2024-2028



About MGCC

Music Generation Cork City (MGCC) is a performance music education programme that works in partnership with community-based musicians and music organisations to bring music education into the lives of children and young people across Cork City. Using the Community Education process, programmes are being made available in the places where children live, play, and go to school, bringing opportunities for music-making into the heart of Cork's communities.

MGCC's programmes operate in the RAPID areas of Cork City, areas of disadvantage, as defined by Cork City Council. We employ 32 musician educators and have programmes in 42 locations around the city.

A major project of Cork City Music Education Partnership, MGCC is part of Music Generation, Ireland's national music education programme, initiated by Music Network, co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds and The Department of Education, with locally matched funding from lead partner Cork ETB, Cork City Council, the HSE, Munster Technological University (MTU) and University College Cork.

musicgenerationcorkcity.com

Acknowledgements Míle Buíochas

Thank you to the children and young people, musician educators, schools, parents, youth workers, executive committee of Cork City Music Education Partnership, consulting group, and LMEP for their contribution to the consultative process associated with this plan and to Paula Phelan, Traverso Ltd., for her work in the supporting the development of this plan and centring CYP's voice within it.

Thank you to all of colleagues at Cork Education and Training Board, Tramore Road Campus, Youth Services and Creative Youth Partnership, Cork City Council Arts Office and Social Inclusion Office, UCC, MTU, the HSE Community Work and Social Inclusion Departments, our MG National Development Office colleagues and all our supporters from the arts and education sectors in the city.

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Foreword

Denis Leamy, Chair of LMEP

Music Generation Cork City is by any measure a great success. Cork ETB is very proud to be the lead partner in supporting this programme. Music has always been at the heart of our community, a universal language that transcends boundaries, nurtures creativity, and unites us in harmony. In Cork City, we have long recognised the profound impact that music can have on the lives of our young people, and this strategy is a testament to our unwavering commitment to fostering musical talent and ensuring equal access to high-quality music education.

The Music Generation Cork City Strategy builds upon a foundation of collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity. It is a visionary roadmap designed to inspire and empower the next generation of musicians, providing them with the opportunities and resources they need to explore their musical passions and reach their full potential. Through a diverse range of programs, partnerships, and initiatives, Music Generation aims to create a vibrant and dynamic musical landscape that reflects the rich cultural heritage of Cork City.

At the core of this strategy is the belief that every child and young person should have the chance to experience the joy of making music. Music Generation is committed to breaking down barriers and creating pathways for all, regardless of background or ability. By working together with schools, community organisations, and cultural institutions, Music Generation will ensure that music is an integral part of the educational experience and that it continues to thrive in every corner of our city.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the development of the Music Generation Cork City Strategy. Most importantly, the many young people that gave their views and input to how the programme should develop over the next few years. Their passion, dedication, and expertise have been invaluable in shaping this ambitious vision. As we move forward, I am confident that, with your continued support and collaboration, we will achieve great things and create a lasting legacy for future generations.

Additionally, we would like to acknowledge our national partners, The Department of Education and Youth, The Ireland Funds, and U2. Their support has been instrumental in our mission. On a local level, we are immensely grateful for the collaboration with Cork City Council, MTU, UCC, and the HSE. These partnerships are a critical support and a reflection of the ecosystem that fosters education and well-being in our city. I pay tribute to Claire Layton and the staff in Music Generation Cork City for their tireless work and commitment, without whom the success to date and the plans for the future would not be possible.

Together, let us embrace the power of music to inspire, uplift, and transform. Let us make Cork City a beacon of musical excellence, where every young person can discover their unique voice and share it with the world.

Go n-éirí an bothár libh!

Denis Leamy
Chief Executive Cork ETB



Foreword

Claire Layton, Music Development Officer for Music Generation Cork City

A Chairde,

Is le bhród agus buíochas a leirimís ár bplean stráitéise nua Music Generation Chathair Chorcaí 2024-2028. We are proud to present our Strategic Plan 2024-2028. At Music Generation Cork City we believe in the transformative power of music-making for improving quality of life, for broadening horizons and for boosting self-confidence, resilience and self-assurance during childhood and adolescence, a time that is crucial to any child or young person's development.

In our 42 locations around Cork City, children and young people have the safety and the freedom to explore music and performance with the support and encouragement of our inspiring musician educator team, with the expert guidance of our programme providers and through the ongoing support of schools, youth groups, community groups, parents and guardians. Our programmes are based on a collaborative model where partnership is key and relationships are built on trust and shared vision. Through the development of this strategic plan we have reassessed our beliefs and motivations and worked together to realign and adapt to the changing environment and conditions in which we now work.

We want to live up to our intention of giving all children and young people agency to influence the shape of their programmes and their experiences in a way that is healthy and productive. We want to empower our staff to support children and young people to be policy makers and to have a voice in decisions that directly affect them. We want to work to create better conditions for our team of professional musician educators to support their right to security and recognition in their roles and to promote a culture of self-reflection, professional development and respect.

By linking with key arts partners across Cork City, such as our world-class festivals, performing arts organisations and venues, we can create performance opportunities and outlets that are relevant, vibrant and vital.

As a country Ireland committed to "respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural and artistic activity" when we adopted The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992. Until every child and young person has this opportunity, we have more to do and we will take steps in the right direction by following the strategic priorities identified through the development of this strategic plan for MGCC 2024-2028.

Claire Layton

*Music Development Officer, Music Generation
Cork City*



Introduction

Recognising that the plan should be developed in response to local need and context, extensive consultations were undertaken with relevant stakeholder groups.

This plan is the outcome of a strategic planning process which Music Generation Cork City commenced in November 2021 and concluded in February 2024 in three stages:

Firstly, a consulting strategic planning group was established to consider national and international policies and strategies and to prioritise core areas for organisational development and consideration in the plan and priority actions.

Secondly, Music Generation Cork City engaged the services of Paula Phelan, Traverso, to work with the organisation to ensure that children and young people's voices were front and centre of this plan.

And thirdly, Music Generation Cork City conducted extensive consultation with major stakeholder groups, including schools, parents, Musician Educators, Providers, youth services and the Local Music Education Partnership executive committee.

The format of these consultations included small focus groups, video conferences, with key stakeholders including representatives of the Cork City Music Education Partnership Executive Committee, Music Generation National Development Office, Cork Education and Training Board (as lead partner), Musician Educator and Provider teams and the local development office at Music Generation Cork City, and with external stakeholders including funders and industry stakeholders.

Children and young people's focus groups were held in person with children and young people from 10 geographically spread partnering programmes around the city from a diverse range of musical genres.

The insights and experience of those consulted has resulted in a plan for Music Generation Cork City which promises a framework for empowering children and young people in Cork City through accessible and effectively resourced performance music education opportunities.

***"Break those walls down and let your light shine.
We all need a bit of time to get in the right mind"***

Lyric from 'Believe in Yourself' by the Athrú Collective, featuring young people from Music Mash Up, CDYS The Hut, The Kabin Studio and Mahon UBU, with support from Foróige in partnership with MGCC.



Our Vision and Our Mission

Our **vision** is to empower all children and young people in Cork City through performance music education.

Our **mission** is to support the social, personal and artistic development of children and young people through performance music education programmes that are well resourced, accessible, and dynamic.

We work to achieve this by:

- ★ Valuing and incorporating the voice of young people in the artistic and strategic development of Music Generation Cork City to ensure our work responds to the needs of all children and young people in the area.
- ★ Communicating and advocating for the value of performance music education locally, nationally and internationally and supporting relevant research in the area.
- ★ Supporting the sustainability and growth of performance music education opportunities by advocating for improved local and national funding for Music Generation's national programme.
- ★ Increasing capacity with local providers to provide sustainable pathways and opportunities in performance music education.
- ★ Supporting our team of professional Musician Educators with employment opportunities, professional development opportunities and peer support and learning opportunities.
- ★ Addressing barriers to participation to ensure diversity and inclusivity.

Our Values and Our Priorities

The following **values** underpin and inform our work: Equity, Fun, Creativity and Togetherness:

- ★ **Equity** - We take a proactive and leading approach to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.
- ★ **Creativity** - We are committed to creative processes that allow for musical expression and risk-taking in a safe environment.
- ★ **Fun** - We place fun at the heart of our interactions with Children and Young People.
- ★ **Togetherness** - We trust the people we work with and encourage a culture of shared respect and support across all of our partnerships.

Our Strategic Priorities for 2024-2028 are:

1. Resource

- ★ **Objective:** To **resource** our programmes well (including Place, Space and People) to meet the needs and ambitions of children and young people and our partnering providers.

2. People

- ★ **Objective:** To provide a healthy, happy and purposeful environment for our **people**, that promotes personal development.

3. Inclusion

- ★ **Objective:** To continue to advocate for and actively encourage and promote best practice in the area of **inclusion** and inclusive music making.

4. Performance

- ★ **Objective:** To offer a diverse range of high-quality **performance** opportunities to drive the pedagogy and artistry of our Children and Young People (CYP) and Musician Educators (MEs).



Strategic Goals and Associated Actions

Strategic Goal - Resource

Objective: To **resource** our programmes well (including Place, Space and People) to meet the needs and ambitions of children and young people and our partnering providers.

Actions:

- ★ We will work with Cork ETB as lead partner and the Music Generation National Development Office, to address gaps and build financial capacity for MGCC to support the strategic goals of the organisation.
- ★ We will work with our partner providers to identify the equipment, staffing and structural needs of each programme and make provision for these in a timely manner.
- ★ We will continue to manage all MGCC assets in a responsible way, ensuring that instruments, and equipment, are fit for purpose.
- ★ We will apply for additional capital funding from appropriate streams to support the maintenance and purchase of additional equipment.
- ★ We will fundraise and advocate for additional financial resources for Music Generation Cork City.

Strategic Goal- People

Objective: To provide a healthy, happy and purposeful environment for our **people**, that promotes personal development.

Actions:

- ★ To ensure the voice of all young people is central and valued in the work of Music Generation Cork City and reflects the diversity of youth in the city.
- ★ To continue to cultivate and inspire a culture of continuous improvement for quality in programming and practice.
- ★ We will cultivate opportunities to develop peer-support and learning among Musician Educators and the national ME network.
- ★ We will promote opportunities to share best practice from national and international research.
- ★ To provide training to our team in the Lundy model of Child Participation in Decision Making and Policy Development and other relevant training to empower MEs in their work.
- ★ To continue to advocate for improved conditions, including incremental benefits and longer-term contracts for Musician Educators, to recognise the quality and experience of the team.
- ★ To communicate effectively with children and young people, schools, musician educator and provider teams using appropriate and adaptable methods of communication.

Strategic Goal- Inclusion

Objective: To continue to advocate for and actively encourage and promote best practice in the area of **inclusion** and inclusive music making.

Actions:

- ★ Practicing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion: social, cultural and pedagogic in all settings where we work and have influence.
- ★ Actively respond to the learning and access needs of all Children and Young People to allow for greater engagement with MGCC programmes.
- ★ To advocate for the effective resourcing of MGCC to ensure real equality of access opportunities to all children and young people.
- ★ Employ national and international best practice to ensure young people's participation is appropriate to their level of experience.
- ★ Provide relevant training opportunities to team-members to support this action.
- ★ To share learning and to engage with relevant research and development of new approaches to inclusive music-making.
- ★ To implement Music Generation's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and continue to review that document and its recommendations regularly.
- ★ To seek further opportunities and grants to develop projects with groups that encounter barriers to participation.
- ★ To continue to participate in the Arts for All Forum and Cork Access Network.

Strategic Goal: Performance

Objective: To offer a diverse range of high-quality **performance** opportunities to drive the pedagogy and artistry of our CYP and our MEs.

Actions:

- ★ To continue to build links with Cork City's professional arts organisations through collaboration and dialogue.
- ★ Maximise opportunities for the development of young leaders and support their progression beyond their time as participants.
- ★ Work to ensure a balance between performance music education and music-making experiences that occur in school settings, youth and community settings and in the wider public domain.
- ★ Apply for Creativity and Collaboration Funds from the National Music Generation Development Office to support CYP's engagement in projects and programmes with festivals, national and international collaborations, progression opportunities and artistically ambitious programmes.
- ★ To support learning around new digital and technological possibilities for performance music education.

"I'll get to where I'm going, with a whole group behind me. Collaboration is my biggest inspiration"

Lyric from 'Optimism', written by young people from The Kabin Studio, in partnership with Harp Ireland/Cruit Éireann and MGCC.





How We Will Measure Success

Evaluation and Reflection

Throughout the life of this plan, we will be responsive to the needs of our people and our programmes, with annual reviews of progress.

We will work with local education partners and researchers to continue to document best practice and share learning around action research initiatives.

We will use our evaluation framework to keep our vision for 2024-2028 on track and to assess and document gaps and needs, transforming these into action points and renewed objectives.

*"Think you can stop what we do?
I doubt it!"*

Lyric from "The Spark", written by the Kabin Crew and Lisdoonvarna Crew, in partnership with Rhyme Island, Creative Ireland and GMC Beats.



Resources and Programmes

Cork Academy of Music – In-School and After-School Programmes

An organisation that aims to use music as a tool for social inclusion, using a holistic approach, which fosters appreciation and love for music as an art form and aims to support participants to attain internationally recognised qualifications and certification while creating progression pathways to both work and further education.

★ corkacademyofmusic.ie

Barrack Street Band's – Youth and Training Bands

In addition to the senior band, Barrack Street Band have developed youth, junior and training bands, school and community programmes in partnership with Music Generation Cork City.

★ corkbarrackstreetband.ie

Creative Tradition

Established in 2013, Creative Tradition is a non-profit, community organisation that runs social and musical projects in Cork, providing classes in tin whistle, flute, fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar, bodhrán, concertina, sean-nós dancing, and traditional singing (English and Irish language songs), as well as composition workshops and facilitating creative music ensembles.

★ creativetradition.ie

GMC Beats at the Kabin

The Kabin Studio (Harbour View Road, Hollyhill, Cork), supported by Music Generation Cork City, is a non-profit community space that has grown out of a love for hip hop, original music, and creativity.

★ thekabin.ie

Foróige

A collaborative partnership with Foróige youth hubs around Cork City in Mahon, Mayfield, Knocknaheeny and Ballincollig, supported by youth workers and developed out of our seven year partnership with Music Mash Up.

★ foroige.ie

CDYS Youthwork Ireland Cork

A not-for-profit organisation working with young people from the Gurranabraher/Churchfield area and city wide, whose aim is to provide a quality, holistic, inclusive and empowering service for the well-being of all young people.

★ cdys.ie/ubu-projects

Cork Community Gamelan at Hollyhill Library

Schools programmes run in partnership with UCC Department of Music.

★ musicgenerationcorkcity.com/programme/cork-community-gamelan-with-ucc



Appendix

About the Strategic Planning Process:

Much of the groundwork for the 2024-2028 plan took place between 2021-2022 led by the MGCC office team with the establishment of the consulting strategic plan group in Spring 2021 with Dr Eileen Hogan (UCC) as Chair.

This group also included:

Amy O'Callaghan (UCC BMUS Student, leader of Rebel Brass, Barrack Street Band member)

Dr Jessica Cawley (Creative Tradition Provider and Musician Educator and former Music Development Officer Cork City 2018-2019)

Dr Michelle Finnerty (Irish traditional musician and Lecturer in Music Education and Community Music at the Department of Music, UCC)

Fionnuala O'Connell (Cork Migrant Centre Co-Coordinator and founding member of CMC Youth Initiative)

Dr Jane O'Sullivan (Lecturer in Early Childhood Education)

Dr. Eileen Hogan (Chair of group and lecturer in Social Policy, UCC);

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan (Founding Coordinator of Music Generation Cork City; Music Generation Head of Quality, Support and Development)

Claire Layton (Music Development Officer 2019-present)

Strategic Plan Consultation Meetings and Actions led by MGCC 2021-2024:

- ★ 3 group partner provider meetings led by MGCC Office team
- ★ 5 online meetings of the consulting strategic plan group (2021-2022)
- ★ In person meetings with schools' representatives (June 2023) and members of the musician educator team (June 2023 and March 2024)
- ★ MGCC in-person involvement in youth focus groups to contribute to the development of the Cork City Council Arts and Culture Strategy 2023-2027 (2022).
- ★ Consultation with parents in early 2024 in light of children and young people's engagement and input into the strategic plan process

"Whenever you feel hidden, music will make you seen. Whenever you feel silenced, music can help you scream."

Lyric from 'Music is Our Home', written by young people from Foróige Mahon, Mayfield and Knocknaheeny, in partnership with MGCC.

"Sometimes we stumble, sometimes we fall, that's okay, that's life – drive on, stand tall!"

Lyrics from "Hiccup" by Sophia 'Sombbrero' McNamara, in partnership with the Kabin Studio

Stakeholder consultation led by External Consultant

In person workshops were held in the following schools, centres and youth services

- ★ St Mary's on the Hill NS,
- ★ The Kabin Studio,
- ★ CCLSS Youthreach (Fr. Rocks),
- ★ Music Mash Up Senior Group at St. Josephs Community Centre,
- ★ The Hut Gurrabraher - Youth Music Café (rock/pop) and rap programme,
- ★ School of the Divine Child,
- ★ Gaelscoil Mhachan (with children from Holy Cross NS and Scoil Ursula).

Online sessions with:

- ★ MGCC providers and musician-educators
- ★ Principals and teachers from MGCC schools.

Policy context:

Music Generation Cork City's Strategy 2024-2028 sits within and responds to national and local policy frameworks and plans:

National Music Generation Strategy – Transforming Youth Lives Through Music 2022-2026

Cork City Council Arts Office; Arts and Culture Strategy 2022-2026

CETB Arts in Education Plan: <https://www.corketb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Cork-ETB-Arts-in-Education-Strategy.pdf>

UCC Arts and Culture Plan 'Igniting UCC's Creative Potential: University College Cork Arts and Culture Plan 2022-2026': <https://www.ucc.ie/en/cacsss/international/ucclaunchesartsandcultureplan/>

MTU Strategic Plan 2022-2027 'Our Shared Vision': <https://www.mtu.ie/about-mtu/strategic-plan/>

Hub na nÓg <https://hubnanog.ie/>, giving children and young people a voice in decision-making.

HSE Cork Arts and Health programme: <https://www.artsandhealth.ie/directory/cork-arts-and-health-programme/>

National Plans and Strategies:

Traveller and Roma Wellbeing through Creativity: <https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/app/uploads/2023/02/Traveller-Wellbeing-through-Creativity-Call-Brief-2.pdf>

Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for the Future (2017-2021): <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/983af-migrant-integration-strategy/>

Cultúr 2025/Culture 2025 Creatbheartas Náisiúnta Cultúir go dtí an bhliain 2025/ A National Cultural Policy Framework to 2025 <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/94227/2cb625da-0887-492d-be64-b94f826df5b6.pdf#page=null>

Creative Ireland and, in particular, the Creative Youth Plan <https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en/publication/creative-youth/>

An Chomhairle Ealaíoin/ The Arts Council's Making Great Art Work (2023-2025)

An Chomhairle Ealaíoin/The Arts Council's Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy which 'strives to respect, support and ensure the inclusion of all voices and cultures that make up Ireland today, from all sections of society, from existing and new communities, and from all social backgrounds, ethnicities and traditions.'

An Chomhairle Ealaíoin/The Arts Council's Paying the Artist Policy promoting 'equitable and fair remuneration and contracting within the arts'.

An Chomhairle Ealaíoin/The Arts Council's Place, Space and People Policy

Rialtas na hÉireann/Government of Ireland Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2024-2030







Music Generation Cork City Chathair Chorcaí



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Music Generation



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education



cetb
Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Chorcaí
Cork Education and
Training Board



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council



Music Generation is Ireland's National Music Education Programme.
A Music Network Initiative, co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds,
The Department of Education and Local Music Education Partnerships.

