Creative Scotland

Youth Music Initiative 2019-2020 Evaluation

Final Report

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BOP Consulting

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Foreword from the YMI team

This Youth Music Initiative Evaluation 2019-20 describes the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic and the profound effect it had on the youth music sector. However, with clear guidance from the Scottish Government to honour existing contracts, we were able to offer funded projects the flexibility to reshape activity to best suit the needs of children and young people. We were astounded by the levels of creativity, determination and passion demonstrated by those delivering projects. From car park instrument drop offs to weekly zoom jam sessions and online singing events, the sector found ways to keep the music playing and, in doing so, supported the health and wellbeing of children and young people at a time when it was needed more than ever.

Although extremely challenging, the need to work within lockdown restrictions resulted in more targeted work, increased partnership working, and huge upskilling and empowerment of those delivering youth music activity, as evidenced in this report. There has been an incredible amount of learning, including the use of digital, which is shaping a new approach to the way Creative Scotland will support the delivery of activities in the future.

While there is much to celebrate in the report, BOP has provided recommendations for us to consider in the year ahead. The commitment to and enthusiasm for projects is clear; however, we need to support organisations and individuals to develop the skills to better evidence the reach and impact of the projects they deliver. The creation of more opportunities for progression, training and sector development was also highlighted. Some of this work is already prioritised in the delivery of the Youth Arts Emergency Fund package and the YMI Annual Plan for 2021-22, but we look forward to working with the sector to further strengthen links.

We are grateful to the organisations and individuals who contributed to this report, particularly those who took part in our case studies which so richly tell the story of the impact of their programmes.

Though there are ongoing challenges brought on by COVID-19, we are confident that music and music-making will play a vital role in supporting recovery, continuing to make a significant contribution to our wellbeing and quality of life. As we look towards the YMI's 20th anniversary year, we are excited about the opportunities to celebrate our thriving sector.

Morag Macdonald, YMI Manager

Executive Summary

The Youth Music Initiative (YMI) was set up by the Scottish Government in 2003 to *"put music at the heart of young people's lives and learning",* with particular emphasis on widening access and participation. Since 2003, it has provided hundreds of thousands of young people every year with free music education activities delivered through both in-school and out-of-school free project activity.

In doing so, YMI aims to achieve three interconnected aims:

(i) Create access to high quality music making opportunities for children and young people, particularly those that would not normally have the chance to participate

(ii) Enable children and young people to achieve their potential in/ through music making

(iii) Support the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of children and young people via training and CPD

This evaluation includes projects which returned their End of Project reports between August 2019 to December 2020 and is based on both data analysis and in-depth interviews with six selected projects, with the aim of understanding the programme's impact for each of the three YMI aims. The findings are summarised below.

In considering the findings, it is important to note that the Formula Fund (FF) projects included in this report all took place throughout the first Scottish COVID-19 lockdown, whilst most of the Access to Music Making (AMM) and Strengthening Youth Music (SYM) projects reported upon here ended before the start of the first lockdown. This is in large part the result of many AMM and SYM projects that would have fallen into the reporting period delaying and/or extending their delivery and reporting time due to struggling with the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 measures. These projects will be picked up in the next YMI evaluation.

Main findings

YMI Aim 1: Creating access for all

- Total participant figures increased, with a significant increase in Scottish Book Trust (SBT) participants making up for a slight decrease in participants to Formula Fund and other Access to Music Making projects. Average numbers of Access to Music Making participants have remained stable.
- While a large number of project strands struggled to deliver all their intended activities, largely due to COVID-19, many were able to continue some level of provision through adapting to digital teaching. This was most visible among FF data and in the fact that many of the AMM and SYM projects that would have fallen into the reporting period delayed or extended their activity.
- Activities that were successfully delivered showed similar levels of involvement to previous years across the strands.
- Feedback from the projects suggest at their enjoyability; however, both 'quality' and 'enjoyability' are challenging to evidence based on data shared by projects.
- FF projects continue to prioritise children and young people with additional support needs and those residing in areas of social and economic deprivation more than other target groups.
- AMM projects continue to predominantly target and reach children and young people residing in areas of social and economic deprivation, but projects across both funds struggle to provide reliable data in this area.
- Projects address the challenging circumstances and needs of the young people they work with through pro-active recruitment, ongoing support and flexible approaches to maintain engagement.

YMI Aim 2: Enabling children and young people to achieve their potential in/ through music making

- Young people report gaining new, technical understandings of music, and take pride in developing their music-making skills.
- Performance opportunities are a valuable motivator for young people, developing their confidence and providing an opportunity to showcase their work.
- Home-learning has proved a challenge for projects, but not insurmountable, with parental support and provision of resources proving valuable to young people's engagement and progression.
- Through their participation in music-based activities, children and young people (CYP) developed transferable skills that will benefit them in the future.
- CYP develop greater levels of confidence in relation to their creativity and music-making, which translates into other areas of positive self-concept.
- Activities supported the wellbeing of young people, impacted their mood, and provided valuable opportunities in areas such as emotional expression and relationship development.
- Smaller groups and an informal approach are valuable tools which allow tutors to build relationships and respond to the needs of individuals.
- Engagement with traditional local/ Scottish music genres supports the development of young people's understanding of heritage.
- There is some suggestion that learning about music genres was connected with learning in other subjects such as history or geography.
- YMI activities regularly provide a forum for young people to influence and make leadership choices, thereby developing their confidence and decision-making skills.
- Time and the context of delivery and practitioners' understanding of the concept may limit the provision of impactful youth leadership opportunities.

YMI Aim 3: Supporting the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of children and young people via training and CPD

- Within funded projects, the number of posts funded by YMI have remained relatively stable. These are most likely to be temporary part-time posts.
- YMI provides an opportunity for on-the-job experience in music education for people in a wide range of roles.
- Fewer practitioners benefited from training through the FF than previously, likely due lockdown restrictions, but average AMM/ SYM CPD participants remained relatively stable, again reflecting the fact that many of these included projects completed delivery prior to the start of COVID-19. Positive online training experiences are likely to influence future provision.
- The need to work within lockdown restrictions resulted in new learning through the necessity to find new ways of working and the introduction of new ways of sharing among staff and across the sector.
- While a few projects referred to supporting progression routes, relatively little evidence of this – or of cross-sector collaboration more generally - was recorded.

Recommendations

These findings have led us to make a series of recommendations to consider in future iterations of the YMI, again focusing on each of the three YMI aims.

YMI Aim 1: Access for all

- Projects have challenges in providing exact figures with regard to numbers of CYP worked with in different targeted demographic groups often due to target groups not being mutually exclusive, sensitivity about requesting related information and the question of whether participants would necessarily self-identify with these groups. Creative Scotland may wish to consider the value and need of continuing to ask for this data in the current format and how better to understand demographics of YMI participants more consistently.

- More generally and responding in particular to the above-mentioned issues of target groups not being mutually exclusive and self-identification, it is suggested that ongoing work to better understand and represent the ways that YMI projects are targeting or working with young people from specific demographics is continued and linked to Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) developments across Creative Scotland and in education policy more broadly.
- Home working and online delivery clearly resulted in some positive impacts and there is a call from both YMI grantees and the wider youth music sector[1] to support/ invest in future 'blended provision'. Given this, it may be of interest to Creative Scotland to continue to explore the benefits, limitations and needs of such hybrid models moving forward.

YMI Aim 2: Enabling CYP to reach their potential

- Evidence on impact in these areas is currently often descriptive and general, making overall evaluation against the outcome areas challenging. This suggests a need for further guidance and support in how to report on the impacts activities are having – including general encouragement to report on learning and what has not worked as intended.
- Specifically, very few projects across YMI provided details on how they determine the quality of the provision. If 'quality and enjoyability' are to remain key tenets of the first outcome in the YMI outcomes framework, then it may be useful to work further with grantees on how this can be explored, measured and reported in projects.
- The benefits of music education to wider educational attainment are both a key factor and aim in the provision of the YMI and frequently mentioned by grantees. However, while hinted at, there was little evidence of how and where music education connected with other subjects that children and young people were learning across the curriculum. It may be worth exploring cross-curricular activity via discreet research to better understand and articulate if these are benefits of music education and an impact of YMI.
- While many projects spoke of providing co-creation opportunities, these were often set within the relatively limited boundaries of providing participants with choices relating to repertoire or activity. This suggests that there is scope to consider how more nuance, ability and confidence could be created among practitioners to support deeper levels of co-creation with young people.

YMI Aim 3: Supporting sector development

- The finding that over half of these posts are temporary and part time indicates how programmatic funding such as YMI, while contributing much to the employment of music teachers and practitioners annually, is also likely contributing to portfolio careers. In some cases, this is welcomed as providing flexibility, although practitioners regularly report that job security (e.g., annual or seasonal contracts) can be a source of instability. Further research is required to better understand the effects of this large proportion of temporary part-time posts on the stability of the workforce and how alternative modes of support (e.g., longer funding periods) may make a difference.
- There is currently no data collected on cross-sectoral collaboration. Given the inclusion of this in YMI's outcomes, supported by the suggestion in the recent *What's going on now?* (2018) report of supporting increased collaboration to allow for more effective delivery and pooling of resources, it may be worth considering requesting further data to inform this area (e.g., number of other organisations grantees worked with within the musical education sector; within other sectors; new partnerships developed through YMI activity etc).

[1] Including the MEPG, YMI FF Lead Contacts, Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland (HITS), Music Education Policy Group (international), Arts in Education Recovery (AiERG), Scottish Instrumental Music Teaching Network (SIMTN) and the Cross-Party Group on Music

1. Introduction

1.1 The YMI programme

The Youth Music Initiative (YMI) was set up by the Scottish Government in 2003 to *"put music at the heart of young people's lives and learning",* with particular emphasis on widening access and participation by reaching *all* children and young people (CYP). Since 2003, it has been funded with around £9m annually by the government.

As such, it forms a key tool in delivering to the Government's commitment that every child in Scotland should be offered a year of free music tuition by the time they leave primary school. This commitment is based on the recognition (as set out in the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, as well as in the Music Education Partnership Group's (MEPG) latest strategy[2]), that music *"[provides] children and young people with opportunities to be creative and imaginative, to experience inspiration and enjoyment, and to develop skills for learning, life and work."* These include *"many wider benefits […] such as increasing attainment, improving levels of literacy and numeracy and the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of young people"*.[3]

YMI thus seeks not only to provide music education *per se*, but for this to impact other areas of children's and young people's (CYP) wider development. This ambition is set out clearly within the programme's three key aims, which in turn are supported by a larger number of more detailed outcomes (see Figure 2 Evaluation Framework):

(i) Create access to high quality music making opportunities for children and young people, particularly those that would not normally have the chance to participate

(ii) Enable children and young people to achieve their potential in/ through music making

(iii) Support the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of children and young people via training and CPD

Through these interconnected aims, which emphasise providing access to wider development/ education opportunities via music education, YMI also feeds into the Government's *Fairer Scotland Action Plan* (2016-2030), which aims to tackle poverty, reduce inequality, and build a fairer and more inclusive Scotland, as well as a series of other Government policies/ strategies, including (see also Figure 2):

- Scotland's first National Youth Arts Strategy *Time to Shine* (launched 2013), which aims to enable Scotland's children and young people to flourish and achieve in and through the arts and creativity;
- Scotland's *National Performance Framework* (2018), which tracks the country's progress in creating a 'more successful country', giving opportunities to and increasing the wellbeing of all people living in Scotland, creating sustainable and inclusive growth and reducing inequalities; and
- Scotland's new *Cultural Strategy* (2020), which highlights the importance of culture to Scotland's prosperity.

To address its aims and benefit as many CYP as possible, YMI funds are distributed via four programme strands, which reach and/ or benefit their audience via the education sector as well as via third sector organisations, with the majority of the budget directed to programmes in (primary) school settings (see Figure 1). Based on this twin track approach, YMI has, since 2003, reached hundreds of thousands of young people every year, who have been able to benefit from music education – learning about music, making music as well as its wider impacts; including those who would not otherwise have had opportunities to do so.

[2] The MEPG Strategy 2020-2025 highlights the *"overwhelming body of evidence [which] suggests that not only is the pursuit of music enriching in itself – but also that its practice has a profound effect on personal development and to mental and physical heath and wellbeing. At all ages, the practice of music develops transferable skills…"*

[3] Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland (2016), *Guidance for Instrumental Teaching in Scotland*

Figure 1 YMI programme strands

YMI strand	Mode of delivery	Aim	Budget
Formula Fund	Formal – via Local Authorities cultural/ education services, delivered in schools (predominantly primary school setting)	Addressing Scottish Government aim 'every pupil in Scotland is offered a year of free music tuition by the time they leave primary school' Reaching those who would not otherwise participate in quality music making opportunities	Approx. 80% of the YMI budget
Access to Music Making	Non-formal (i.e., largely out of school) – via third sector organisations/ individuals	Creating access to quality music making opportunities for those aged 0-25	Approx. 17% of the YMI budget
Strengthening Youth Music	Via third sector organisations/ individuals	Improving the youth music sector infrastructure and services via strategic action research and training	
CPD and Training Fund[4]	Via third sector organisations/ individuals	Supporting those working outside school settings to strengthen youth music in Scotland	

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

[4] Not part of this evaluation.

1.2 This evaluation

This evaluation focuses on those projects which returned their End of Project reports within the period of August 2019 to December 2020.[5] As a longstanding programme which is evaluated on an annual basis, the evaluation requires setting into context, providing insight into how YMI performed during the 2019-2020 period compared to previous years by referring to previous evaluations wherever possible or insightful.

However, this period covers a particularly turbulent time for the fund, which inevitably impacted the programme's delivery and thus requires referencing in the evaluation.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which began around the start of 2020 (with the first lockdown imposed in March 2020) has had a huge impact on the arts and music sector as a whole, with the cancellation of live events and face-to-face activity. This required the cultural sector, including the organisations funded through YMI, to come up with new ways of working, e.g., through enhanced digital engagement, in order to be able to continue reaching their participants and audiences. To support their grantees and the sector during this time, Creative Scotland took a more flexible approach to the use of distributed YMI funds, allowing Local Authorities the option to defer their planned activity or consider other ways in which activities could be delivered. At the same time, in support of livelihoods, YMI required Local Authorities to honour any contracts agreed with freelancers to deliver YMI, regardless of whether activity was cancelled, reduced, amended or rescheduled.

Several recent studies have suggested that the pandemic has increased social inequality, with the more socially disadvantaged being harder hit by the pandemic's effects across a range of factors (e.g., employment, health, education). This means that YMI's mission to bring music education and its benefits to all young people, including those who would not otherwise benefit, has become both more important, and more challenging, than ever. Moreover, this only adds to research reported in the 2019 report, *'What's going on now'*,

[5] This includes FF projects running from August 2019 to June 2020 and AMM/ SYM projects which received funding in the years 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 and reported within the stated period.

which found ongoing inequalities in access to music provision, with variations in the offer of free music tuition from local authority to local authority, an increase in local authorities charging for instrumental music lessons as well as considerable unmet demand for instrumental music lessons. As a result, the report found an *"attainment gap between children and young people from middle class and more working class and poorer households [which] is conspicuous with regard to engagement and attainment in music".* In response, the *Music Manifesto for Scotland* launched jointly by MEPG and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in 2021 argues for the need to *"embed music into Scotland's future"* to support creativity, well-being and Scotland's young people and calls for action, highlighting both the widening social and attainment gaps that were exposed by the pandemic as well as the *"impetus for creative solutions to those challenges"* that the pandemic provided. The manifesto made a number of demands to Scottish Government to achieve these aims, including mainstreaming music in the education system; taking a nation-wide approach to embedding music making in all schools; an online upskilling programme for specialists and teachers; a harnessing of existing assets and resources through increased partnerships and digital enablers; and enhancing equity in access to music provision by equalising provision across local authorities.[6]

The manifesto was taken up by all main Scottish parties in the run up to the 2021 elections, with pledges to support music in schools and eradicate instrumental tuition fees. This included the SNP's manifesto, which pledges to support young people after COVID-19 through accepting the recommendations made in the Music Manifesto, including by abolishing fees for music and arts education (in schools) and supporting teachers. The SNPs manifesto moreover pledged to expand the YMI model across other art forms as well as provide music to CYP from disadvantaged communities through ongoing founding to Sistema Scotland.

The Youth Arts Fund (YAF) in 2021, which for 2021/22 includes some elements of YMI, is broadened in reach to include the wider youth arts sector.[7] While established initially for a year to address the youth arts' sectors struggles resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is now considerable attention on how this support to the wider youth arts sector could be sustained while maintaining existing support to music education, (e.g., by extending YAF while maintaining YMI as a core component within it).

This evaluation thus provides an opportunity to critically explore in-depth what happened in this year, what worked well and what less so, what forms of delivery were more or less effective in achieving YMI's outcomes; and to extract learning for the government, Creative Scotland and the sector, in order to inform YMI's future amid this context of change.

To address these different needs, the evaluation firstly seeks to understand YMI's impact during this time, with a focus on how it has reached its three key aims and connected outcomes, based on a set of aligned research questions (as set out in the Evaluation Framework, see Figure 2):

- *Participants – How many people are benefitting?*
- *Profile – Who are the people who benefit from YMI?*
- *Outcome – What difference is YMI making to the lives of CYP and communities?*
- *Employment – What jobs, training and volunteering opportunities is the YMI supporting directly?*

Secondly, the evaluation addresses several additional research questions, to extract specific learning for the programme going forward:

- *What is the value of YMI focusing on working with specific target participants?*
- *Which YMI delivery methods are more (or less) effective in achieving YMI's stated outcomes?*
- *How do the findings connect with those of the wider music education review 'what's going on now' and the MEPG's music manifesto for Scotland?*

[6] https://www.rcs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Music-Manifesto-01-03-21.pdf.

[7] YMI elements included in YAF are: Access to Music Making (=YAF Access Fund), Strengthening Youth Music (=YAF Targeted Fund) and YMI's workforce development structures

…and to understand the impact COVID-19 has had on the sector:

— *How has COVID-19 impacted the sector and YMI and how valuable was the subsequent support offered? Were there any positives/ learning in the sectors' response to the pandemic? Where is the sector on the road to recovery, and what is needed to regain sustainability?*

1.3 Our approach

The evaluation focused on a number of key steps to ensure that relevant insights are gained and to develop an informative report that provides a real sense of the programme's scope and impact.

Development of an Evaluation Framework

As a basis for the research and reporting, we developed an Evaluation Framework including YMI's key aims, existing short-term outcomes and indicators. The resulting framework was used as a basis on which to collate and analyse the quantitative and qualitative data provided by the projects, enabling us to respond in our analysis to the key questions outlined in the brief.

Data analysis

This was followed by the collection, collation, cleaning and analysis of the End of Project (EOP) report data provided for three programme strands. The quantitative data was collated and analysed in the form of excel spreadsheets, whilst the qualitative information contained within the EOP reports was analysed using NVivo software. This enables the analysis of qualitative data in the form of coding of dominant themes alongside the use of examples and quotes.

Depth interviews with six projects

In parallel, the secondary data analysis was complemented with primary research in the form of interviews with six projects. These were chosen, based on our review of the EOP reports, with a view to focussing on some of the more complex questions and themes that the research project is exploring, while including a range of YMI activity and different geographic areas of Scotland.

The information gained from these interviews is presented in the report as short thematic case studies that inform the outcomes included in the framework.

1.4 Evaluation Framework

The final Evaluation Framework is based on YMI's key aims, which have been connected with the existing short-term programme outcomes. These have then been linked with the key research questions set out in the ITT as well as a set of research indicators.

To ensure the project is embedded within its wider context, some of the indicators used in the previous years' evaluation have been repeated, as well as some of the indicators used in the current evaluation of the Youth Arts Fund (2020-2022), with which YMI activity overlaps. In addition, the framework spells out how YMI contributes to the aims of a number of key government policies and strategies, including Scotland's 2020 Cultural Strategy, Scotland's National Youth Strategy *Time to Shine*, Scotland's National Performance Framework and Curriculum for Excellence.

Given that the research undertaken for this evaluation is primarily based on the existing End of Project reports, reporting on the identified indicators is dependent on the information available. Where quantitative data gaps are identified, insight is provided through available qualitative information, including the interviews. Meanwhile, indicators with limited current information should, to a certain extent, be seen as 'aspirational', providing useful insight into potential future YMI data gathering going forward.

Figure 2 YMI Evaluation Framework 2019-2020

YMI Aims	YMI short-term Outcomes (changes seen over one year)	Reporting indicators (indicators in blue link to Youth Arts Fund evaluation framework; indicators in orange based on 2018/19 evaluation[8])	Contribution to wider policies/ strategies
1. Create **access to high quality music making opportunities** for CYP, particularly those that **would not normally have the chance** to participate	1. CYP have more opportunities to take part in enjoyable and quality music-making activities 2. CYP who would not normally have the chance to participate take part in music-making activities	*Research Q - Participants: how many people are benefitting?* — No of participants in YMI projects — No. of opportunities provided by YMIs for music making — Evidence of delivery of projects by highly skilled practitioners — Participants enjoyed the opportunities they participated in *Research Q: Profile - who are the people who benefit from YMI?* — Demographics of participants (ethnicity, age, location) — No of participants living in poverty or residing in areas of social and economic deprivation — No of participants who had not taken part in similar activity previously — Projects evidence interesting and innovative approaches to reach and engage new CYP *Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic* — YMI projects were able to reach out to CYP from groups that are more difficult to reach despite the constraints of the pandemic — Organisations found new ways to reach out to CYP in response to the constraints of the pandemic	**Cultural Strategy** — Extend opportunities that enable people to take part in culture — Open up potential of culture as transformative opportunity across society **Time to Shine** — To address inequalities and develop mechanisms which allow access for all **National Performance Framework** — CYP: We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential — Communities: We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe — Culture: We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely — Poverty: We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally

[8] https://www.creativescotland.com/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/86252/YMI-Impact-Report-2018_19-FINAL.pdf

YMI Aims	YMI short-term Outcomes (changes seen over one year)	Reporting indicators (indicators in blue link to Youth Arts Fund evaluation framework; indicators in orange based on 2018/19 evaluation[8])	Contribution to wider policies/ strategies
2. Enable CYP to **achieve their potential** in/ through music making	3. CYP develop their music and music-making skills (CfE: successful learners)	*Research Q: Outcome - What difference is YMI making to the lives of CYP & communities?* — No./% of participants who demonstrated music skills development — CYP report learning new music skills/ skills & confidence in their chosen instrument — Practitioners note a development of the participant's music making skills	**Cultural Strategy** — Extend opportunities that enable people to take part in culture — Open up potential of culture as transformative opportunity across society — Celebrate Scotland's extraordinary cultural contributions — Place culture as central consideration across all policy areas
	4. CYP develop their skills for life, learning and work (CfE: effective contributors, confident individuals)	— Practitioners note a development of the participants' wider transferable skills development (including e.g., social skills, team cooperation, communication) — Practitioners note a development of participants ability to learn and work (including e.g., concentration, perseverance, listening, creativity, etc.) — CYP report feeling more confident — CYP report feeling better able to express themselves	**Time to Shine** — To create and develop mechanisms to nurture and celebrate ambition, enthusiasm and talent.
	5. CYP increase their awareness of music and culture across Scotland, the UK and the world (CfE: responsible citizens)	— CYP report increased knowledge/ awareness of music and culture in Scotland/ UK/world	**National Performance Framework** — CYP: We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential — Communities: We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe — Culture: We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely — Education: We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
	6. CYP influence or lead youth music opportunities and have their voice heard in design and delivery (CfE: responsible citizens)	— No of activities/ projects that were either youth-led or co-created with CYP — No of CYP who took part played in active role in forming projects (through e.g., participation in advisory groups, helping to run end of project performances, etc.) — CYP report feeling that they are heard	**Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)** — Contributing to the development of CYP to become successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens
		Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic — YMI helped reduce CYP's sense of isolation during the pandemic — YMI supported CYP's mental and physical health and wellbeing throughout the pandemic	

YMI Aims	YMI short-term Outcomes (changes seen over one year)	Reporting indicators (indicators in blue link to Youth Arts Fund evaluation framework; indicators in orange based on 2018/19 evaluation[8])	Contribution to wider policies/ strategies
3. Support the **development of the youth music sector** for the benefit of CYP via training/ CPD	7. People delivering youth music develop their skills and confidence 8. Organisations in the music sector and beyond work together to create progression opportunities that strengthen the youth music sector for the benefit of CYP	*Research Q: Employment - What jobs, training, and volunteering opportunities is the YMI supporting directly?* — No. of paid project employees directly supported — No. of training/volunteering opportunities made available — No. of artists and creative practitioners trained — No. of teachers and/or setting support staff trained — No of volunteers supported/ trained — People delivering projects rate their skills and confidence in delivering music-making projects more highly following participation — Practitioners report positively on the impact of YMI CLPL[9] and training resources on their skills and confidence in delivering music making activities for CYP *Research Q: Outcome - What difference is YMI making to the youth music sector?* — No. of new partnerships — Projects share knowledge and learnings across the sector — Practitioners report on the availability of new progression routes *Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic* — YMI helped organisations to survive, adapt and remain resilient throughout the COVID-19 pandemic — YMI helped the sector come together during the pandemic	**Cultural Strategy** — Develop conditions and skills for culture to thrive, so it is protected and produced for the enjoyment and enrichment of all present and future generations — Value, trust and support creative people **Time to Shine** — To create and develop infrastructure for the CYP arts sector and ensure continuous quality improvement **National Performance Framework** — Culture: We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely — Education: We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society — Fair Work and Business: We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone

Additional/ summative research questions

— *To what extent were YMI's aims and outcomes delivered in the reporting period? Which YMI delivery methods are more or less effective in achieving YMI's stated outcomes?*

— *What is the value of YMI focusing on working with specific target participants? What can be learned from the projects around working with target groups?*

— *How has COVID-19 impacted the programme and how valuable was the support offered? Were there any positives/ learning in the sectors' response to the pandemic? What is needed to regain sustainability?*

— *How do the findings connect with other cultural and wider policy outcomes as well as the wider music education review 'what's going on now' and the MEPG's music manifesto for Scotland?*

[9] Career-long professional learning

2. Findings

This evaluation period represents 77 projects for which End of Project return forms (EOPs) were received. The data and information presented within this chapter section is based on these forms, and includes:

- 33 Formula Fund (FF) projects (via 32 Local Authorities + Jordanhill School) – taking place in 2019-2020
- 41 Access to Music Making (AMM) projects – taking place between 2016 and 2020 (with EOP reports submitted between August 2019 and December 2020); and
- 3 Strengthening Youth Music (SYM) projects – taking place between 2018 and 2020 (with EOP reports submitted between August 2019 and December 2020).

A list of all AMM and SYM projects included in the reporting period can be found in the appendix.

This represents considerably fewer AMM and SYM projects then in the previous reporting period, where findings were based 70 AMM projects and 6 SYM projects. This is predominantly the result of a large number of projects, which were delayed or extended beyond the reporting period due to struggling to deliver their activity during the COVID-19 lockdown period.[10] These will be captured in the next YMI evaluation 2020/21, which will include all projects for which EOP's were submitted between January 2021 and July 2022.

Indeed, review of the AMM and SYM reports listed in the Appendix shows that only few of the projects included in this report had any delivery take place since the start of the first COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020 (12 out of 44, with several ending in March or April 2020). In reading the following report, it is worth noting that this differs considerably from the FF projects included in this report, which all took place throughout the first Scottish lockdown and into summer 2021. This means that the FF projects reported on were considerably more affected by COVID-19 than most of the AMM and SYM projects included here. How AMM and SYM project numbers were affected by COVID should become clearer in the next scheduled YMI evaluation.

2.1 Creating access for all

The first section of the Findings chapter focuses on YMI's first key aim of creating access to high quality music making opportunities for children and young people, particularly those who would not normally have the chance to participate. As such, it focuses on the following two research questions in order to understand YMI's impact on its first two short-term outcomes:

Research Q	Short-term outcome
How many people are benefiting?	CYP have more opportunities to take part in enjoyable and quality music-making activities
Profile - who are the people who benefit from YMI?	CYP who would not normally have the chance to participate take part in music-making activities

In consideration of the constraints and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic during 2019 and 2020, in answering to the questions and outcomes above, the section also looks at if:

- YMI projects were able to reach out to CYP from groups that are more difficult to reach despite the constraints of the pandemic; and
- organisations found new ways to reach out to CYP in response to the constraints of the pandemic.

[10] Around 70 AMM and SYM should have been included in this reporting period; a combination of projects which had planned to finish within the set reporting period and a few which were delayed from previous funding rounds. Of those, around 30 projects from 2016/17 to 2019/20 were not included, as they did not complete their activities and reporting in time for inclusion (by December 2020) due to COVID-19-related delays. Nine projects remain incomplete at the time of reporting (November 2021) and three have suspended their activities indefinitely. This leaves the 41 projects, which have been included in this report.

2.1.1 Young people have more opportunities to take part in music-making activities

Total participant figures increased, with a significant increase in Scottish Book Trust participants making up for a slight decrease in participants to Formula Fund and other Access to Music Making projects. Average numbers of Access to Music Making participants have remained stable.

Looking first at the number of participants who benefited, together, these projects reached 278,726 children and young people. This included 182,409 participants via FF projects and 95,732 via AMM projects. The vast majority of AMM participants were reached via the Scottish Book Trust's (SBT) YMI-funded projects (88,736), with this including 30,000 visitors to an online resource provided by the Trust.

Figure 3 YMI 2019/20: Number of participants

	FF	AMM	SYM	Total
EOPs	33	41	3	**77**
YP involved across all projects	182,409	95,732 Including — SBT: 88,736 participants (including 30,000 visitors to an online resource) — All other projects: 6,996	585	**278,726**
Average number of YP involved per project	5,528	175 *(excluding SBT)*	n/a	

Source: BOP Consulting (2021).

The total participant figure for 2019/20 is slightly higher than in the past four years (see Figure 4). The number of participants of the FF strand was however slightly lower than in previous years, with this overall increase resulting from a significant increase in the number of participants reached via AMM. A closer look at the AMM figures shows that this rise came despite the significantly lower number of EOPs (and i.e., projects) included in 2019/20 compared to the previous period. Instead, it is explained specifically by a significant increase in SBT project participants (it is worth noting that this would still be the case if removing the 30,000 online participants included in the SBT's figures from the equation).

Overall, figures among the remaining AMM projects have however remained stable. While recording an overall drop, explained to a large degree by the significantly lower number of projects included in this reporting period compared to the last, the average per project this year is only slightly lower at 175 participants per project in 2019/20 compared to 182 per project in 2018/19 (see

Figure 5). This is not unexpected, given that most projects completed their activity before the start of the first COVID-19 lockdown.

Figure 4 YMI participant figures over the years

Strand	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
FF	182,409	199,372	195,296	202,210	215,219
AMM	95,732 (SBT: 88,736)	44,239 (SBT: 31,676)	45,357	40,604	41,235
SYM	585	509	86	0	9,078
Total	**278,726**	**244,120**	**240,739**	**242,814**	**265,532**

Source: BOP Consulting (2021) & Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (2019)

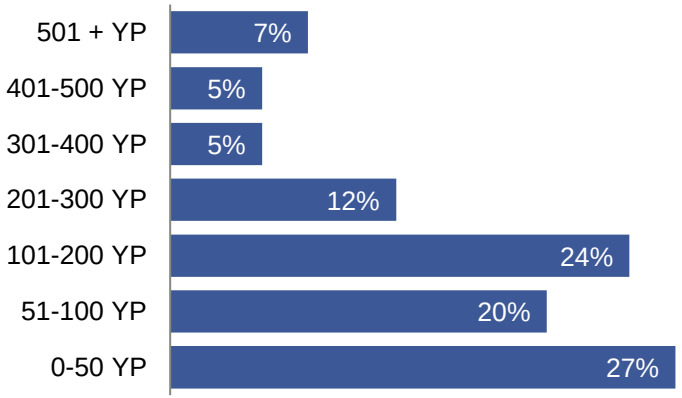
Figure 5 AMM: 2019/20 compared to 2018/19

Funding period	EOPs	Total AMM participants	Average (excluding SBT)
2019/20	41	95,732	175
		Excluding SBT: 6,996	
2018/19	70	44,239	182
		Excluding SBT: 12,565	

Source: BOP Consulting (2021) & Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (2019)

As these figures suggest, looking in more detail at the size of AMM projects, most work with considerably fewer participants than the SBT – 71% of all projects reached between 0-200 participants, with only 7% reaching more than 501 participants.

Figure 6 AMM: Number of participants reached by projects



Source: BOP Consulting (2021). N=41

YMI achieves regional spread - while the largest proportion of funds goes to more densely populated areas, a small number of YMI out-of-school projects can be found in most Local Authorities.

By way of example, additional analysis of all grants that were handed out in 2019/20 shows that YMI activity takes place across the breadth of Scotland (see Figure 18 and Figure 19 in the Appendix).

Unsurprisingly, the larger urban areas such as Glasgow and Edinburgh, South Lanarkshire and Aberdeen/ Aberdeenshire recorded the largest number of projects. Although the largest proportion of funds thus goes to Scotland's more densely populated areas, this simply reflects the higher number of residents in these areas who are likely project participants. Alongside this, almost all other Local Authorities bar a small number are home to at least one AMM or SYM project (alongside the FF activity taking place in all Local Authorities). Suggesting that the YMI offer is accessible to organisations – and thus participants – across Scotland, including its more rural areas.

While a large number of projects struggled to deliver all their intended activities, largely due to COVID-19, many were able to continue some level of provision through adapting to digital teaching.

Analysis shows that there was a more varied picture in 2019/20 compared to previous years in terms of whether projects had delivered all their intended activities (see Figure 7), which can largely be explained by the pandemic. Indeed, this is exemplified by the fact that many of the AMM and SYM projects that would have fallen into the reporting period extended or delayed their delivery (and thus reporting) period in order to address the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 lockdown and will therefore be captured in the next YMI evaluation.

Considering the data from the projects that returned their EOPs in the reporting period, across all strands, slightly less than half of all projects (46%) reported delivering all their activity as intended (compared to 63% in 2018/19) and 51% reported delivering less than intended, with only two projects reporting

delivering more activities than intended. By comparison, in 2018/19 only 10% reported delivering less than intended.

Looking at the individual strands shows that in particular FF projects struggled to deliver all their intended activity across the period, with 67% delivering less than intended, compared to 37% of AMM projects. This reflects the fact that many of the AMM and SYM projects included here had completed delivery before the pandemic, while all FF projects were still in the delivery phase when the first lockdown started

Figure 7: Activities delivered as intended

Q: Did you deliver all the activities that you intended to deliver?

	FF		AMM		SYM		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
As intended	8	24%	23	61%	2	67%	33	46%
Less than intended	22	67%	14	37%	1	33%	37	51%
More than intended	1	3%	1	3%	0	0%	2	3%

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

Relatedly, the FF data for 2019/20 shows that while the majority of local authorities were able to deliver on the aim of each pupil participating in one years' free music tuition by the time they left primary school, a sizeable minority (33%) indicated that this was not achieved (Figure 8). As a result of this inability to directly deliver to pupils, 7,417 pupils across eight local authorities did not receive 12 hours of music making activity by the time they left primary school in 2019/20.

These figures provide a likely reason for the lower overall FF participant figures and slightly lower average AMM figures this year as shown above.

Figure 8 FF: Full year tuition achieved

Q: In 2019-20, had all pupils in your local authority participated in one year's free music tuition by the time they left primary school?

	N	%
Yes	21	64%
No	11	33%

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

As the explanations provided in the End of Project monitoring forms (EOPs) make clear, this significant discrepancy in projects' ability to deliver their planned activities is largely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic from early 2020 onwards, with many organisations listing the number of projects or activities they were unable to (fully) deliver due to the restrictions imposed by lockdown. Unsurprisingly, these included activities such as in-person sessions, performance opportunities for the young people and visits to concerts and live music events.

That being said, in many instances, projects were able to pivot to deliver digital activities to lessen this impact. Projects commented on the value of continuing provision in some form, with some signifying that the new format allowed for unexpected benefits and learning both for the young people (see section 2.2) and the teachers/ specialists involved (see section 2.3). While may projects struggled to engage young people consistently in digital activities, citing the similarities between schoolwork and additional activity provision during the pandemic, others found this to be incredibly successful, broadening their reach.

One project described the value of continuing to engage young people digitally as part of future project delivery, with the potential for taking a more blended approach to be able to reach more schools and young people than previously (see also YMI Story 2):

> "It helped us explore other ways of delivering the program, for example teaching remotely or online will potentially enable us to reach more schools and pupils. As we live in a rural area, we

spend a lot of time travelling and we could run lessons for more pupils by using MS Teams. We would still want to go and visit the schools, but we could take on a supporting role, visiting at the beginning to kick start the learning and at the end to help pull together a performance or end of project review.

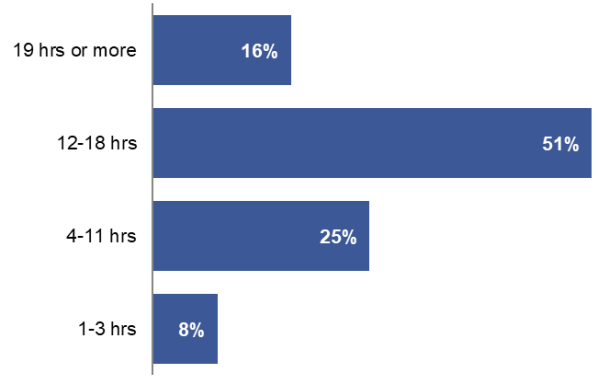
Activities that were successfully delivered showed similar levels of involvement to previous years across the strands.

Looking lastly at the *level of* involvement that young people had through the activities that were delivered, this is indicated through the number of hours of involvement received for FF; and the nature of the involvement received for AMM and SYM.

This data highlights that while in-school projects funded via the FF strand struggled considerably more due to COVID-19 to deliver all their planned activities, the activities that were successfully delivered differed only little from those in the past year. Compared to last year a larger proportion of school pupils received only 1-3 hours of tuition and a smaller proportion received 19 hours or more. However, overall, there was only a 5% reduction from 2018/19 in the proportion of school pupils that received 12 hours or more of YMI funded music activities (67% in 2019/20 compared to 72% in the previous year, see Figure 9).

Levels of involvement were equally similar for the out-of-school projects delivered via AMM and SYM in 2019/20. It is worth considering the SBT's activities here, which this year accounts for the vast majority of AMM participants, separately to all other projects. SBT reported 19,825 (22%) 'ongoing drop-in activity', accounted for entirely by Bookbug sessions, 445 (1%) 'ongoing planned activity' and 38,439 (43%) 'other' activity, which included 30,000 visitors to an online resource. While these figures look somewhat different to last year, where the majority of participants went to ongoing drop-in activities (again including mostly children with their parents attending Bookbug sessions), the 2019/20 figures have to be seen as incomplete: the level of involvement was 'unknown' for 34% of activity, as nine Local Authorities were unable to provide the data due to COVID-19-related reasons.

Figure 9 FF: Hours of involvement received by participants



Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

In terms of the remaining AMM projects (see Figure 10), the majority provided one-off activity for participants (47%), slightly more than in the previous year (40%), while a slightly higher proportion than in the previous year offered ongoing planned involvement (35% in 2019/20 compared to 31% in 2018/19) or ongoing drop-in activity (14% compared to 14%). Meanwhile the majority of SYM projects provided participants with one-off activity (79%).

Excluding SBT, the majority of participants who took part in ongoing, planned AMM activities furthermore completed their involvement this year (85% overall[11]); this was slightly lower than in the previous year, where 91% completed their activity. While difficulties in maintaining involvement may have been exacerbated by the constraints of the COVID-19 lockdowns for some projects, comments as in previous years hinted at a range of reasons that make

[11] This includes only those projects which provided data both on number of participants to ongoing, planned involvement, and data on completion. Alongside SBT, three further projects that did have ongoing planned involvement are therefore not included in this calculation.

ongoing involvement difficult, such as illness, family commitments, chaotic home lives, loss of interest.

Figure 10 AMM & SYM: Level of involvement offered

Q: *What level of involvement did each young person have?*

	AMM (excluding SBT[12])			SYM	
	2019/20		2018/19		
	N	%	%	N	%
One-off activity	3,981	47%	40%	460	79%
Ongoing drop-in activity	1,384	16%	14%	20	3%
Ongoing planned involvement	2,984	35%	31%	67	11%
Other	116	1%	13%	38	6%

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

Feedback from the projects suggest at their enjoyability; however, both quality and enjoyability are challenging to evidence based on data shared by projects.

Feedback from the EOPs provides much descriptive content around the activities undertaken, with the frequent use of terms such as 'high quality' or 'enjoyable' (repeating the terminology from the outcome). However, in most cases this isn't supported by specific evidence of what makes these activities high quality or enjoyable. One reason for this is the subjective nature of these terms – whether an activity is enjoyed or found to be of quality is after all highly individual. This means that while there are many instances of individuals being reported as enjoying their involvement, it is difficult based on the standard of data shared to indicate what makes activities more or less enjoyable, or if some activities are more enjoyable than others.

Clearly, in many cases, the music making opportunities provided through YMI are very social activities, bringing young people together and providing opportunities to make new friends. Some reflections hinted at the importance of creating a welcoming environment with an openness to letting young people be themselves and letting them engage with others in their own time, to increase enjoyability:

> "Making the sessions enjoyable has been about establishing an informal welcoming environment for the young people. The music sessions enable young people to engage without necessarily having to speak much, this has been particularly good for the more nervous young people who concentrate on the drumming until they are more ready to engage.

Others focused on how the opportunity to participate in YMI-funded activity was providing enjoyable activities as a respite from additional challenges that young people are experiencing:

> "Feedback from the Carers was again very positive saying that when they came home they were keen to tell them about their sessions and the experiences they had. The young people we worked with have had traumatic experiences in their young lives so giving them something fun and interesting is invaluable to supporting their own progress in life.

> "I'm not going to apologise for being this cheesy: he has been to a couple of psychology appointments but it's just not his thing. He hasn't liked other mental health groups. Music is how he connects. It's not often someone phones me to tell me how much they've enjoyed something. He said "it was magic, he

[12] This table also excludes one project that did not specify level of involvement.

loved it, and he'll definitely be back next week. (Community Psychiatric Nurse)

Very few projects across YMI provided details on how they determine the quality of the provision, with the assessment of quality in music education a broad topic, across formal and non-formal, school and non-school based settings. If 'quality and enjoyability' are to remain key tenets of the first outcome in the YMI outcomes framework, then it may be useful to work further with grantees on how this can be explored, measured and reported in projects.

2.1.2 Young people who would not normally have the chance to participate take part in music-making activities

Formula Fund projects continue to prioritise children and young people with additional support needs and those living in poverty or residing in areas of social and economic deprivation.

Aligned with a number of Scottish Government plans and strategies (as set out in the Evaluation Framework above), YMI specifically aims for its funded projects to target their music activities at those CYP who would not otherwise have opportunities to engage. This is the case both for activities delivered via local authority services to schools via the Formula Fund as well as for activities delivered outside schools via Access to Music Making. In doing so, YMI specifies a number of priority groups:

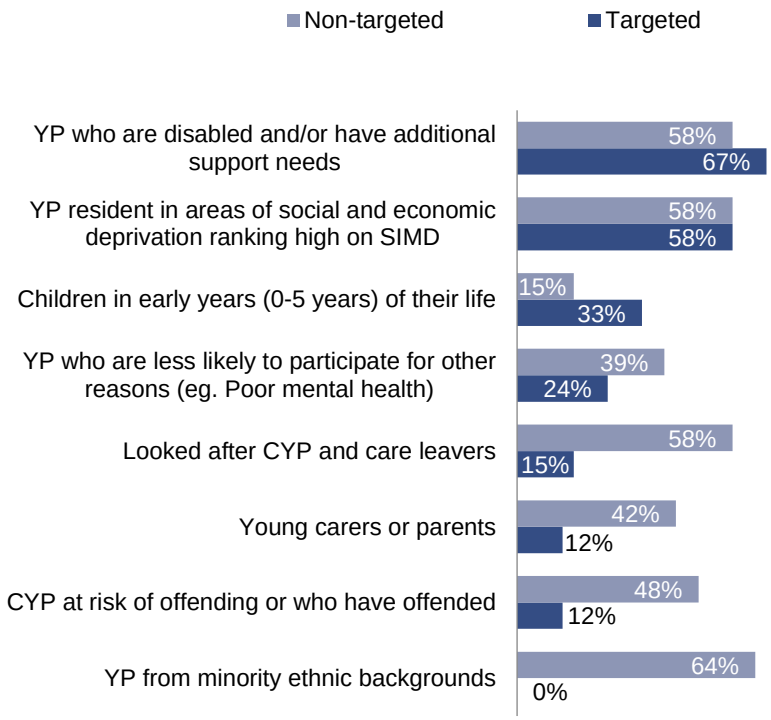
- Looked after CYP and care leavers
- Young people in areas of social and economic deprivation ranking high on SIMD
- Young people from minority ethnic backgrounds
- Young people who are disabled and/or have additional support needs
- Young people who are at risk of offending or who have previously offended
- Young carers or parents
- Children in the early years (0-5) of their life
- Young people who are less likely to participate for other reasons, for example, because of poor mental health

In 2019/20, the 33 services funded via FF most commonly pro-actively targeted their work at young people who are disabled or have additional support needs (67% of all granted projects, see Figure 11) and young people living in poverty or residing in areas of social and economic deprivation (58% of all granted projects). The next largest target group were children in their early years (33%). This picture was very similar to the previous year, with these three target groups similarly ranking first to third place and can be explained by Local Authority's legal obligation to ensure equal access to those with disabilities (by e.g., working in special needs schools) and to direct additional resources to where they are most needed (e.g., the more deprived areas).

Looking then at the young people the projects reached across all their activity, the picture is very different (see Figure 11, 'non-targeted'). While the target group which was most reached was 'young people from minority ethnic backgrounds' (67%), followed by 'young people with additional support needs', 'young people from areas of social and economic deprivation' and 'looked after CYP' (58% each), overall there was a much more equal distribution across all target groups.

Review of the comments provided in the EOPs suggests that this is explained simply by the fact that the music services work with schools across their Local Authorities, which inevitably include young children from these categories, many of which may moreover fall into more than one of the categories.

Figure 11 Formula Fund: Project focus area (Targeted and Non-Targeted)



Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

Access to Music Making projects continue to predominantly target and reach CYP from areas of social and economic deprivation, but projects struggle to provide reliable data in this area.

The largest proportion of AMM projects in turn targeted young people from areas of social and economic deprivation (95%), significantly more than the next three highest-reported target groups (CYP who are disabled or have additional support needs, 44%; looked after CYP and care leavers, 41%; and CYP from minority ethnic backgrounds, 41%). In the past two years, similarly, by far the largest number of projects targeted young people from areas of social and economic deprivation, followed by those with support needs and then 'looked after children'. When excluding the SBT data, this finding remains.

Reflecting this, the target group that was reached most across the projects as also CYP resident in areas of social and economic deprivation. However, it should be noted that many projects were unable to provide precise, if any, information on demographics, and the data on CYP reached across the target groups should therefore be considered as indicative only. The SBT reached almost 20,000 'children in the early years of life' through Bookbug sessions and a further 385 through an antenatal pilot project. However, this data was not included in the overall calculations, as SBT was unable to provide information on the other categories reached.[13] This makes it difficult to compare the picture with last reporting period, where 73% of participants reached were 'children in their early years', with the inclusion of Bookbug, with all other categories at under 10%. However, as in this reporting period, 'young people from areas of social and economic deprivation' made up the next highest group, at 9%, previously, too.

[13] Given the large number of CYP reached by the SBT overall, including the number of 'children in early years of life' reached by the organisation, while the number of other target groups that the organisation reached remains unknown and thus unaccounted for, inclusion would heavily skew the picture towards this one category, with no way of knowing whether this was an accurate picture.

Figure 12 AMM: Target groups

	% projects that targeted these groups	% of YP reached across all projects in each group[14] (excluding SBT)
Looked after CYP and care leavers	41%	3%
YP resident in areas of social and economic deprivation ranking high on SIMD	95%	51%
YP from minority ethnic backgrounds	41%	18%
YP who are disabled and/or have additional support needs	44%	13%
YP at risk of offending or who have offended	20%	3%
Young carers or parents	22%	3%
Children in the early years (0-5 years) of their life	20%	9%

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

Only one SYM project provided information on which groups it had targeted: young people with additional support needs, young carers or parents and children in the early years of life. Two projects in turn provided information on which groups they had reached, although data was not complete. The largest number was those with additional support needs (500), followed by children in early years of life (75) and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds (30).

Given the evident challenges that projects face in providing this data – with some resorting to guesswork or rough percentages and others providing data on some categories but not others although they worked with them, compounded by the issue that the categories are not mutually exclusive, it would be worth considering how better to explore work with different targeted demographics in the future.

More generally, it is suggested that ongoing work to better understand and represent the ways that YMI projects are targeting or working with young people from specific demographics is continued and linked to Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) developments across Creative Scotland.

Finally, out of school projects also provide information on gender breakdown. As last year, across both AMM and SYM the split between male and female participants was broadly equal, with a slightly higher proportion of female participants for AMM projects (54%, compared to 45% male).

Projects address the challenging circumstances and needs of the young people they work with through pro-active recruitment, ongoing support and flexible approaches to maintain engagement.

Insight gained through feedback in the EOPs and through the interviews conducted for this report highlights both the challenges that working with young people experiencing additional challenges can bring. Bearing this in mind, it is all the more notable to consider that the majority of participants who took part in ongoing, planned AMM activities completed their involvement this year.

Both Wheatley Care (YMI Story 1) and Artsplay Highland (YMI Story 2) highlighted the need for delivery organisations to be pro-active in order to start a relationship with participants experiencing additional challenges in the first place, by actively working together with organisations already working with these young people (here, community organisations and nurseries). This pro-active engagement remains ongoing, with a need for continued efforts and empathy on the side of the delivery organisations to maintain their relationships with the participants and ensure their ongoing involvement. This went from more

[14] This data is highly indicative only: many projects could provide only partial information on target groups reached, provided estimated proportions, minimum figures or highlighted the occasionally subjective nature of these categories and the difficulties in providing accurate data.

mundane support such as providing travel fares to the need to address complex confidence, anxiety or motivation issues through supporting young people in coming to sessions as well as engaging with participants in between sessions to keep the momentum going. Smaller groups and structured one-to-ones were highlighted by a number of projects as providing a valuable format in which tutors are more easily able to build and nurture sustained relationships with young people.

Projects also reported the importance for activities to be set up flexibly to accommodate fluctuating attendance: *"The programme and progression of sessions is flexible enough to accommodate people missing a few sessions"* and *"The ability to book and drop into sessions flexibly worked best for most of our participants".* Reflecting this, Wheatley Care for example found that online sessions in smaller groups worked well for some of their participants who may on some days struggle to find the confidence or energy to come to attend to sessions but found enough motivation to log in to Zoom sessions from their bedroom. They are now planning to continue a more flexible approach, blending both online and in-person sessions.

YMI Story 1: Wheatley Care – breaking down barriers to participation

Reported by Zofia Piotrowska, Community Engagement and Resilience Lead

Wheatley Care (formerly Loretto Care) is a care organisation offering care and support services to a range of different target groups, including providing a homelessness service. The music project, "Ensemble", was able to link in and collaborate with the core staff providing direct care to vulnerable individuals. Staff signposted young people to the project and supported them to take part.

The primary target group for the YMI funded project were 16–25-year-olds who came from areas of social and economic deprivation, have disabilities, have previously offended or are at risk of offending, are care leavers or come from an ethnic minority background, including refugees. The aim was to *"target those who are traditionally hard to reach and who have no opportunities to engage in music making opportunities like this"* elsewhere.

In recruiting for the project, Wheatley Care tried to ***"be as present as possible"***. Most referrals came through the Wheatley Care staff, who were asked to talk about the project to the young people at their services. The project also partnered with a youth community support agency in Glasgow who work with many asylum seekers and other very marginalised people, and distributed posters and leaflets.

However, recruiting participants during COVID-19 proved more difficult than usual – previously, the project team would go out to organisations to do **one-off taster sessions** with young people, which was highly effective in reaching new participants, which has not been possible since the pandemic started. As a result, the project this year worked with considerably less participants (20) than in the previous year (49).

However, it is **not just a case of one-time recruitment, but an ongoing effort to maintain participation**. Travel costs are covered for all participants regardless of how far they come from (some came to Glasgow from Falkirk) to eliminate this barrier. In some cases, Wheatley Care's Health & Wellbeing Assistants were brought in to **support participants to and from the workshops to eliminate any barriers** related to anxiety, confidence and motivation. *"Some have never travelled so far before. Depending on a person's confidence in travelling, sometimes we just need to remind them of dates and pick-up times or pick them up from the taxi to help them with fear of entering the building. For others it involved support staff coming along to the sessions.* **In between sessions, the team worked to keep the momentum going**: *"Our project coordinator spent so much time on the phone to keep the momentum going, to get to know the young people and to gain their trust.* ***It is not just coming up with a great***

activity and waiting for participants to come – we have to go out to them, and work with them*, before they attend the actual sessions. Before we got on to the song writing, there was a lot of work just getting people to know each other, feel comfortable with each other."*

In response to the lockdown restrictions, activities reverted to zoom sessions, which were **changed to smaller group sessions** as this was found to work better and be less exhausting than having all participants join at the same time. This approach gave young people more opportunities to be heard as well as having the advantage of being very flexible. While many initially felt apprehensive of using zoom, in particular the camera functions, they ultimately found that it made **participation easier for those who may have struggled to find the energy or motivation to attend** a full session, as ***"even on a bad day, they [knew they] could turn up as they were****. That helped a lot".* As a result, Wheatley Care found they gained new insights into their delivery methods, *"learning that some people prefer the format of smaller groups".* They are thus planning to continue using this blended approach, keeping both an **online element as well as in-person meetings for those who wish**, or using this first as a transition to the latter, once the young people have got to know each other and gained confidence to attend.

YMI Story 2: Artsplay Highland – music as a steppingstone in disadvantaged young children's' early education

Reported by Monica Neeling, Artistic Director, Artsplay Highland

Artsplay Highland delivers music workshops in nursery settings. They worked in around 19 nurseries, offering a series of 25 workshops in each, run by a regular music teacher together with guest artists who would base their art on the music. One session for example included a 'bubble man' who showed the children how to make bubbles and explained the science behind them, set to music – e.g., talking about the concepts of loud and quiet. The music specialists work closely together with the nursery staff to ensure their offer complements the nursery's programme and ties in with their themes and the children's' education.

In doing this work, Artsplay aims in particular to provide their offer to children living in areas of multiple deprivation, in order to ***"bring music into children's' lives who wouldn't usually get music;*** *who would have no other music specialist input. […] Music should be for everyone, not just for those who can afford it".* Indeed, based on a survey, Artsplay found that only around 1% of the children they reached received musical education from elsewhere.

To reach these children, Artsplay specifically approach nurseries situated **in areas that rank high on the Scottish indices for multiple deprivation**, and/ or nurseries where English is a second language for many children. As a well-known programme, they also often get approached by nurseries directly.

Within the nurseries, Artsplay in particular **target their offer at four-year-olds before they take their next step into primary education,** given the benefits of music education on acquiring a range of other skills (see below): *"our target groups are those who would benefit most. […] We want to give them a* ***great start before they begin school****"*. This is particularly important since *"those in disadvantaged areas are already behind with regard to their education by the time they go to nursery"*.

2.2 Enabling children and young people to achieve their potential in/ through music making

This section focuses on YMI's second aim of enabling children and young people to achieve their potential in and through music making. As such, it focuses on the following research question in order to understand YMI's impact on a number of related short-term outcomes which specify the areas of impact under consideration:

Research Q	Short-term outcome
Outcomes – what difference is YMI making to the lives of CYP and communities?	CYP develop their music and music-making skills
	CYP develop their skills for life, learning and work
	CYP increase their awareness of music and culture across Scotland, the UK and the world
	CYP influence or lead youth music opportunities and have their voice heard in design and delivery

In consideration of the constraints and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic during 2019 and 2020, in answering to the questions and outcomes above, the section also looks at if:

- YMI helped to reduce CYP's sense of isolation during the pandemic
- YMI supported CYP's mental and physical health and wellbeing throughout the pandemic.

2.2.1 Young people develop their music/ music making skills

Young people gain new, technical understandings of music, and take pride in developing their music-making skills.

Children and young people were able to develop a variety of skills in relation to musical practice and music-making across the full spectrum of YMI projects. An increase in young people's technical skills and musical understanding was highlighted by projects, including development in their ability to keep to a beat or rhythm, to listen and identify timbre and instruments accurately, and to find and accurately sing at pitch. A number of projects also referenced young people developing skills in composition, improvisation and song writing, providing them with an opportunity to express themselves through music. This was further enhanced through many young people's experience developing their capabilities in relation to playing musical instruments, and of how to perform as part of an ensemble or orchestra. As a result of their participation in YMI, many projects describe young people continuing to pursue the learning of an instrument, going on to take accredited courses and exams and participate in ensembles locally and further afield.

Although it is clear that steps are being made through projects to broaden and deepen CYP's opportunities to develop these skills, this was often found to be reported in quite descriptive, broad terms within EOP reports. Looking to the future, Creative Scotland may wish to consider how best to support YMI funded projects to represent musical development in less descriptive ways.

Performance opportunities are a valuable motivator for young people, developing their confidence and providing an opportunity to showcase their work.

A very high number of YMI projects involved young people participating in performance opportunities across a variety of scales, from showcasing their work to their peers, wider school and parents/guardians, through to performing for larger audiences as part of established events, festivals and competitions.

Providing CYP with opportunities to showcase their learning and creations to an audience can be seen to act as a goal for participants to work towards, motivating them to hone the skills they have developed to a high level that they can take pride in. One project described each component of project delivery as including *"the important and valued opportunity to perform, which drives confidence and levels of participation"* in young people.

Lockdown and COVID-19 restrictions could have resulted in the loss of this performance element which was shown to play a critical role within many projects, however many projects were able to adapt their work to ensure young people were still afforded this opportunity. In one case, young people,

professional musicians and members of the local community were encouraged to share recorded videos of their performances at home. These recordings were then combined to form an hour-long programme, and then shared via social media channels and hosted on a dedicated website. At the time of reporting, the recordings had reached over 100,000 people, an audience far larger than any young person might have expected at the start of their involvement in the project.

Home-learning has proved a challenge for projects, but not insurmountable, with parental support and provision of resources proving valuable to young people's engagement and progression.

As a result of projects being moved online a number of projects referenced increased engagement with the parents and guardians of participants taking part in the projects. Young people engaging in projects from home provided parents and guardians with an insight into YMI activity, and to witness the impact of that activity more overtly. One project described being able to develop stronger relationships and *"a more nuanced understanding of these projects and the benefits they can bring"*, enabling *"YMI projects to be delivered within a family learning context"*.

For many projects, a specific challenge encountered in shifting to online delivery was the initial inability (due to strict regulations in this area, which were later tuned down) for many YMI tutors and other practitioners to use cameras when interacting with the young people. As a result of this, there was a need for activity to be pre-recorded, which reduced the capacity of tutors to respond to the interests and needs of the young people they were working with in real time. This was the case when YMI activity initially moved online in East Dunbartonshire (YMI Story 3), which resulted in some drop off in attendance in the early stages, however the team worked hard to come up with innovative ways to overcome this challenge and continue to engage children. Eventually, participants and teachers were able to use the format to their advantage, with children able to rewatch tutors playing their instruments, thus enabling the learning process.

Dumfries and Galloway (YMI Story 4) noted the challenges home-based learning posed to ensuring that all young people were able to engage and have equitable access to music and music-making opportunities. As part of a project focused on music technology, young people used their devices at home to continue to engage in music creation; however, some did not have access to a device at home which would have allowed them to sustain this engagement whilst in lockdown (the issue of having to share a home device with siblings or parents was also mentioned by East Dunbartonshire). In order to overcome this, Dumfries and Galloway used funds to provide young people who needed them with devices to use at home to ensure that access to opportunities remained equal for all involved. The provision of access and adaptability in relation to this project was critical, as the YMI activity was described in some cases as being the only communication class teachers had with pupils who were not otherwise engaging consistently with school in home learning.

YMI Story 3: East Dunbartonshire – bringing music education into children's' homes during the pandemic

Reported by Scott Arnott, musician and Senior Instrumental Instructor, East Dunbartonshire Council IMS team

East Dunbartonshire provides music education in schools across the Council area, in particular *"trying to target schools who would not otherwise have such provision. There are quite a few pockets of serious deprivation in the area, so we go to schools that are not well resourced."* Much of the service's primary school work is supported by YMI.

When the service initially went online, there was a camera ban, meaning that lessons could be filmed and sent, but could not take place live. This meant that teachers had to be doubly creative both in drawing children in and providing their lessons: *"Engagement would have been better if we could have used cameras from the start, so we had a bit of a drop off. Engagement had a lot to do with the kids' availability of suitable devices. It was a huge minefield of rules and risk assessments."*

However, the team had the *"determination and passion*" to ensure that the children continued to **have some music in their life** and found new ways

to draw the children in. *"I would **record myself playing something and sent it** – almost like a promo video! It worked – it has to look good, digitally, to get them into it. I would send them **inspirational videos** [of drummers] and they would have them in five seconds. It was a really good way to engage the children. Previously I had to search the whole school just to find a CD player!"* One teacher was so successful at this, he *"transformed himself into a TV presenter!"*

Both teachers and children adapted quickly to the new set-up and found that online music lessons worked better than perhaps expected. *"Online sessions worked brilliantly! We could do **live playback, meaning the children could rewatch me playing.** I could get them to join in."* Scott also showed the children videos of his own gigs, giving them an insight into what is possible musically and the exciting activities their teachers are engaged in outside teaching. Given the success of these approaches, Scott believes that there will be an element of flexibility going forward, with a **mix of online and live lessons**.

Feedback from the headteachers was highly positive – *"it was a tough time, we were providing something at a time when it was really difficult to deliver education".* For the children in turn, "*quite often it was the **highlight of their day**."*

YMI Story 4: Dumfries and Galloway – adapting to online delivery to sustain contact with young people during the pandemic

Reported by Melanie Henry, Principal Teacher Youth Music Co-ordinator/ Instrumental Music Co-ordinator, Education and Learning Directorate, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Dumfries and Galloway run a variety of YMI supported musical projects, with an aim to provide young people with access to these opportunities from early years through to them going on to secondary school.

Lockdown proved challenging for projects; however Melanie reflected that Dumfries and Galloway's YMI programme was **able to reach more young people during COVID-19 through adapting their delivery to run online**. *"It was harder not seeing people face to face, building real life connections…but we could offer the project to more people than we could have if we were travelling to schools".*

Although it was recognised that online sessions did not provide the same experience as those delivered in person, projects were made **increasingly accessible through online delivery**. Examples of this include content **being engaged with by people from beyond the region**, and the online offer as providing an **opportunity to engage with young people who might ordinarily be more difficult to reach**.

"A real bonus from the work in 2019/20 is that now if we can't reach someone through their school because they don't attend, we are able to say would you like to join online. Some children can't access school for various reasons, and even though face to face is better because young people are able to build better relationships with tutors, if that isn't an option, joining online gives them a different approach...it doesn't just exclude them because they aren't there [in person]."

As a result of their success in reaching more young people through pivoting to online delivery, Dumfries and **Galloway intend to continue with an element of online delivery** alongside their face-to-face offer in future.

2.2.2 Young people develop their skills for life, learning and work

Through their participation in music-based activities, CYP developed transferable skills that will benefit them in the future.

In addition to developing skills related specifically to musical practice, a high number of projects reported the development of further skills in young people as a result of their participation in YMI projects. Transferable skills highlighted by projects included working as part of a team, timekeeping, patience, organisation, communication, negotiation, listening and leadership: skills that are translatable into other areas of life, with the potential for application both in school and education settings, and beyond. A number of projects also referenced the development of skills such as perseverance, dedication and resilience, which CYP developed through their commitment to learning new music-skills and instruments.

Several projects backed this up by referring to feedback received from teachers (either anecdotally or in some cases through survey data), with teachers reporting that the skills developed through young people's engagement in project activities impacted their work in core areas of the school curriculum, such as literacy and mathematics.

CYP develop greater levels of confidence in relation to their creativity and music-making, which translates into other areas.

Many projects moreover described the significant impact of YMI music-making opportunities in providing young people with the opportunity to build their self-esteem and confidence. Aided by tutors and musical practitioners working together with the participants to create collaborative and supportive environments, children and young people were seen to become more confident in sharing within their group or class, and in taking part in public performances to larger audiences. In some cases, CYP involved in this activity are *"exemplified as role models within their schools and communities"*, which further contributed to their confidence and sense of pride in their achievements.

In building such confidence, Artsplay Highland highlighted in particular to the space music activity provides in encouraging children to experiment and be creative confidently and without a fear of failure – an important lesson and tool throughout their life (see YMI Story 5).

YMI Story 5: Artsplay Highland – giving pre-schoolers creativity, confidence, and joy to support their learning

Reported by Monica Neeling, Artistic Director, Artsplay Highland

Artsplay focuses their offer at nursery children in their last year before primary school, working with those who will benefit most not only of the musical education per se, but of the wider benefits this has been shown to bring.

According to Monica, research has shown that children who engage in music gain in terms of **language development** – for example, children who can clap in a beat tend to be better readers, too. It also been shown to contribute to **social skills and motor skills** – *"it covers a lot of ground"*.

Aside from such 'skills for learning', Monica has found that their music sessions are also *"a great way to get the children to feel great, for their mental health, **expression and creativity**"*. With regard to the latter, *"starting music at a young age gives children the freedom to express themselves, to be creative, to find different ways to play an instrument. It **provides the capacity to try things** without getting them wrong. So, if you start that early, it will **bring out this capacity to try and experiment and be creative."***

Feedback from parents and children after end of year concerts and Artsplay's annual ceilidh event suggest that *"what the kids get out of it…creativity, listening skills, language development – particularly for Gaelic speaking children and those whose first language isn't English, and **confidence**. That is a huge one. At the beginning of the year, they may not sing at all, and later they sing on their own at home."*

Not least, the children enjoy what they are doing: asking for feedback, *"the biggest word that is used is fun"* – and this, says Monica, is crucial: *"it is so much more than a music session.* ***Once the children feel good about themselves, they are in a better state to learn****, too. We are* ***bringing the joy!"***

Children's pictures of how Music Matters made them feel

I like Ellen doing the bubbles. I feel good when we do the bubbles.

I'm singing the builgean beaga song. It makes me so happy.

Wheatley Care in turn experienced direct consequences of this surge in confidence among their participants, some of which had such challenging confidence issues to begin with that it took considerable support to encourage them to participate. Following the project, many found the confidence to move on to other engagements that they would previously find challenging, such as applying for college, going into employment, or volunteering (see YMI Story 6).

While COVID-19 and home-learning created new challenges for young people, many were still able to develop their confidence through YMI activity, albeit in a home environment. EOP reports highlight numerous examples of children continuing to passionately pursue the learning of their instrument during lockdown from home, with parents reporting this back to project leads. For some young people, this environment and situation provided them with the opportunity to be more independent in their approach to music-making, relying less on the YMI tutors and instead on greater ownership of their learning and musical creation.

> "Lockdown due to COVID-19 could have produced a dearth of music making. Instead, young people with instruments were able to pursue a valuable interest. Their dependence on tutor-led learning was broken, and they were encouraged to find out for themselves, use the vast resources available online, and hone their independent learning skills.

> "Online lessons have proven to be empowering for pupils, with many pupils finding more confidence during online sessions.

Activities supported the wellbeing of young people, impacted their mood, and provided valuable opportunities in areas such as emotional expression and relationship development.

Many projects recognised the significant value of music in relation to mental health and wellbeing and reported considering it not just a positive by-product but a key aim in providing their activities.

This was highlighted for example by Wheatley Care (YMI Story 6), who described wanting to ensure that the project and its aims do not "*just start and stop with music"* but rather that this activity would "*[look] at the [young] person holistically, to see what support they need to live their life to the fullest".* In this, they value the inclusive nature of music, describing it as having the ability to provide space for the exploration of challenging topics, and in uniting people through the sharing and creation of music.

These facets of music provision were considered as particularly valuable at such a challenging time, where lockdown and enforced home-learning had the potential to make young people feel isolated and demotivated. A number of projects therefore highlighted the importance of consistency and making sure that they continued to engage with young people during lockdown. In the case of some projects, it was made clear that this became a key focus and priority of their delivery, acknowledging this as an area of particular need in the current circumstances. This was for example referred to in the interview with a representative of East Dunbartonshire's music service, who found that for the participants, the service provided not only a music lesson, but *"we often came in as something fun, it had a lot to do with the general wellbeing of the child. Quite often it was the highlight of their day."*

> "Wellbeing became our individual and collective priority, as did connectivity, communication and holistic cares that include approaches to health, to personal growth and to professional development.

As Wheatley Care's example furthermore showed, while the musical activity was hugely valuable in supporting wellbeing, the sheer point of having regular enjoyable activities, which meant young people made an effort to attend, contributed to their wellbeing, bringing structure to their life in particular during the isolating months of lockdown and providing a social space – albeit from their homes.

Indeed, for many young people, the social element of their participation in YMI activity was a valuable opportunity to connect, meet other young people and make friends outside of their school environment, all contributing to wellbeing. Importantly, it also provided young people with opportunities to support each other. One project provided the example of a young person struggling to progress while working with the tutors, who then improved vastly in a more social context with direct support from peers – demonstrating the unique needs of different young people and the value of being able to find the ways of learning that work best for them.

Connected to this, some projects also highlighted a link between wellbeing and general educational attainment, with EOP reports for example describing YMI activities as impacting CYP's approach and attitude towards learning. In some instances, this appears to have involved using YMI activities as a way of encouraging commitment to other subject (i.e., by focusing across all subjects they will be rewarded with music-based activities). Several projects also reported the broader impact and benefit of YMI activities on pupil mood, attitude and concentration as naturally promoting better engagement and attainment across other subject areas.

YMI Story 6: Wheatley Care – supporting young people's mental health and wellbeing, in particular during the COVID-19 lockdown

Reported by Zofia Piotrowska, Community Engagement and Resilience Lead

The project funded by YMI, *"Ensemble",* involved three six-week long song writing blocks, with professional musicians, volunteers, trainees and participants working together to create songs, which resulted in live performances and a professional recording. **During the COVID-19 lockdown, activities were moved to online song writing workshops, alongside regular zoom check-ins** to keep engagement levels high *"and remind them that we are still here".* Where necessary, the project provided IT equipment to the participants to enable their participation. Whereas live sessions tended to bring all participants together, this proved unworkable via Zoom, with *"people getting very exhausted"* and the project structure was therefore changed to smaller groups. While many initially felt apprehensive about using zoom, in particular the cameras, the project took a flexible approach, **easing the participants into the new way of working**.

While the main aim of the project was to improve young people's music making skills and their confidence in those skills, beyond that, the project focused on building general confidence and ensure that skills learned during the workshop could be used by the participants in real life situations. *"We wanted to* ***ensure it doesn't just start and stop with music, but it's something that looks at the person holistically, to see what support they need to live their life to the fullest****."* This aspect of

supporting participant's health and wellbeing is seen as very important, even before COVID-19 began, but became **doubly so during the *"period of isolation and loneliness"*,** which was *"particularly difficult for people who feel isolated and 'outside the norm' anyway"*.

Many of the young people who were involved in *"Ensemble*" have *"never had the **experience of having their contribution valued, of being listened to**. They have always had decisions made for them. When you grow up, you accept this as what your life is – or you rebel against it and do things that are damaging to you*". Many of the songs that the young people wrote were about their own experiences of homelessness, mental health and stigma. While the project does not provide music therapy as such, *"just giving people the opportunity in a safe and supportive environment",* with volunteers and carers who can provide emotional support, is *"quite therapeutic". "**Music, as any creative activity, lets you explore potentially difficult subjects in a more accessible way,** [and] particularly music has that power to bring people together, create together. It is a very inclusive process, there are no right or wrong answers".* Beyond this, participation **provided the young people with a structure for the day**, *"it got them out of bed, provided a more positive outlook on life, a bit more hope".* In addition, working remotely through online sessions and communicating on message platforms had the side effect of helping young people with their typing and spelling – *"they wanted to communicate, to leave a message, they found the motivation to do it".*

As a result, many of the participants **gained sufficient confidence to apply for college, go into employment or to volunteer themselves**. Some have started working with vulnerable people, able to provide support that they previously needed, whilst others have started college courses, including in music production. Some participants went from living with the homelessness service back to living on their own. All commented that without taking part, they would not have found the confidence and self-esteem to do so.

Smaller groups and an informal approach are valuable tools which allow tutors to build relationships and respond to the needs of individuals.

Project examples – such as that of Wheatley Care above – highlighted the value of the more flexible approaches of many YMI activities when contrasted with more traditional educational environments, particularly with regards to building relationships and enabling contact with hard-to-reach young people. Feedback suggests that the ability of working in smaller groups allows YMI tutors the time required to give attention to individual CYP, enabling them to build a lasting connection and create a safe space for sharing, where this is needed. In addition, smaller groups allow for a greater tailoring of activities to respond to the interests of participants, as well as the time and space required to undertake genuine collaboration and co-creation with participants (see also section 2.2.4). Peer to peer learning approaches are also likely to be successful particularly in small group learning environments, where understanding and support between peers can be more easily promoted.

This was highlighted by Stirling's music service (YMI Story 7), who described small groups as being *"an important way to engage young people…making them feel heard and known"*. Building in structured time for one-to-one or running shorter sessions in smaller groups were recognised as approaches which provide opportunities for YMI tutors to connect and build relationships with individual young people, increasing the likelihood that they continue to engage in the project and allowing for a greater depth of impact to be achieved.

YMI Story 7: Stirling – engaging and building relationships with young people through small groups and an informal approach

Reported by Clare Hoare, Creative Learning Officer, Stirling Council, and Kenny Bates, Music Development Officer, Stirling Council, and supported by Stirling's EOP report

Stirling Council's YMI programme seeks to create longer term projects that work with specific target groups over an extended period of time. This allows tutors and young people the chance to get to know each other

better, *"**enabling long term relationships to be developed**".* Clare and Kenny describe this as being particularly valuable for some of the young people the programme works with, especially those who might find developing relationships over a shorter time more challenging, or young people who have additional support needs.

The establishment of long-term relationships between tutors and young people is beneficial in allowing tutors to **better understand the needs and interests of young people and respond to those** in a way that enables the development of their musical knowledge and practice. *"With the type of learning we promote – **young person centred and facilitated** – this longer-term relationship is important. Tutors can get to know a young person, what they are interested in (beyond music too), what their individual needs are, how they learn, what excites them (and what might create a block to learning)."*

Clare and Kenny highlighted the value of structuring time to **work in smaller groups or one-to-ones with young people**, noting that this provides the space and dedicated time required to get to know the young people and establish the long-term relationship that sits at the core of Stirling's YMI offer.

This is done in conjunction with taking **a more informal approach**, which might differ to a school environment. The majority of the tutors who are part of Stirling's YMI programme are professional performing musicians, something which often captures the attention of young people at the outset. This identity as a musician can be viewed as separate from school staff, and as coming from a place of a shared love of music first and foremost. This identity can remove barriers that, for some, might come with a teacher/pupil dynamic, and the implementation of simple behaviours, such as working on a first name basis, can further create a sense of equity.

By taking an approach grounded in the value of self-expression as art, the programme can be seen to create an environment where the young people are able to speak in their own voices, take risks, and feel comfortable talking about any challenges they might face in their day to day lives. This informal approach has seen great success, as the tutors are able to work in collaboration with the young people and the young people have their voice and needs heard, sharing in a space that they feel safe and understood, with tutors being responsive to the young people's interests and needs.

Working in this manner can allow for learning and activity to be more tailored and led by children and young people, creating space for them to share, be heard and influence the delivery of sessions.

2.2.3 Young people increase their awareness of music and culture

Engagement with traditional local/ Scottish music genres supports the development of CYP's understanding of heritage.

Projects which opted to work specifically with traditional genres of music or instruments, such as the pennywhistle/tin whistle, fiddle, bagpipes or drums, typically sought to assist young people in connecting with the culture and heritage of the local area, region or nation through their participation in music-related activities. The significance of this resulting greater awareness and connection of the young people to their local culture was made evident by one project, which described this experience as giving every child in the region *"a sense of place in the country and the world"*. There is a sense that this impact is not limited to the participants, with some projects referring to this increased awareness being shared and developed among participant's families and the wider local community through performances and other mechanisms involving the young people – indeed, as one project highlighted, the act of performing is a key element in both the enjoyment of and benefits taken from the project:

> "Our pipe band drumming, traditional fiddle and tin whistle projects offers pupils the opportunity to learn Scottish music that they can perform on traditional instruments. These projects are a fun and creative way to engage with pupils and raise

awareness of traditional and world music. Progress is measured by pupil engagement and performances. Traditional songs can be great fun to perform in front of an audience and can greatly increase pupil confidence.

A few projects also indicated a link between young people's experience of traditional music and a greater interest and connection with language and language-learning. While one project described participants' engagement with traditional music as directly assisting in their learning of Gaelic, another referenced the strong existing connection of many of the young people with the language, describing their affiliation with it as *"empowering for the child"*, and something they respond to with great excitement and enthusiasm. Further research and evaluation is required to establish the specific processes through which this takes place and the overall impact.

Some projects suggested that learning about music genres is connected with learning in other subjects such as history or geography.

Through their participation in music-making activities, young people were in some cases able to learn more about the culture and context from which this style of music originated. There is some evidence that where young people engaged with specific genres of music, cross-curricular links were made to tie this into subjects such as history or geography, with such connections made as part of or in addition to YMI activity so as to deepen the understanding of the young people. However, this finding is relatively low level, with EOP reports often only giving very brief mention to this with limited detail or additional data provided.

2.2.4 Young people influence or lead youth music opportunities and have their voice heard

YMI activities regularly provide a forum for young people to influence and make leadership choices, thereby developing their confidence and decision-making skills.

A high number of projects reference youth leadership in the sense that CYP are provided with the opportunity to make choices and influence decisions, and have their voices heard in the design and delivery of activities within a pre-determined framework. Examples of this include activities ranging from contributing ideas to the creation of new content to the selection of musical pieces or genres, through to the planning and execution of events and performances (see for example YMI Story 8).

Relatedly, across several projects, participants were described as being able to work alongside YMI tutors and other professional musicians as collaborators, rather than what could be considered as a more traditional, instructional teacher/student relationship. One project referred to this as the *"flattening of previous teacher dynamics"*, noting the intention of this process and opportunity for the young people to work directly with professional musicians as *"active collaborators"*. This was reported as providing young people with a sense of *"authority and agency"* that they would not normally have in this space or context.

Through being provided with the opportunity to take the lead as part of different project activities, taking on increased responsibility and ownership of the work and its outputs, CYP were able to build their confidence and develop transferable skills such as communication and leadership. Importantly, as the Wheatley Care example below shows, such approaches may be of particular benefit to young people from more challenging backgrounds who often experience lower levels of agency and are thus used to a situation in which others make decisions for them.

YMI Story 8: Wheatley Care – giving young people agency and choice

Reported by Zofia Piotrowska, Community Engagement and Resilience Lead

The *"Ensemble"* project ensured that a number of their musical volunteers and trainees were young people, with the aim of providing opportunities for young people in the music industry to develop their professional and musical skills. In addition, some of the **young people who signed up to participate in the project took over lead roles in various aspects of the project delivery**, including concert and workshop planning, leading parts of the workshop, providing peer support and more.

Outside of the COVID-19 restrictions, the participants, volunteers and trainees were able to meet in groups, running highly interactive workshops together with the professional musicians. The same level of interaction was visible in the performances of the songs which the project was able to arrange. *"We had comments from people attending the little gigs that it was **difficult to distinguish who was staff and who was participant** as everyone had a part to play and all were so on the ball. We ensured that the young people were given different tasks, so they all felt that they were part of it. They were co-creating - **things were not done to them, but with them."***

This approach was also taken in creating the final *"Ensemble"* album: the young participants took part in focus group workshops where they listened to demo recordings of all songs created during the workshop and had a say on what songs would feature on the album. They were also invited to choose an artist out of a shortlist of 10 to create the artwork for the album: ***"it was a lovely process as the young people decided which songs would be on the album and in which order and chose the artist and co-created the artwork".***

YMI Story 9: Sense Scotland – supporting young people to develop their confidence and voice through working with them to design and tailor accessible instruments and environments

Reported by David McCluskey, Lead Artist, Sense Scotland

Flexi-Lab works across Scotland, designing and tailoring accessible instruments, equipment, materials and set-ups for people with a range of additional support needs and disabilities. The Flexi-Lab project built on the established work of Sensatronic Lab, which similarly seeks to enable access to music technology and the designing of instruments for people with additional support needs.

By working directly with young people with additional support needs or disabilities, Flexi-Lab creates opportunities for participants to have a voice in the shaping of activity, and in the design of the instruments themselves, ensuring that they are fit for purpose and accessible.

David shared an example of one young person who acted in *"almost a consultant role…telling [the team] about his experience of the instruments from his perspective as a blind musician"*. As the project engaged with manufacturers and mainstream music producers, this provided the chance for the young person to *"critically engage with them, and how they are thinking about different musicians"*, helping them to understand *"what the areas of difficulty are, helping to problem solve these challenges, and how to make [instruments and environments] more accessible".*

The project's responsiveness to the needs of individual young people, and as a result its role in the development of young people's confidence and voice, was shown to be of significant importance to individual participants. David highlighted that for some of the young people with whom Sense Scotland work, "*something as simple as acknowledging a person's voice is important…and they haven't experienced that before, and that's often because they are non-verbal, using sounds rather than language as society views it".*

David noted one example of a young person with whom they worked to design an instrument which could respond to variations in her breathing. This allowed her to create rhythms that were then animated visually

through an app. The team initially provided the young person with a microphone, however realised quickly that she would require someone else to hold this for her, and so instead worked to design a dome coder which she could hold and use independently. Through this, David described witnessing the participant *"literally finding her voice"*, as she developed the confidence to experiment and extend her vocal repertoire, to the point that she is now improvising and participating in group work.

Within a framework of collaboration, guidance and ideas from teachers contribute to widening young people's horizons.

As one project highlighted, a balanced approach is required in allowing young people to lead and influence the shape of the project activity, whilst also challenging them to develop beyond what they might initially have expected. As part of Stirling's activity (YMI Story 10), some projects have an initial youth consultation element taking place at in the early stages of the project, while others were described as *"constantly consulting, reacting to the young people and their interests".* The Stirling team described working with YMI tutors to undertake a practice whereby they act in the role of facilitators rather than as teachers. In this role, they are able to inspire, empower and encourage young people to think beyond the limits of what they themselves may have considered producing, building from ideas rather than didactic instruction.

This approach was taken by Stirling as it was noted that otherwise, by solely relying on the leadership of children and young people, they might only operate within the frame of what they think or understand to be possible. In this context, it is the role of tutors as facilitators to use their own experiences and frame of reference to inspire and encourage young people to achieve more than they could have anticipated at the initiation of the project.

Time and the context of delivery and practitioners' understanding of the concept may limit the provision of impactful youth leadership opportunities.

While many young people are provided with opportunities to have their voices heard and take ownership throughout the course of projects, most projects reference youth leadership in the sense that CYP are provided with given choices, for example in reference to musical pieces to perform as part of concerts or events. This is of value, as young people are able to use their voice and opinion to contribute to the direction of the project. However, it could be considered as a relatively limited approach to co-creating with young people. Feedback suggests that some projects are aware of this and may be keen to explore opportunities to provide co-creation/ youth-led activities at a greater depth in the future.

On a practical level, the limited duration of projects and large group sizes were highlighted as key challenges which can limit the extent to which this objective can be achieved, with projects instead relying on "*decision-making opportunities and lead roles offered within a framework"* to achieve this outcome area.

> "An issue that presents challenges for fully enabling ownership on the part of young people, is that where projects run for a limited number of weeks, and involve a large class size, the reality on the ground of making this aim work can be difficult to realise. What is more workable, is a predetermined structure and programme, with plenty of decision-making opportunities

and lead roles offered within a framework. Obviously the longer the project the more scope for achieving this aim. This is becoming increasingly harder with cuts to YMI.

Needless to say, co-creating activity with young people and creating meaningful youth-led opportunities within projects is an area which is heavily influenced by the environment and the context in which the project is taking place and the abilities of the young people who are participating, as well as the approach and skillset of the engaged practitioners. The challenges of this were referenced in some EOP reports, with one project for example recognising the complexity of collaborating and providing leadership opportunities to young people.

This suggests that there may be scope to consider how more nuance, ability and confidence could be created among practitioners to support deeper levels of co-creation where the context would make this possible.

YMI Story 10: Stirling – tutors work in the capacity of facilitators rather than teachers

Reported by Clare Hoare, Creative Learning Officer, Stirling Council, and Kenny Bates, Music Development Officer, Stirling Council, and supported by Stirling's EOP report

Clare and Kenny described the need for YMI tutors **to strike a balance** between keeping sessions and projects sufficiently open, **enabling young people to take the lead**, in combination with *"inspiring the young people involved and **directing in a way that takes the learning forward further**".* The need for balance to be struck in relation to approach was emphasised as *"it's important to always give young people the agency to lead on the direction of a creative activity, and so the value of the tutor's experience is in expanding the frame of what they think or understand to be possible".*

Stirling sought to create an opportunity for young people to have a voice and play a role in the direction of the project and did this by **positioning YMI tutors as facilitators rather than teachers.** This approach allowed tutors to provide inspiration, support and guidance to the young people in this process, recognising that without this, the young people's understanding of their potential might also act as a limitation. Through working closely with the children and young people, tutors ***"can help them to broaden that frame",* encouraging them to take their learning further** and to be inspired to produce and achieve things they didn't otherwise think possible.

In order to respond to the interests of young people, many of the projects which form part of Stirling's YMI programme involve a consultation element at the beginning of the project to inform its direction. Others take an approach of *"constantly consulting, reacting to the young people and their interests, how they feel something should sound, what should be said in a song being written, or the direction an arrangement might take".* This approach allows for **agency** and **greater tailoring of the young people's experience**, as *"rather than telling them and directing them in terms of what they will do in the time, [the tutors] have greater flexibility and are more reactive to the young people's interests and passions".*

Clare and Kenny noted that sometimes they're asked why the more informal elements of Stirling's programme do not run to a set curriculum or content. Trust in the knowledge and skills of the professional musicians employed is central to the programme. Employing experienced musicians who have an extensive knowledge of their genre, as well as in facilitating workshops with young people, ensures an understanding of the progression they would like to see in each of the young people they are working with. This allows the tutors to work with the young people collaboratively, at their own pace and engaging them in work that matters to them, responding to their own interests and needs to achieve this. In doing this they create a dynamic environment of trust, care, mutual respect, understanding and progression.

2.3 Supporting the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of children and young people via training and CPD

The final section of the findings chapter focuses on YMI's third aim of supporting the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of CYP via training and CPD. As such, it considers the following two research questions in order to understand YMI's impact on its first two short-term outcomes:

Research Q	Short-term outcome
Employment - What jobs, training, and volunteering opportunities is the YMI supporting directly?	People delivering youth music develop their skills and confidence
Outcome - What difference is YMI making to the youth music sector?	Organisations in the music sector and beyond work together to create progression opportunities that strengthen the youth music sector for the benefit of CYP

In consideration of the constraints and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic during 2019 and 2020, the section also looks at in how far:

- YMI helped organisations to survive, adapt and remain resilient throughout the COVID-19 pandemic
- YMI helped the sector come together during the pandemic.

2.3.1 People delivering youth music develop their skills and confidence

Within funded projects, the number of posts funded by YMI have remained relatively stable. These are most likely to be temporary part-time posts.

During the reporting period, YMI supported 989 music education posts across its three programme strands; considerably fewer than in the previous year (1,196 in 2018/1). Breaking down the figures, the drop in numbers was recorded specifically among AMM and SYM projects; FF in contrast saw a small rise in posts funded, from 653 in the previous period to 692 in the reporting period (see Figure 13).

The key reason for this drop in posts funded within the AMM and SYM strand is likely to be the considerably lower number of projects included within the reporting period (44 AMM & SYM projects) than in the previous year (76), which similarly had an impact on overall participant figures (as outlined in section 2.1). As with the participant numbers, the average number of posts per project funded through AMM and SYM however remained the same between the reporting periods (7.1. for 2019/20 and 7.1 in 2018/19). This again echoes the small drop in average participation figures across the two years, suggesting that while total figures have reduced due to the lower number of projects overall, within funded projects, provision has remained stable.

The finding that over half of these posts are temporary and part time indicates how programmatic funding such as YMI, while contributing much to the employment of music teachers and practitioners annually, is also likely contributing to portfolio careers. In some cases, this is welcomed as providing flexibility, although practitioners regularly report that job security (e.g., annual or seasonal contracts) can be a source of instability. Further research is required to better understand the effects of this large proportion of temporary part-time posts on the stability of the workforce and how alternative modes of support (e.g., longer funding periods) may make a difference.

Figure 13 YMI: Employment created

Q: *How many posts were funded (or part funded) through YMI?*

	FF	AMM	SYM	Total
Type of post	**N**	**N**	**N**	
Permanent - full time	46	9		55
Permanent- part time	127.7	50		177.7
Temporary - full time	9	24	2	35

Temporary - part time	509.2	207	5	721.2
Total	**691.9**	**290**	**7**	**988.9**

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

YMI provides an opportunity for on-the-job experience in music education for people in a wide range of roles.

Within schools, a breadth of roles were involved in delivering music lessons supported by YMI. The largest group involved in YMI delivery were teachers (2,627), followed by tutors (538) and professional musicians (361). These figures all compared similarly to the previous year. There was however a huge decrease in the involvement of parents or carers, from 3,063 in 2018/19 to only 68 in the current reporting period (see Figure 14).

In addition, 74 volunteers, 51 music students as well as 23 youth workers were involved in delivering YMI activities funded through the FF, suggesting that the programme provided an opportunity for gaining professional experience on-the-job for people who are not professional musicians or teachers. A further 229 volunteers and 275 trainees were involved in AMM making activities during the reporting period (with the latter including cross-sector training for individuals from other sectors, for example to nurses via one project), in addition to 2 volunteers and 2 trainees supported by the SYM strand.

One project, delivered by AMM-funded Artsplay Highland, highlighted the value of such on-the-job training to support nursery staff in delivering quality music experiences for young children; in particular when provided in parallel with more formal training opportunities (see YMI Story 11 below)

Figure 14 Formula Fund: Roles involved in delivery

Role	2019/20	2018/19
Teachers	2,627	2,592
Tutors	538	550
Professional musicians	361	384
Administrators/managers	132	70
Adult volunteers	74	
Parents or carers	68	3,063[15]
Music students	51	93
Trainers	45	31
Youth workers	23	13
Other	28	

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

YMI Story 11: Artsplay Highland – helping nursery teachers bring music into nurseries

Reported by Monica Neeling, Artistic Director, Artsplay Highland

Monica stresses that Artsplay *"don't just choose any nursery. We also want the nurseries to work well with us –* ***better cooperation with the nursery means that the children benefit more****."*

A key aim of bringing music education specialists into nurseries that couldn't otherwise provide a similar offer is to **support the nursery teachers in continuing to *"share more music with the children."*** To

[15] It's unclear from the 2018/19 report why this figure is so much higher, it may be that it is due to specific large projects focused on engaging parents in delivery.

this end, Artsplay may work over several years in one nursery *"if we find they can do with more help"*, but they also leave some behind and begin working with others each year. A challenge in maintaining a decent level of music provision in individual nurseries is that staff turnover in the nurseries is *"quite high"*.

In many cases Artsplay find that *"the teachers try and sing [with the children] but they are not trained"*. The project is thus designed to **train the teachers 'on the job'** whilst in the nurseries. For example, teachers are encouraged by the music specialists to lead part of the session: *"it is really easy to be involved, but more difficult to get engaged. Like this, they can get **feedback from the specialists."*** A big thing that often holds them back is confidence, and *"when they have been involved for long enough, **they gain confidence"**.*

However, alongside 'learning by doing', Artsplay has found that teachers also need *"actual experience and skills".* To this end, the organisation offers **additional CPD training** days funded by Creative Scotland. Interestingly, they found in the past year that while an offered in-person training day was not well attended, **online sessions have seen considerably higher take-up** – *"people have got used to it, in many ways it's easier for people".* They are now planning to begin a new six-week online training course for teachers.

Fewer participants benefited from training through Formula Fund than previously, likely due to lockdown restrictions, but average Access to Music Making/ Strengthening Youth Music CPD participants remained relatively stable. Positive online training experiences are likely to influence future provision.

Alongside on-the-job learning opportunities, YMI also supported specific training opportunities across the three strands. During the reporting period, 3,411 people benefited from training and CPD linked to YMI activity, with the largest proportion (72.5%) delivered via the Formula Fund. This presents a considerable drop from the previous two reporting periods, where over 5,000 people received CPD via YMI activity, both among FF and out-of-school projects and is most likely explained by both the lower number of AMM projects included within the reporting period, as well as the difficulties of providing training during the lockdown period. When considering the average number of people reached through CPD by AMM and SYM projects, again these are in line with previous years (21.3 in 2019/20 compared to 22.2 in 2018/19), explained by the fact that most AMM projects included in the reporting period ended before the beginning of lockdown.

Figure 15 YMI: No of people who benefitted from training and CPD linked to the YMI activity

	FF	AMM	SYM	Total
2019/20	2,473	846 **including 256 via SBT*	92	3,411
2018/19	3,361	1,691		5,052

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

COVID-19 restrictions were however referenced in a number of FF EOP reports as prohibiting in-person delivery, resulting in the cancellation of CPD training and delivery. Many of the affected projects however managed to transition CPD activities to online delivery, with several commenting on the value and success of being able to offer more accessible training opportunities as a result of the move to online delivery.

> "This all moved online and in fact was a great success as people were much more able to access training and professional development due to this.

In connection with training, a number of projects referenced the significance that lockdown provided staff with 'time' which they otherwise would not have had to consider which training they were most keen to receive and prioritise their own learning and development; and for organisations to respond:

> Since face-to-face input stopped, staff felt empowered to search for 'that' training they had been wanting to do but had never had the time to do. Organisations worked hard to quickly provide opportunities that could be more easily accessed. This time also allowed us the opportunity to consult with the wider education staff to find out what they wanted from [the music service], meaning we could respond appropriately to their needs.

> We were able to offer an online CPD/ sharing session to all our practitioners which was much easier to organise with no travel costs incurred and less time needed for people to attend. As a result of this event, one of our freelance practitioners offered a free training session on using DaVinci Pro, a free online video editing platform, which helped develop skills for production and editing of video content.

Clearly, the necessary reliance of the population on digital forms of communication in general and the notable shift in willingness to engage with digital communication platforms, has been key to the success in delivering such online training, with new ways of working now considered viable that were not previously explored. As demonstrated by Artsplay Highland's example (YMI Story 11), having gained experience and felt the benefits of working digitally – including the more positive response from participants to an online CPD offer than to on-site training - there is a sense that the convenience of this method of working will continue to be utilised by projects in future to continue to enable sharing to take place. Artsplay for example found that people have now 'got used to' working online and are keen to take advantage of the benefits and convenience it provides and have responded by developing a six-week online training course for teachers.

The need to work within lockdown restrictions resulted in new learning through innovative practice and sharing among staff and across the sector.

The upheaval resulting from COVID-19 restrictions acted for many as an impetus for a shift in perception with regards to feasible ways of working, with some approaches previously deemed unworkable now considered necessary. Such approaches included working, teaching and collaborating remotely, creating a blended or hybrid learning offer, or, as one project described, adopting 'train the teacher' models, encouraging and empowering non-music specialist teachers to deliver music lessons without in-class support.

In some cases, the need to work within the lockdown constraints in itself brought about new experiences and learning specific to music education. Staff in the East Dunbartonshire service discovered not only a huge benefit in regular (online) interaction that they are planning to maintain, but also found that they had to develop new ideas to be able to continue engaging and teaching their pupils, some of which were so successful that they intend to continue them in their lessons (see YMI Story 12).

To enable remote teaching, in some cases training was offered to support such transitions, thereby strengthening people's ability to deliver quality music education, even if the training was not directly related to teaching music.

Qualitative analysis of the EOP reports showed that the positive impact of regular online communication and connection. Several described being 'strengthened' as a team as a result. Greater interaction across project teams and partners was seen to encourage a more *"joined up way of thinking that was not there before"*, with many projects describing increased opportunities for collaboration, and noting that they plan to continue this level of communication and engagement moving forward. In the case of Dumfries and Galloway, previously different projects within their YMI programme were considered as running simultaneously without being interconnected. The need to develop and test new ways of engaging young people across projects created opportunities for tutors to interact and feed into each other's projects, sharing resources to assist teachers throughout the local authority who were delivering online lessons at the time.

> Previously the individual projects ran concurrently however were not necessarily connected. This changed as tutors were brought together in a shared need to brainstorm and test online delivery methods. This strengthened partnerships between projects- with some discovering other projects in detail for the first time.

Qualitative feedback through the case studies and EOPs suggests that the need to move to online delivery resulted in increased connectivity and opportunities to sharing knowledge not only at a local level among project teams, but also on a regional and national scale. According to one project: *"YMI leads were greater connected and sharing ideas and solutions across Scotland."*

YMI Story 12: East Dunbartonshire – new IT skills provided the delivery team with a sense of 'togetherness' and opportunities to share new ideas and approaches

Reported by Scott Arnott, musician and Senior Instrumental Instructor, East Dunbartonshire Council IMS team

At the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdown, the digital set-up and skills across East Dunbartonshire's music services (IMS) team were relatively low – *"some staff didn't even have email addresses, so setting up a digital music service over night was challenging!"* The service began by ensuring all staff had council laptops with Microsoft Teams installed and provided an initial online training for staff, going down to the basics of *"this is how you turn your computer off"*.

Given this low starting point, *"where we are now digitally is incredible"*. A Microsoft Teams group was created which all instructors connect on a daily basis. This provided an important opportunity for **instructors to come together to combat feelings of isolation** that worsened during lockdown: *"It can be quite lonely, going into different schools every day, you are never part of one thing. It's good to feel part of the bigger music service delivery team".* The regular sessions also proved a **valuable way for staff to share ideas** about how to provide (online) lessons and new ways of engaging the pupils. As they proved so rewarding for staff, bringing the music service delivery team closer together, they will continue in the future.

In addition, the need to create recorded lessons to send to the pupils – and later to provide live online lessons – **forced teachers to try new ideas, some of which have proved so successful** that they are intending to maintain them. Scott for example previously taught lessons using one drum kit, showing children what to do before they had a go. Having to do lessons remotely – him on his drum kit at home and children at home with theirs or using improvised tools such as pots and pans for drumming – showed him the benefits of teaching in such a way. *"You could really get into depth with them. Now moving forward, I have two drum kits side by side so the kids can learn alongside me. Some of the kids are profoundly dyslexic, and it has really changed their learning. Doing it by the book doesn't always work for all the children – I need to give them the best experience I can."*

2.3.2 Organisations in the music sector and beyond work together to create progression opportunities that strengthen the sector

While a few projects referred to supporting progression routes, relatively little evidence of this – or of cross-sector collaboration more generally - was recorded.

Beyond data provided in section 2.3 around numbers of trainees and volunteers involved and numbers of training participants, evidence around wider sector benefits, cross-sectoral collaboration in general as well as specifically to create progression opportunities was relatively week, with no data around this outcome area and little feedback recorded from the case studies and EOPs.

Stirling music services described having strong connections with the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and engaging with their students through means such as community arts modules. This provides students with the opportunity to

come and volunteer as part of the programme, shadowing and working alongside tutors to understand their role and 'learn the routes' in the sector. In doing this, students gained an awareness of the potential routes and pathways, and in some cases go on to eventually become tutors themselves.

Another project provided a detailed example of a student volunteer who went on to work as a YMI tutor, following which they opted to undertake a qualification to allow them to teach secondary music. This individual described their experience of being involved in the YMI-funded activity as having helped to inspire them to pursue this pathway, and as providing valuable experience, skills and confidence through the opportunity of working in a classroom setting:

> "I gained experience [through the YMI project], which helped inspire me to pursue a career in music teaching and provided valuable experience for PGDE course applications. Skills that are important for classroom teaching, such as communication, patience, and adaptability, were developed and nurtured during my experience there. These skills can only be developed through first-hand teaching experience, which I am grateful that [the project] provided for me. Additionally, it allowed me to practice what I learned in college in a classroom setting, giving me extra confidence in my abilities as a teacher.

In order to be better able to respond to the outcome of organisations working together to create progression routes as well as the wider question of the difference YMI is making to the sector, it may be worth considering collecting further specific data around this in the future, either through quantitative questions around the number of other organisations that grantees worked with or the number of new partnerships developed through YMI, and/or some targeted qualitative questions around these outcome areas.

3. Conclusion and consideration of additional research questions

To what extent were YMI's aims and outcomes delivered in the reporting period? Which YMI delivery methods are more or less effective in achieving YMI's stated outcomes?

In terms of creating access (aim1), the findings suggest that despite the challenges brought about by COVID-19 and the resulting lockdown restrictions, overall youth participant figures to activities funded by YMI remained stable. While drops were recorded in some areas – notably Formula Fund participants – average numbers for the Access strand remained stable. This speaks volumes for the determination and huge efforts that were made on the part of delivery organisations to transition to online provision during the pandemic, which indeed many if not all organisations were able to do in some form.

As previously, grantees across the three strands continued to prioritise CYP in key target groups – most dominantly those from areas of social and economic deprivation. Importantly, feedback suggests that organisations do this not just because they are asked to, but because they understand the importance of using such 'additional resources' to reach those who may not otherwise have these opportunities, and the benefit they can provide for such children and young people. However, organisations struggle to provide concrete data on numbers of young people within the target groups involved, suggesting this may be an area to consider revising in the future.

With regard to YMI's ability to enable CYP to achieve their potential (aim 2), progress was recorded across all outcome areas, including music-making, transferable skills, confidence and well-being. While this is often based on anecdotal evidence, feedback from the EOP forms and case studies suggests that a particularly dominant outcome area – or perhaps an area that organisations consider as particularly important to report – is the ability of music activities to increase children's' and young people's confidence and transferable skills such as organisation, team working, communication (often bolstered by increased confidence), which will benefit them in other walks of life.

Projects also highlighted the value of their activities in bringing enjoyment to participants. Whilst this remains a highly subjective notion which is difficult to evidence, many projects spoke of the joy their activities brought and the positive impact they had on participants' mood; not just through music-making per se, but also through the forum it provides for young people to express themselves and build relationships.

These impacts were brought about through a variety of activities included within YMI projects – feedback pointed in particular to the value of performances, group work with peers and providing participants with agency to influence the projects as motivators and confidence-builders. Importantly, many projects here stressed the value of providing activities in a slightly different format to children's and young people's general education (both in and outside school), through working in smaller groups and taking more flexible/ informal approaches which allow tutors to build relationships with the young people and respond to their individual needs (to some extent).

Considering YMI's impact on supporting sector development (aim 3), while the Formula Fund recorded a drop in training beneficiaries – likely to be the result of COVID-19 restrictions – training figures remained stable among Access projects. Likewise, employment created per project remained relatively stable across all three strands, although as in previous years, predominantly of a temporary, part-time nature. Alongside formal training, data suggests that YMI also provides an opportunity for on-the-job experiences in music education for people in a wide range of roles, with one case study for example stressing the value of providing both to support the development of quality music education providers. However, beyond this, relatively little evidence – beyond anecdotal reporting - is available to provide insight into whether YMI impacts cross-sector collaboration, the creation of strong progression routes, or indeed what kind of training or sector support is most effective.

What is the value of YMI focusing on working with specific target groups? What can be learned from the projects around working with target groups?

As mentioned above, the data and qualitative feedback show that projects not only worked with CYP in specific target groups, but that many make a concerted effort to engage these groups and understand the value in providing their activities to these participants.

Projects spoke of this providing them with an opportunity to *"make a real difference"* where it is most needed and of providing children with a 'chance' they may not otherwise have. Projects in this context spoke of the impact their provision had on young people's wider skills, helping in some way to close attainment or skills gaps – including academic as well as life skills – that may set young people in hard-to-reach groups back compared to their peers; or helping to prepare young people for further steps in their life outside musical education (e.g., general education, employment). Not least, several projects also spoke of the enjoyment they bring to young people who elsewhere have to address significant challenges in their life.

Emblematic of the understood value in working with target groups, projects were vocal about the value in a funding body such as Creative Scotland requesting projects to target key groups to ensure YMI reaches those who would not otherwise receive such an offer, thereby motivating as well as supporting organisations to make the effort to reach out to participants that are often classed as 'hard to reach':

> "It forces groups to work creatively with those target groups and not just to go with those that are easy to engage. It challenges [us] to look beyond what is easy and accessible and make a real difference. Which in turn […] can lead to bigger change. It most force organisations to do what is difficult, reach people despite the difficulties.

> "We definitely try to offer the projects where otherwise they wouldn't get any music education. It's quite a strong case! I wouldn't like to think that if they pulled YMI it would still continue! It's about giving kids a chance.

> "*It's as simple as they just wouldn't have it otherwise. Young people with disabilities or learning needs - they wouldn't have projects designed to their needs – and in general the larger body of children would not be getting music to the same level [and quality].*

Through their work, projects have gained insight into both initially engaging 'hard to reach' groups as well as maintaining ongoing commitment. Projects spoke of:

- the importance of developing close relationships with the young people – often to help them overcome personal issues such as anxiety or low confidence;
- connected to this, the benefit of working together over a longer period time to enable the development of long-term relationships and to provide space for the participants and tutors to get to know each other and allow provision to be tailored to participants' needs;
- the importance of keeping ongoing communication at some level during gaps in provision, to maintain engagement, for example through emails, chat groups etc;
- the value of flexible and less formal approaches compared to general education, to make young people feel at ease as well as to accommodate fluctuating attendance born out of participants' challenging lives: *"The programme and progression of sessions is flexible enough to accommodate people missing a few sessions"* and *"The ability to book and drop into sessions flexibly worked best for most of our participants".*

> We decided early on in the YMI programme to create longer-term programmes that worked with specific target groups over an extended period, rather than short term programmes [without] follow up to. Working with specific target groups over a longer period enables long term relationships to be developed – for some of the young people […] this is very important, especially where home life is difficult. It means both tutors and young people get to know each other much better. […] Tutors can get to know a young person, what they are interested in (beyond music too), what their individual needs are, what excites them (and what might create a block to learning).

How has COVID-19 impacted the sector and the programme specifically and how valuable was the subsequent support offered? Where there any positives/ learning in the sectors response to the pandemic? What is needed to regain sustainability?

Unsurprisingly, all projects spoke of the huge upheaval brought about by COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, both on their ability to deliver activity, the impact it had on participants and trainers/tutors as well as the wider impact on the sector. Remarkably, feedback suggests that many if not all projects were able to shift provision online to some extent; both of their activities for CYP as well as of CPD activities. This inevitably caused multiple difficulties, from lack of IT equipment and skills among both tutors and pupils at home[16], to initial policy restrictions around live video sessions, to having to find new ways to promote engagement. However, it is noticeable how many projects also spoke positively about this subject, buoyed by their success in shifting so quickly to a new medium of delivery, as well as the new skills and insights that were gained through being forced into new ways of working, which they felt benefited their delivery of quality music education and which they may maintain going forward. One project for example spoke of a *"huge upsurge in a 'can do attitude'"* within their team, with increased *"problem solving and thinking in different ways to facilitate delivery to young people".* Indeed, several spoke of potentially offering a hybrid model of delivery in the future, providing both online sessions as well as face-to-face sessions (which feedback suggests all still see significant value in over or alongside online session).

> We would always advocate and prefer live in person lessons for our delivery. As a backup resource the online materials are excellent, but nothing takes away from a real 'live' and enthusiastic person delivering tuition face to face.

It remains to be seen if these positive impacts of home working and online delivery are maintained in non-lockdown conditions and it may be of interest to Creative Scotland to continue to explore the benefits, limitations and needs of such hybrid models moving forward.

Given the volume of responses received in this area, below we consider some more detailed aspects in relation to the research question.

Impact of the COVID-19-restrictions on YMI activity delivery

Clearly, the key impact the lockdown restrictions had in terms of delivering YMI activity was the cessation of delivery of face-to-face sessions as well as any public activity such as performances that projects had planned. Tutors were no longer able to go into classrooms and varying degrees of limitations to IT equipment and skills meant that it took a while before projects were able to offer online provision. Some projects reported having to provide IT training to staff to enable them to deliver their activities online.

> We were right at the last few weeks of the project when it started, so we couldn't go into classrooms, we weren't set up to

[16] One interviewee noted that while many young people were extremely confident around their IT equipment with regard to social media platforms etc that they use frequently, they had very limited skills with regard to e.g., using Word documents or similar.

> go online straight away. It was a huge learning curve for us to do that the following year, but we did!

Several projects spoke of initial difficulties with regard to the rules and regulations of undertaking online video teaching with CYP, meaning that lessons had to be pre-recorded and then sent to the children. This perhaps inevitably caused a drop in engagement among young people. While online video classes were later permitted, with many speaking of how successful they were, overall, there was a sense that the lack of face-to-face activities resulted in fewer opportunities and perhaps less motivation for young people to engage, with a resulting break in the benefits these bring:

> “ I feel it has, in some ways, reduced opportunities for young people to be involved in music learning and I’m sure this is reflected nationally. We have definitely seen a reduction in the number of young people who usually access our programmes. This creates a break in their learning (and also social opportunities) and we feel sad about this as for some this music learning is a very important part of their week, is something they very much enjoy, maybe want to do longer term, and this break in learning might have a negative effect on learning, on emotional wellbeing, on being with friends outside school etc.

Projects also spoke of the significant impact the changes had on the tutors, creating additional stress, pressure and workloads in the effort of having to develop new ways of working.

> “ It has also created an increase in pressure on tutors and coordinators to try and find ways to rethink and reimagine programmes in a short period of time. Workloads increased trying to reimagine and redesign projects (and this continues).

The value of support and ongoing (online) YMI activities to organisations and participants

Where the cancellation, postponement or adaptation of activity was required in response to the pandemic, in order to support delivery organisations, Creative Scotland allowed for the more flexible use of allocated funds, while requiring grantees to honour existing contracts with freelancers. In adapting to the new situation, many projects described this support as hugely valuable, resulting, so to speak, in one less area to ‘worry about’ and in particular providing flexibility that meant e.g., budgets could be re-allocated where needed, or activities re-shaped, in order to continue (some) provision, thereby ultimately also benefited the children and young people. Crucially, several highlighted the value of the *“quick support of YMI and the understanding that work would not be happening as usual”;* as well as the way YMI/ Creative Scotland’s response was informed by the sector and based on what was shared by sector representatives.

> “ Creative Scotland’s decision to pay tutors for their contracted work during lockdown has led to enormous reserves of goodwill from employees and staff, establishing a caring and productive relationship which will continue through the challenges ahead of us.

> “ I don’t think we could have done the project without the flexibility. We were able to allocate resource budgets to different things that we wouldn’t usually, for example webcams instead of instruments. It was really good to know the flexibility was there from Creative Scotland.

> “ The flexibility with amending budget plans was very much appreciated. We have […] reallocated some funds in between different activities (for instance, we reallocated some of the song-writing budget to music video making) based on the feedback we were getting from young people […]. We have run

> all our proposed changes by the YMI team and they were very supportive and understanding of our rationale.

Several interviewees also highlighted the importance of this support to their staff and freelancers, pointing to the importance of being able to continue offering freelancers/ tutors paid employment – one spoke of the expectation of freelance staff continuing to deliver their work in return for payment, based on *"open and honest dialogue",* with all *"managing the transition from live teaching to online seamlessly".* As another project highlighted, this ongoing provision resulted in tutors *"knowing what income was coming in",* at a time when *"for a number [of tutors], the YMI programme was their main/ only source of income beyond the Government Support. […] This flexibility […] meant we could continue to pay tutors and continue our relationship with them".*

All projects also highlighted the huge benefit of the ability to provide online activities to the children and young people involved. Projects spoke particularly of the benefit of social interaction during a period that was very isolating for many, the sense of continuity and normality that ongoing lessons provided and the joy activities brought during a time when many may have struggled. Some also reported reaching more young people, participants or audiences with their online activity then they would otherwise have done with live sessions, with this in some cases raising awareness of the projects (e.g., through creating an online concert that has been shared on social media).

> "For the children it was brilliant because it gave them a sense of normality – they had the same music specialist on the screen they usually had in the classroom. At a time when so little was normal! We kept a lot of the familiar songs to give them a feeling of comfort. It was great for them to have that continuity. Videos were sent home by the nursery teachers.

In offering this ongoing provision, a few projects also highlighted the gratitude they received from other school staff/ head teachers, in helping them provide home education at a time when schools were struggling to transition to home schooling – it was *"one less thing for them to do"*.

Sector learning resulting from adaption to the COVID-19-restrictions

Many projects also highlighted skills development or new insights gained through having to adapt to COVID-19-restrictions and shift their activities online. Perhaps unsurprisingly, one point often mentioned is the 'huge learning curve' with regard to basic IT skills among teachers and tutors, as well as learning what worked and what didn't work in creating engaging learning videos or online learning sessions. In some cases, these new skills or findings have resulted in grantees planning on maintaining some of the elements introduced, either through a combination of online and offline activities or by introducing them into the activities they have traditionally provided.

While clear about the limitations, the fact that online activity can also broaden reach, or help reach out to some participants who may otherwise not be able to attend also gained some notice, with some suggesting this as an important reason to continue offering a blended approach. As one project reported:

> "Digital access has also created innovation in delivery that will continue […] and this innovation potentially will support wider access to programmes through continued virtual delivery – particular for young people who are not able to attend out of school workshops as they are unable to get to the venue […] for a number of access reasons (financial, transport, rural etc).The projects that were able to continue online with regular video calling sessions were the ones that have fared the best now that things are opening back up – numbers were more or less maintained some with a small drop off, others we managed to recruit new young people during lockdown.

Future support needed by the sector

Lastly, while not a dominating feature of projects' feedback, some interviewees highlighted areas where they felt the sector would need ongoing support, either due to the impact of COVID-19, or highlighted by the sectors' reaction to the restrictions. One project for example spoke of the general difficulty in finding

funding for the arts (including music) sector as a result of COVID-19, as *"it's not feeding families, so it's not seen as essential".*

Another interviewee highlighted how musicians and artists should be 'recognised as professionals', feeling they are often not fully recognised as such in the same way as other professions (including by politicians). To this end, *"it needs investment and recognition of the value it brings".* In this context, one music service reported struggling to find freelance staff, as while they were paid for YMI projects, their other work dried up, resulting in them having to find other employment*: "we hoped they would come back, but they haven't".* If this is indeed a wider problem, it suggests that a concerted cross-sectoral effort may need to be made to enable freelance staff to transition back into their previous work, possibly by initially understanding how freelance staff were previously balancing their YMI work with other work, and what kind of employment they had in parallel with their YMI activity.

Clearly, a range of projects were highly positive about the opportunities that a blended online/ offline approach may bring but providing such an approach may require increased funding, or a reduction in traditional delivery. In response to this, one called for *"additional funding to be able to keep the innovation of digital aspects of our programmes; to offer digital learning alongside the original programme would be incredibly helpful. Taking on board learning from 2019/20 means we have a lot of opportunities to extend the programmes we deliver face-to-face and digitally, but to do this we would need to either reduce the weeks existing programmes run or cut a programme to increase finance to fund digital development and offer".*

With this in mind, another project also highlighted the challenges that the current 'half-way' situation is bringing: while some headteachers who are particularly open to the importance of music education are more engaged about getting the music service back into school (classing them as 'essential'), others are still only allowing online lessons. While this interviewee felt keenly about the value of on-site lessons as opposed to online lessons in schools, it demonstrated that even where projects may wish to return to the 'old' model exclusively, they may have to continue offering a blended approach for the foreseeable future, with all the complexity around timetabling and costs this brings.

How do the findings connect with other cultural and wider policy outcomes as well as the wider music education review 'what's going on now' and the MEPG's music manifesto for Scotland?

Finally, we consider how the findings from this report connect with the wider policy landscape in which the Youth Music Initiative sits, and how YMI contributes to wider policy outcomes. Looking first at the link to the MEPG's music education review, *What's going on now?* (2018) and music manifesto for Scotland, the review made a number of key findings focusing on:

- The ongoing and increasing inequality in access to music provision, particularly raising the issue of the difference in free/ charged provision across different local authorities, resulting in creating different opportunities for young people post school.
- The central role of schools in providing music education, but a concern around music having become 'devalued as integral part of a rounded learning experience' among schools and parents, with YMI requiring a more 'effective context and onward routes' in schools to be more effective.
- An existing 'unfulfilled appetite' among school pupils for music education, requiring the need for additional teaching staff, equipment and facilities to be met.
- The current incoherence of provision across schools, third sector organisations and private suppliers and need for more coordinated networks and long-term funding.

The report recommended, alongside generally extending equality of opportunity to all young people: more common guidance for music services; the creation of resources to raise the awareness and understanding of the impact and status of music education; ongoing professional support; regional pooling of assets to create economies of scale and increased partnership working between all parts of the music education sector. In response, the MEPG's Music Manifesto calls for embedding music-making in all schools and the removal of tuition charges;

better accreditation of music teachers; to support ongoing blended online/ offline teaching to extend reach (including relevant upskilling) and harnessing assets through more partnership working.

The current approach to data reporting provided by YMI grantees cannot respond to MEPG's claims of unfulfilled appetite for music education (i.e., there is no consistent approach to needs analysis reported) nor increasing inequality of free provision across local authorities (i.e., the Formula Fund reporting was consistently positive in this regard). Clearly, YMI cannot be expected to address all the identified strategic needs alone. However, the findings we have shared which evidence how YMI is playing a role in addressing the needs outlined above include:

- YMI's focus on target demographics who are experiencing additional barriers to access and progression in music making is motivating and supporting delivery organisations – both in and outside school – to target activities at those who would not otherwise receive such opportunities, thereby contributing to addressing existing inequalities.
- Through offering free provision, YMI to some extent combats the devaluation of music *in* education by making it easier to access. However, this issue was reflected in conversations with some local music service providers who highlighted the different level of engagement between different schools. The need for more recognition of the professionality of sector members as well as improved understanding of the benefits was mentioned by some; tying in with MEPG's calls for better accreditation and the need for further guidance and information resources, particularly for schools.
- Findings support MEPG's call for supporting a blended online/ offline approach going forward to reach more participants – both in terms of activity targeted at young people as well as CPD activity.
- Few projects referred to cross-sectoral activities or the pooling of resources suggesting this indeed may be an area of improvement as identified by MEPG and a potential areas of focus for future iterations of YMI.

Overall, YMI is clearly a major contributor to the aim of providing music education to all young people in Scotland, providing a huge proportion of the existing free music provision requested as well as supporting the sector. The MEPG's report suggests that largely it is the broader context in which YMI sits that needs improving to make the most of YMI's provision and it seems that here – in improving/ encouraging cross-sector collaboration, pooling of resources and raising the profile of best practice in music education – may be the area that YMI could respond most strategically to the needs identified (alongside continuing to provide the funded projects and CPD it is currently).

In order to consider how YMI sits within the wider context of Scotland's Cultural Strategy, youth strategy *Time to Shine* and the National Performance Framework, the below table briefly summarises how the evidence outlined in the report is aligned with these.

YMI Aim 1: Access for all

Cultural Strategy — Extend opportunities that enable people to take part in culture — Open up potential of culture as transformative opportunity across society **Time to Shine** — To address inequalities and develop mechanisms which allow access for all **National Performance Framework** — CYP: We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential — Communities: We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe — Culture: We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely — Poverty: We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally	Evidence suggests that YMI responds to these aims by: — Contributing to inclusivity by providing free music education in a variety of formats and through a variety of delivery organisations, thereby reaching many young people in target groups who would otherwise not have such opportunities. — Thereby enabling young people in hard to reach groups to access and benefit from a 'transformative' and enjoyable opportunity

YMI Aim 2: Enabling CYP to reach their potential

Cultural Strategy
- Extend opportunities that enable people to take part in culture
- Open up potential of culture as transformative opportunity across society
- Celebrate Scotland's extraordinary cultural contributions
- Place culture as central consideration across all policy areas

Time to Shine
- To create and develop mechanisms to nurture and celebrate ambition, enthusiasm and talent.

National Performance Framework
- CYP: We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential
- Communities: We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- Culture: We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
- Education: We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)
- Contributing to the development of CYP to become successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens

Evidence suggests that YMI responds to these aims by:
- Providing an experience that brings young people closer to a particular cultural form.
- Providing a cultural experience that is allowing young people to build educational and life skills that benefit them more widely, including confidence, enthusiasm and empowerment.
- Providing an education that for some supports the development of particular musical talent.

YMI Aim 3: Supporting the development of the youth music sector

Cultural Strategy
- *Develop conditions and skills for culture to thrive, so it is protected and produced for the enjoyment and enrichment of all present and future generations*
- *Value, trust and support creative people*

Time to Shine
- *To create and develop infrastructure for the CYP arts sector and ensure continuous quality improvement*

National Performance Framework
- *Culture: We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely*
- *Education: We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society*
- *Fair Work and Business: We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone*

Evidence suggests that YMI responds to these aims by:
- Supporting cultural practitioners in improving and sharing their skills, thereby contributing to the ongoing existence of such skills.
- Providing a source of income for practitioners; crucial to allowing them to deliver the above.
- Providing funding for training and a forum for gaining experience on-the-job, thereby improving quality of provision and ensuring the ongoing existence of the sector.

3.2 Recommendations

Across the report, we provided a number of recommendations focusing on areas for consideration in the future shape/ delivery of the programme or in the collection of data and evidence going forward. These are summarised below.

YMI Aim 1: Access for all

- Projects have challenges in providing exact figures with regard to numbers of CYP worked with in different targeted demographic groups often due to target groups not being mutually exclusive, sensitivity about requesting related information and the question of whether participants would necessarily self-identify with these groups. Creative Scotland may wish to consider the value and need of continuing to ask for this data in the current format.
- More generally and responding in particular to the above-mentioned issues of target groups not being mutually exclusive and self-identification, it is suggested that ongoing work to better understand and represent the ways that YMI projects are targeting or working with young people from specific demographics is continued and linked to Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) developments across Creative Scotland and in education policy more broadly.
- Home working and online delivery clearly resulted in some positive impacts and there is a call from both YMI grantees and the MEPG to support/ invest in future 'blended provision'. Given this, it may be of interest to Creative Scotland to continue to explore the benefits, limitations and needs of such hybrid models moving forward.

YMI Aim 2: Enabling CYP to reach their potential

- Evidence on impact in these areas is currently often descriptive and general, making overall evaluation against the outcome areas challenging. This suggests a need for further guidance and support in how to report on the impacts activities are having – including general encouragement to report on learning and what has not worked as intended.
- Specifically, very few projects across YMI provided details on how they determine the quality of the provision. If 'quality and enjoyability' are to remain key tenets of the first outcome in the YMI outcomes framework, then it may be useful to work further with grantees on how this can be explored, measured and reported in projects.
- The benefits of music education to wider educational attainment are both a key factor and aim in the provision of the YMI and frequently mentioned by grantees. However, while hinted at, there was little evidence of how and where music education connected with other subjects CYP were learning across the curriculum. It may be worth exploring cross-curricular activity via discreet research to better understand and articulate if these are benefits of music education.
- While many projects spoke of providing co-creation opportunities, these were often set within the relatively limited boundaries of providing participants with choices relating to repertoire or activity. This suggests that there is scope to consider how more nuance, ability and confidence could be created among practitioners to support deeper levels of co-creation with young people.

YMI Aim 3: Supporting sector development

- The finding that over half of the posts supported by YMI are temporary and part time indicates how programmatic funding such as YMI, while contributing much to the employment of music teachers and practitioners annually, is also likely contributing to portfolio and, in some cases, precarious careers. Feedback suggests that this became more evident during COVID-19, with freelancers struggling to find sufficient additional income alongside their YMI work. To support this part of the sector, further research would be of value to better understand the effects of short-term programme funding on the workforce, how freelance staff balance their YMI work with other work, what kind of employment they had in parallel with their YMI activity, and how alternative modes of support may make a difference.
- There is currently no data collected on cross-sectoral collaboration. Given the inclusion of this in YMI's outcomes, supported by the importance MEPG

places on collaboration to allow for more effective delivery and pooling of resources, it may be worth considering requesting further data to inform this area, e.g., number of other organisations grantees worked with within the musical education sector; within other sectors; new partnerships developed through YMI activity etc.

3.3 Process findings

Lastly, while not specifically asked for in the tender, we also identified a range of points that pertain more specifically to the way in which YMI is administered, rather than to its impact. Key emerging themes are listed below.

— Participants overwhelmingly found the application and funding process clear (FF: 94%, AMM: 98%) as well as the M&E process clear (FF: 94%, AMM: 95%)**.** BOP Consulting, together with the Creative Scotland team, is working at more detailed level on the question of if and how the reporting process could be updated to provide more relevant information pertinent to YMI's stated aims and outcomes. However, this data suggests that in terms of format, clarity and level of work required in fund application, management and reporting there are not significant fund-wide issues currently. One interview described it as *"clear and transparent throughout the process"* while another referred to the process as *"sensible"*, referring to a level of flexibility to accommodate different approaches or timelines.

> "[The YMI team] are sensible and run it really well! […] YMI and the music services [don't] always work at the same time. But it should all be part of the same thing! YMI get it, they understand what works, they are not too prescriptive. That's very helpful.

— Feedback from interviews suggests that projects appreciate the supportive and communicative relationship with the YMI team, which one interviewee described as resulting in the whole funding process being *"clear and transparent"*. Individual responses suggested that projects appreciate the level of interest taken by the team in their work and feel more of a sense of working together with the Creative Scotland team towards a joint interest.

> "I found them to be very good at communication [and] supportive in terms of checking in. It's nice to see that they were interested in our project! They followed our social media, asked us to feature things in their newsletter – they are invested in the projects they fund, and when [the projects] do well, they want to recognise what we do. It's really encouraging.

— Several projects however hinted at challenges both with regard to the annual funding cycle, with as yet no guarantee that funding will be provided in the subsequent year (in particular given that the programme has already been going on for so long), as well as the timing of funding announcements, which are currently not aligned with the school year, and thereby resulting in a shorter time frame during which activities can take place.

> "For us in trying to do our one-year projects, it's important that we are able to start at the new school year and finish it at the end. With the round of funding, we learn in November if we get the funding, so we have to start in January, so we can only run for two terms. We would need to know about funding in March to be able to do all terms. It used to be like that.

One interviewee suggested that it would be useful for YMI to remind projects to hand in their interim reports *"they are a good way of seeing how the project is doing, it makes you stop and think",* but currently *"they are easy to forget to do, you don't get a reminder and you are not penalised [if you don't return them]".* The interviewee felt that a firmer deadline and (if necessary) reminder would help projects to deliver a summary of the project, which *"would help us centre us again".* This indicates a recognised need of a culture shift towards using M&E for organisational reflection and learning; something that Creative Scotland as fund managers can develop further with the sector in the years ahead. However, it may not need to take the form of 'interim reports', which are not currently required by Creative Scotland for most projects; instead, this may take the form of check-in calls or similar mid-way through the projects to allow for a moment of reflection.

4. Appendix

4.1 Access to Music Making projects included in the reporting period

The 12 projects highlighted in orange include those that ended after the start of the first COVID-19 lockdown towards the end of March 2020.

Figure 16 AMM projects included in the reporting period

Organisation	Local Authority	Amount awarded
A.R.Ts Afternoon	Edinburgh	£39,984.00
Articulate Cultural Trust	Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, Dundee, Falkirk	£20,000.00
Artsplay Highland	Highland	£38,739.00
Canongate Youth	Edinburgh	£39,673.00
City of Edinburgh Council	Edinburgh	£28,000.00
Common Wheel	Glasgow	£25,221.00
Feis Rois	Highland	£54,950.00
Fersands and Fountain Community Project	Aberdeen	£14,987.00
Gael Music	West Dunbartonshire	£24,000.00
Gael Music	Scottish Borders	£22,000.00
Girvan Youth Pipe Band Association	South Ayrshire	£9,740.00
Hands On Studios	Highland	£4,990.00
Hands Up for Trad	South Lanarkshire	£27,655.00
Hot Chocolate Trust	Dundee	£20,000.00
Kibble Education and Care Centre	Renfrewshire	£20,493.00
KOR! Records CIC	Glasgow, West Lothian	£33,734.00
Laura Mandleberg	Argyll & Bute	£7,870.00
Loretto Care (now Wheatley Care)	Glasgow	£36,849.00
Love Music Productions	Edinburgh	£13,744.00
Love Music Productions	Edinburgh	£16,597.00
Mull Music Makers	Argyll & Bute	£31,000.00
National Youth Orchestras of Scotland (NYOS)	National	£90,000.00
North Edinburgh Arts	Edinburgh	£20,000.00
NYCOS	National	£35,013.00
Outer Hebrides Music Trust	Western Isles	£20,000.00
Reel Youth Media	Edinburgh	£28,281.00
Scottish Book Trust	National	£75,000.00
Sottish Culture & Traditions, Aberdeen	Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, National	£22,218.00
Scottish Music Centre	National	£40,000.00
Scottish Music Centre (Music +)	National	£90,000.00

Sistema Scotland	Stirling, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee	£89,457.00
Soundsystems Project CIC	Dumfries & Galloway, Glasgow, North Ayrshire	£32,500.00
Station House Media Unit	Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire	£33,614.00
The BIG Project	Edinburgh	£36,844.00
Tinderbox Collective	Edinburgh	£40,000.00
Toonspeak Young People's Theatre	Glasgow	£25,000.00
West College Scotland	Inverclyde	£17,415.00
Whitburn Youth Band	West Lothian	£29,500.00
Whitburn Youth Band	West Lothian	£30,000.00
YMCA Glenrothes	Fife	£37,186.00

4.2 Strengthening Youth Music projects included in the reporting period

Figure 17 SYM projects included in the reporting period

Organisation	Local Authority	Amount awarded
ABC Creative Music	National	£20,000.00
NYCOS	National	£15,000.00
Sensatronic Lab	National	£15,000.00

4.3 Regional distribution of funds 2019/20

Figure 18 Grants distributed per Local Authority (2019/20)

Local Authority	AMM projects	SYM projects
Aberdeen		£15,000
Aberdeenshire, Angus, Edinburgh		£14,500
Argyll & Bute	£17,000	
Dundee	£20,000	
Dumfries & Galloway; North Ayrshire	£27,000	
East Ayrshire	£29,600	
East Lothian, Edinburgh	£18,000	
Edinburgh	£85,580	
Edinburgh, Dundee, Scottish Borders, Dumfries & Galloway	£40,000	
Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee		£20,000
Edinburgh, South Lanarkshire	£25,430	
Glasgow	£91,334	
Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Stirling	£84,000	
Glasgow, Inverness, Aberdeen, Perth, Dumfries and Galloway	£85,000	
Glasgow, South Lanarkshire	£20,000	
Glasgow, South Lanarkshire, Falkirk, Stirling, Renfrewshire. Most large group activity in Glasgow.	£37,000	
Highland	£41,859	£4,500
Inverclyde	£14,984	
Moray	£20,000	
North Lanarkshire	£18,000	
Scottish Borders	£4,812	
South Lanarkshire	£27,332	
Stirling	£5,000	

West Lothian	£4,280	
National	£499,220	£16,600
TOTAL	**£1,215,431**	**£70,600**

Figure 19 Number of projects per Local Authority (2019/20)

Local Authority	Number of AMM & SYM projects
Glasgow	6
Edinburgh	6
South Lanarkshire	4
Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire	4
Dumfries and Galloway	3
Dundee	3
Scottish Borders	2
Stirling	2
Argyll and Bute	2
North Lanarkshire	1
West Lothian	1
Renfrewshire	1
Falkirk	1
Perth and Kinross	1
North Ayrshire	1
East Ayrshire	1
Angus	1
East Lothian	1
Moray	1
East Renfrewshire	1
Inverclyde	1
Highlands, including Western Isles, Shetland Isles, Orkney Isles	1
South Ayrshire	0
East Dunbartonshire	0
West Dunbartonshire	0
Fife	0
Clackmannanshire	0