

Creative Scotland

# Youth Music Initiative 2021-2022 Evaluation

Final Report – FINAL

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**BOP**  
Consulting



# Contents

<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 The Youth Music Initiative.....	4
1.2 This evaluation.....	6
<b>2. Findings .....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 Aim 1: Creating access for all.....	10
2.2 Aim 2: Enabling children and young people to achieve their potential in and through music making.....	20
2.3 Aim 3: Supporting the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of children and young people.....	34
<b>3. Enablers and challenges to successful YMI delivery.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>4. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>45</b>
4.1 Recommendations.....	46
<b>5. Appendix.....</b>	<b>48</b>
5.1 Access to Music Making projects included in the reporting period.....	48
5.2 Strengthening Youth Music projects included in the reporting period .....	50
5.3 Regional distribution of funds 2021/22 .....	50

## List of Figures

Figure 1 Youth Music Initiative programme strands .....	5
Figure 2 YMI Evaluation Framework 2021-2022.....	9
Figure 3 YMI 2021/22: Number of children and young people participating in YMI.....	11
Figure 4 Total YMI participants over the years.....	11
Figure 5 YMI average participant figures across all projects over the years....	11
Figure 6 Access to Music Making: Proportion of projects reaching different numbers of participants .....	13

Figure 7: Activities delivered as intended.....	13
Figure 8 Formula Fund: Hours of involvement received by participants.....	14
Figure 9 Access to Music Making: Nature of involvement offered .....	15
Figure 10 Formula Fund: Priority groups reached (Targeted and Non-Targeted) .....	16
Figure 11 Access to Music Making: Priority groups reached .....	17
Figure 12 Impact of YMI activity on participants' mental health and wellbeing..	23
Figure 13 YMI 2021/22: Employment created .....	34
Figure 14 Formula Fund: Roles involved in delivery .....	36
Figure 15 YMI 2021/22: Number of Strengthening beneficiaries over the years .....	37
Figure 16 YMI 2021/22: No of people who benefitted from training and CPD linked to the YMI activity.....	37
Figure 17 Access to Music Making projects included in the reporting period ...	48
Figure 18 Strengthening Youth Music projects included in the reporting period .....	50
Figure 19 Number of informal projects delivered in each Local Authority (2021/22) .....	50
Figure 20 Awards distributed per Local Authority & merged (2019/20) .....	51



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# Executive Summary

## The Youth Music Initiative in its 20<sup>th</sup> year

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 emphasis on widening access and participation. It currently operates with an annual budget of £9m and works with children and young people from birth to age 25. The programme seeks not only to develop music-specific skills, but also to impact positively on other areas of children and young people’s wider development as well as well-being. This is set out within YMI’s three aims:

- **Aim 1:** Create access to high quality music making opportunities for children and young people, particularly those that would not normally have the chance to participate (including across identified priority groups)
- **Aim 2:** Enable children and young people to achieve their potential in and through music making
- **Aim 3:** Support the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of children and young people via training and CPD.

To address these aims, YMI funds are distributed via four programme strands:

- **Formula Fund:** distributed to all Local Authorities in Scotland to support delivery in school settings
- **Access to Music Making:** supports music making projects delivered by third sector organisations and individuals
- **Strengthening Youth Music:** supports sector development projects delivered via third sector organisations and individuals
- **YMI CPD and Training Fund:** administered through the Scottish Music Centre to support third sector organisations and individuals

Based on this approach, YMI has since 2003 reached hundreds of thousands of participants every year since 2003, including in the priority groups, who have been able to benefit from music and music making opportunities. 2022 now

marks a key milestone for YMI as its 20th anniversary year. To celebrate this, a range of activities and publications have been arranged throughout the year, focusing on four messages:

1. Music brings joy, it has the power to change our emotions, make us happy and generally feel good about ourselves
2. Music creates safe spaces, resilience, and boosts health and wellbeing
3. Music can bring people together and build stronger communities
4. Youth music can build careers, pathways, and sector development

## The 2021/22 annual impact evaluation

YMI is evaluated on an annual basis and as such has developed a strong body of evidence with regard to outcomes achieved over the past years. In the context of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Creative Scotland this year sought a different approach to the evaluation, taking a “*step away from a focus on outcomes [only]*” and putting a stronger focus on understanding the programme’s impact through the case studies.

Alongside review of 82 End of Project Reports submitted between January 2021 and July 2022, this evaluation therefore focused on the creation of eight in-depth, reflective case studies, designed to investigate key thematic focus areas identified through an initial grantee focus group. This allowed the evaluators to initially understand where those closest to project delivery feel YMI’s biggest impacts lie and then investigate these further; providing an opportunity to identify insights into YMI’s impact beyond the existing outcome framework.

A large proportion of projects within the evaluation period were delivered during Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions in 2021 and ’22. They were thus impacted by ongoing challenges such as school closures, restrictions on face-to-face meetings, increased levels of mental health issues among participants, limited access to venues and staffing shortages.

*BOP would like to thank all grantee workshop participants and case study interviewees for their time and contributions to this evaluation.*



## Creating access for all

Despite most projects facing ongoing Covid-related restrictions and challenges, they were overall successful in creating access to music education:

- YMI projects reached a **total of 362,483 children and young people**, over 80k more than in 2019/2020 (178,398 Formula Fund participants and 184,112 Access participants<sup>1</sup>).
- The majority of projects **delivered their intended activities**, with a notable increase in Access projects exceeding expected delivery.
- Average Access participant figures rose considerably, with data suggesting that projects adapted to Covid-related circumstances by focusing on small groups or by reaching large numbers of participants via online delivery. Increases in ongoing activity may be a result of projects relying upon more regular, planned activity with a core group of participants during Covid.
- Formula Fund projects saw a slight decrease in participant numbers and hours delivered, which is likely to be a reflection of Local Authorities being forced to adapt or reduce activity in the face of increased staff and overhead costs with decreasing or standstill funding from YMI since 2015/16.
- Formula Fund and Access projects continue to **target and reach participants across the priority groups**, in particular those residing in areas of high social and economic deprivation. Projects worked in target areas; connected with referral and delivery partners; as well as broadened their offer to draw in a wider range of young people with a variety of interests.
- YMI continues to provide an offer to children and young people residing both in **Scotland's urban and rural areas**.

## Enabling children and young people to achieve their potential

Focus group members in particular highlighted two broad areas of impact of YMI-funded activity on children and young people, which were further evidenced by the case studies and End of Project reports:

1. YMI provides **opportunities for children and young people to progress from early music education to training and in some cases a career**, by supporting 'a pathway of projects' through which participants can move as they get older. Within this context, focus group members highlighted YMI's approach to encouraging projects to embed traineeships within their activities as a valuable way to introduce young people to sector careers.
2. YMI contributes to **participants' mental health and wellbeing** by supporting projects that are 'informal', flexible and engaging; are participant-led; include singing and performing; are group-based and often longer-term:
  - YMI's informal, youth-led music education approach promotes enjoyment and reduces stress
  - YMI-funded activities support skills development, self-efficacy and confidence, supported by the inclusion of participant-led approaches and the provision of space for creativity and performance opportunities
  - YMI-funded activities support bonding, friendship and social confidence among participants; supported e.g., by group work and long-standing activity. This was highlighted as particularly beneficial during the height of the Covid pandemic, with projects providing a regular point of contact, even if online.

## Supporting the development of the youth music sector

Projects were overall successful in continuing to support the youth music sector despite the ongoing challenges imposed by Covid:

- In total, **YMI supported 1,182 music education posts**. In addition, Access and Strengthening projects involved 200 volunteers and 114 trainees. With the pandemic negatively impacting the stability of work for freelancers,

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<sup>1</sup> The majority of Access participants were reached via the Scottish Book Trust.

some projects highlighted the support of YMI in allowing them to hire freelancers. Two projects mentioned that new modes of delivery due to Covid allowed them to reach out to more freelancers than previously.

- Overall, **Strengthening projects reached 10,214 sector beneficiaries** including tutors, local authority staff and MEPG members, a significant increase compared to the previous reporting period.<sup>2</sup>
- **In addition, 5,631 people benefitted from training and CPD** linked to YMI activity through Formula Fund, Access and Strengthening projects, with three-quarters delivered via Formula Fund – more than previously, supported in particular through one Local Authority’s activity. This demonstrates that projects were able to deliver training activity despite the limitations of the pandemic. A further 44 individuals and organisations accessed training through receiving YMI CPD & Training Fund grants.

The grantee focus group highlighted two key sector impact areas of YMI, which were further reflected in the case studies and End of Project reports:

1. YMI projects see a **strong presence of and value in partnerships**. Evidence suggests that receiving YMI funds over several years and active encouragement of (cross-sector) partnership work by YMI has supported relationships and networks across a wider range of partners within local communities and further afield. Projects reported that this supports the creation of an improved offer for participants; in some cases leading to projects and delivery organisations becoming embedded and long-standing **local community resources**.
2. YMI supports the **relationship between informal music tuition and formal education settings**, with some indication of such involvement impacting on members of the formal (music) education sector, providing insight into new approaches to music tuition. While evidence suggests that teachers see the benefit of YMI activity once introduced to it, some projects

highlighted ongoing challenges in engaging schoolteachers in the first place.

## Conclusion

- **2021/22 was a highly successful year for YMI**, with most projects delivering as intended, reaching large numbers of young people from across the priority groups and supporting high numbers of employment and training to those working in the sector. This suggests that many projects benefited from the experience they had gained in delivering during pandemic-related restrictions by the time of this funding round, allowing them to adapt and plan in these circumstances and deliver successfully despite them.
- Removing the focus of this evaluation from YMI’s existing outcomes to a **more open evaluation approach revealed some strong impact areas** that have previously received less attention, around YMI’s impact on:
  - children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing
  - children and young people’s progression routes
  - sector partnerships and the creation of ‘community resources’
  - the ability of ‘informal’ YMI projects to impact the formal sector
- Evidence strongly suggested that **these outcomes were hugely supported by YMI’s key characteristics, including both its structure** (it’s longevity and willingness to repeat fund, allowing projects to embed, create partnerships and provide a continued offer) **and its approach** (promotion of ‘informal’ tuition based on enjoyment, engagement, group and youth-led music activities; and its promotion of cross-sector partnerships).
- Taken together, this perhaps suggests that fundamentally, **YMI is not just a ‘music programme’** (indeed with strong existing evidence of success in music education), **but that just as much, it is a ‘youth programme’** which supports children and young people in a range of different ways.

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<sup>2</sup> The majority of participants were reached via the Music Education Partnership Group.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The Youth Music Initiative

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. It currently operates with an annual budget of £9 million and focusses on working with children and young people from birth to age 25.

The programme delivers the Scottish Government’s commitment that every child in Scotland should be offered a year of free music tuition by the time they leave primary school. To this end, each of Scotland’s 32 local authorities receives funding through YMI to allow children and young people across Scotland to take their first steps in their musical journey through a range of inclusive music making activities in school settings. In addition, YMI supports music making in informal and community settings with the particular aim of reaching young people who would not normally have the chance to participate.

The programme reflects the recognition, as set out in the Music Education Partnership Group’s 2020-2025 strategy<sup>3</sup>, 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*”.<sup>4</sup>

YMI thus seeks not only to develop music-specific skills, but also to impact positively on other areas of children’s and young people’s wider development as well as well-being. 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):

- **Aim 1:** Create access to high quality music making opportunities for children and young people, particularly those that would not normally have the chance to participate
- **Aim 2:** Enable children and young people to achieve their potential in and through music making
- **Aim 3:** 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 and education opportunities via music education, the Youth Music Initiative 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:

- Scotland’s 10-year 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 nation’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 children and young people as possible, YMI funds are distributed via four programme strands, which reach and/ or benefit participants via local authorities, the third sector, and individual freelance practitioners, with the majority of the budget directed towards programmes in (primary) school settings (see Figure 1 below).

<sup>3</sup> 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 health and wellbeing. At all ages, the practice of music develops transferable skills...*”

<sup>4</sup> Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland (2016), *Guidance for Instrumental Teaching in Scotland*

**Figure 1 Youth Music Initiative programme strands**

YMI strand	Mode of delivery	Aim	Budget
<b>Formula Fund</b>	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
<b>Access to Music Making</b>	Non-formal (i.e., 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
<b>Strengthening Youth Music</b>	Via third sector organisations/ individuals	Improving the youth music sector infrastructure and services via strategic action research and training	
<b>CPD and Training Fund</b>	Administered through the Scottish Music Centre Funding to third sector organisations/ individuals	Supporting those working outside school settings to strengthen youth music in Scotland	

Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

## The Youth Music Initiative’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Based on the above approach, the Youth Music Initiative has, since 2003, reached hundreds of thousands of children and young people every year who have been able to benefit from music education: learning about music, making music, as well as benefiting from its wider impacts – including those who would not otherwise have had opportunities to participate in music making.

2022 now marks a key milestone for YMI as its twentieth anniversary year. Since its inception, it has become one of Creative Scotland’s most longstanding funds, which has had a significant influence on a large number of young people’s lives, and has, over time, increasingly revealed the positive impact that music can have on participants. To raise awareness of and celebrate this

milestone, a range of activities, events and publications have been arranged throughout the anniversary year, focusing on four messages:

1. Music brings joy, it has the power to change our emotions, make us happy and generally feel good about ourselves
2. Music creates safe spaces, resilience, and boosts overall health and wellbeing
3. Music can bring people together and build stronger communities
4. Youth music can build careers, pathways, and sector development

Although the evaluation is not a direct part of these celebrations, it nevertheless reflects and refers to these four key messages.

## Key contextual factors of the reporting period

Alongside the general overview of the Youth Music Initiative set out above, a number of contextual factors are particularly relevant to the period covered by this latest YMI evaluation. These significantly influenced the environment in which the projects operated, and it is therefore important to bear them in mind in understanding the challenges and achievements of YMI in this funding period:

Firstly, the total YMI funding available for organisations to fund project activity has slightly contracted in recent years, impacting in particular the Formula Fund. Whilst total YMI funding distributed until 2015/16 lay at £10m, this reduced from 2016/17 onwards to £9m. 2020/21 saw a further £1m cut to the Formula Fund; this was compensated by additional emergency funding through the Youth Arts Fund. However, in practice this has meant that the **YMI award to Local Authorities has slightly reduced and then remained at a standstill in recent years, whilst the cost of staff and overheads has increased**. Whilst this has also affected Access projects, it is possible that delivery organisations may have been able to source increased match-funding to support their projects in a period over the past couple of years which has seen increased recognition of the value in youth programmes to support children and young people through a challenging period.

Secondly, many of the Access to Music Making and Strengthening Youth Music projects included in this round of reporting were **still delivering during Scotland's COVID-19 lockdowns, restrictions and containment measures in 2021 and '22** and were thus impacted by challenges such as school closures, restrictions on face-to-face meetings as well as increased levels of mental health issues among children and young people. However, compared to the projects in the previous evaluation period, many of those in this evaluation period were aware of and had some experience in managing such restrictions by the time that they planned their projects. It is likely that they were therefore more prepared than previous projects by building in new ways of working and contingency plans. All Formula Fund projects meanwhile took place between August 2021 and July 2022; i.e., following the final lockdown period. Although the majority of restrictions in school settings had been lifted, some remained, as did related challenges such as limited access to venues and staffing shortages.

Thirdly, a significant change was made to the (school-based) youth music ecology **from the academic year 2021-2022** onwards (i.e. August 2021 - end of June 2022, the period covered by this evaluation), with **the removal of fees for instrumental tuition at school** due to a £7m+ funding package from the Scottish Government. Local Authorities in Scotland deliver school-based music education via three strands:

- Music is included within Scotland's Curriculum, with activity delivered by class teachers as a part of children and young people's broad education (nursery – S3) and by music teachers as part of senior phase (S4-6) SQA qualifications.
- YMI enhances existing delivery in schools and focusses on providing young people with their first experience of music making. Activity is often delivered in primary school settings to whole classes, or in non-mainstream settings such as in additional support needs settings and Special Schools.
- The teaching of music instruments is delivered by the Instrumental Music Service within each local authority and is an optional offer for young people.

Until the beginning of the academic year 2021-2022, the Instrumental Music Service was in many areas part-funded by the parents and partly by the Local

Authorities. This changed this year, with all charges to parents being scrapped and the Local Authorities and Scottish government taking the fees. The key aim of this change was to make provision of the Instrumental Music Service more equitable, i.e., attainable to all children and young people keen to learn to play an instrument irrespective of their parents' ability to pay for the tuition. The change has meant that Local Authorities now have more agency about *where* and *how* they focus the Instrumental Music Service offer, in order to make it more equitable: some have for example started providing whole class tuition, whilst others are trying to target specific priority groups. It thus further feeds into the aims of the National Performance Framework and Scottish Cultural Strategy to reduce inequality and was a key element in the SNPs election manifesto ahead of the May 2021 election. However, as this is a relatively recent development, little is known as yet about its consequences - it will therefore be instructive to review in how far it has the desired impact, once the changes have been fully embedded across Scotland.

## 1.2 This evaluation

### 1.2.1 The brief

This evaluation of the Youth Music Initiative includes all End of Project Reports that were submitted between January 2021 and July 2022. This slightly extends the evaluation period for this annual impact report from the usual period of 12 months (July-July) in previous impact reports to 18 months. This is a result of the hiatus in YMI's annual funding approach posed by Creative Scotland's emergency Covid-19 response in the form of the Youth Arts Fund (YAF) in 2020, which incorporated YMI for this period with EOPs flowing into the YAF evaluation. Following the end of YAF, some adaptation to the collection of YMI EOP's was needed this year to bridge a gap in reporting and get YMI reporting back onto the July-July pattern.

In the context of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, for this year's evaluation, Creative Scotland sought a slightly different approach to the evaluation compared to previous years.



Past evaluations primarily focused on drawing out impact and learning against YMI's short-term outcomes. Whilst key performance indicators still need to be reported against this year as in the previous years, this year's aim of the evaluation is to "*step away from a focus on outcomes*" only, and instead to put a stronger focus on understanding the programme's impact on the participants, staff and communities who make and benefit from YMI, through a selection of in-depth case studies.

### 1.2.2 Our approach

Based on the above brief, we designed an approach that focused on the creation of eight detailed case studies that both contribute to the Youth Music Initiative's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, whilst also being insightful, evaluative, and reflective. The key benefit of this approach is the added depth of insight which case studies can bring, and which data alone cannot provide: helping us to delve deeper into the programme's impact by allowing us to look at example projects and speaking with the people who are most closely involved; and to spread the investigative net wider by keeping it more open, thereby potentially highlighting new insights into the programme's varied impacts.

To support this, we designed an approach based on initial grantee participation in order to identify the thematic focus areas for the case studies. The key aim here was to ensure that the opportunity of such openness "*beyond the focus on outcomes*" was taken to first understand from those closest to the programme's delivery where *they* feel YMI's biggest impacts lie, beyond what we think we know, and then to investigate this further through the creation of case studies and the review of the qualitative responses provided in the End of Project Reports (EOPs). The hope was that in this way, the case studies may potentially highlight some interesting new insights into YMI's impact beyond the restrictions of the outcome framework. Were certain impacts previously missed? Is YMI's impact particularly strong in some areas?

Alongside this, ongoing year-on-year data monitoring was also undertaken, to allow for an ongoing and comparable understanding of YMI's reach and impact across the years.

## Key steps of the methodology

### 1. Grantee workshop to identify YMI's 'most significant' impacts

The project began with a workshop with Youth Music Initiative grantees to which all grantees were invited. Six grantees took part, representing three of YMI's four strands, a range of different organisational backgrounds and coming from different regions across Scotland.

As outlined above, the aim of the workshop was to discuss the Initiative's impacts with those delivering the projects first-hand. The workshop was based on an approach similar to that of the 'Most Significant Change' approach, which asks grantees to put forward in brief a story which demonstrates how for them a grant or programme etc. has the *most significant* impact; a number of these stories are then chosen by a representative grantee cohort for being the most representative of the programme's impact.

Whilst limited time meant that this approach could not be taken in full, the workshop focused around identifying where grantees felt YMI's 'most significant' impacts lie – including through example stories – and then discussing these together. This approach identified a number of areas in which grantees felt that YMI's impact was particularly strong. Many of these interestingly reflect the key messages identified to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as referenced in the main body of report. These areas were then used to identify themes and projects for the eight case studies, and as a basis for a rapid review of qualitative information provided in the End of Project Reports (see the Evaluation Framework in Figure 2 below for more detail on this).

### 2. Eight in-depth case studies

Following identification of the thematic focus areas for the case studies through the grantee workshop, the YMI team at Creative Scotland short-listed a number of projects which would allow us to drill deeper into these areas, whilst bearing in mind spread across funding streams, delivery organisations and geography to ensure that the case studies were representative of the overall fund (Figure 2).

For each case study, we arranged site visits and/or interviews with up to three stakeholders, including the project managers as well as participants, educators

and/ or partners. Whilst aiming to delve further into the identified theme for each case study, the interviews also sought to look across the Initiative's three key aims to gain insight into impact, achievements as well as challenges and learning opportunities.

### **3. Analysis of the quantitative data included in the End-of-Project reports**

In parallel, we collated and analysed the quantitative data included in the End-of-Project reports for the Formula Fund, Access Fund and Strengthening Youth Music strands, as well as reviewing the data for the YMI CPD and Training Fund included in the Scottish Music Centre's final report.

As previously, data was analysed against the context of this evaluation period as well as compared with the data from previous evaluation periods.

### **4. Review of qualitative information included in the End-of-Project reports**

We also undertook a rapid review of the qualitative responses provided in the End-of-Project reports for the Formula Fund, Access Fund and Strengthening Youth Music strands.

Rather than focusing the review on the YMI existing outcomes (which we felt would reveal very similar messages to last year's evaluation), the focus here lay on three questions based on the themes identified by the grantee workshop and chosen together with the YMI team (see the Evaluation Framework in Figure 2 for details).

### **5. Reporting**

Finally, all the above information was collated in a final report that accompanies the eight detailed case studies.

#### **1.2.3 Evaluation Framework**

The below Figure 2 lays out the Evaluation Framework on which this year's evaluation is based. This is based on the programme's existing framework –

including the programme's three overarching aims as well as existing short-term outcomes.

However, for the purpose of this year's evaluation, the latter are included largely for reference, with the focus of this year's evaluation lying on the three high-level aims only, in order to allow us to look beyond the existing series of short-term outcomes.

In addition, the Evaluation Framework lays out the information used to evidence impact across the three aims, including:

- The quantitative data included in the End of Project Reports, as in previous years
- The information gained through development of the case studies
- The qualitative information included in the End of Project Reports, based on three focused questions

In addition to the above, the evaluation also reports on insight identified regarding the changing context in which YMI is operating; in particular:

- the ongoing challenges and restrictions due to and in the aftermath of COVID and any learning organisations gained by dealing with these in delivering the projects
- the recent changes to the youth music ecology through ending tuition fees for Instrumental Music Services in Scotland and whether and how this has impacted projects to date.

*BOP would like to thank all grantee workshop participants and case study interviewees for their time and contributions to this evaluation.*

**Figure 2 YMI Evaluation Framework 2021-2022**

YMI Aims	YMI short-term Outcomes	Quantitative data from EOPs to evidence the aims and outcomes	Focus of case studies & analysis of qualitative information in the EOPs to evidence achievement of YMI aims, as identified through the grantee workshop
<p><b>1. Create access to high quality music making opportunities for CYP, particularly those that would not normally have the chance to participate</b></p>	<p>1. CYP have more opportunities to take part in enjoyable and quality music-making activities</p> <p>2. CYP who would not normally have the chance to participate take part in music-making activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— No. of participants in YMI projects</li> <li>— No. of opportunities provided by YMI's for music making</li> <li>— Demographics of participants (ethnicity, age, location)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Provision of <b>stable, relied-upon community resource</b> based on strong partnerships, supported by YMI's longevity of funding and willingness to repeat funding (Case studies: Canongate Youth and Mull Music Makers) <i>Aligns with 20th anniversary message "Music can bring people together and build stronger communities"</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Enable CYP to achieve their potential in/ through music making</b></p>	<p>3. CYP develop their music and music-making skills</p> <p>4. CYP develop their skills for life, learning and work</p> <p>5. CYP increase their awareness of music and culture across Scotland, the UK and the world</p> <p>6. CYP influence or lead youth music opportunities and have their voice heard in design and delivery</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Providing opportunity for young <b>people to progress by creating pathways</b> of long-term projects through which young people can move as they get older and progress (Case studies: Scottish Brass Band Association and A.R.Ts Afternoon) <i>Aligns with 20th anniversary message "Youth music can build careers, pathways, and sector development"</i></li> <li>— Creating <b>space for YP interaction, bonding, friendship</b> groups, mutual support – with impact on wellbeing (EOP review, Case studies: Dumfries and Galloway Council and Edinburgh College) <i>Aligns with 20th anniversary messages "Music can bring people together and build stronger communities" &amp; "Music creates safe spaces, resilience, and boosts overall health and wellbeing"</i></li> <li>— The <b>value of YMI's 'informal' approach</b> to music education including singing, live music, performance, participant-led activity, and its impact <b>on wellbeing</b> (EOP review) <i>Aligns with 20th anniversary message "Music brings joy, it has the power to change our emotions, make us happy and generally feel good about ourselves"</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Support the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of CYP via training/ CPD</b></p>	<p>7. People delivering youth music develop their skills and confidence</p> <p>8. Organisations in the music sector and beyond work together to create progression opportunities that strengthen the sector for the benefit of CYP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— No. of posts supported (temporary/ permanent)</li> <li>— No. of artists/ creative practitioners/ teachers/ volunteers who benefited from training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Creation of <b>links between formal and informal music instruction</b>, impacting formal music tuition practice and resulting in mutual benefits (EOP review, Case studies: Limelight Music and Renfrewshire Beat Buddies)</li> <li>— Provision of stable, relied-upon community resource based on <b>strong partnerships</b>, supported by YMI's longevity of funding and willingness to repeat funding (Case studies: Canongate Youth and Mull Music Makers) <i>Aligns with 20th anniversary message "Music can bring people together and build stronger communities"</i></li> </ul>

## 2. Findings

This evaluation includes all YMI End of Project Reports (EOPs) that were submitted anytime between January 2021 and July 2022. In total, it is based on the returns of 82 projects, including:

- 32 Formula Fund projects (via 31 Local Authorities<sup>5</sup> and Jordanhill School) – with activities taking place between August 2021 and July 2022
- 46 Access to Music Making projects – with project activities taking place between early 2017 and summer 2022; and
- 4 Strengthening Youth Music projects – with project activities taking place between April 2020 and September 2021.

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

As Formula Fund awards are given to all Local Authorities each year, the number of Formula Fund EOPs included within each annual impact report is generally the same each year. The number of Access and Strengthening projects included in each annual impact report can however slightly vary depending on how many projects complete within the given evaluation period. This year's number of Access and Strengthening is slightly higher than in the previous reporting period, where analysis was based on 41 Access and 3 Strengthening projects.<sup>6</sup>

40 of the 50 non-formal projects included in this report (36 Access, 4 Strengthening) delivered activity during periods of lockdown in Scotland.<sup>7</sup> Most therefore experienced some form of pandemic-related infringements, meaning that they had to adapt or delay delivery.<sup>8</sup> However, many of the projects planned and started their activities in the knowledge of these limitations (or at least having experienced them previously and in the knowledge that they may occur

again), as opposed to many of the projects in the previous report, who planned 'normal' face-to-face delivery and were then unexpectedly met with the catastrophic impact of the first lockdown and the urgent need to find entirely new ways to deliver.

While all Formula Fund projects included in this reporting period were delivered following the lockdown periods, meaning that the majority of restrictions in school settings had been lifted by then, some restrictions such as ongoing social distancing or mask-wearing measures in schools will have remained in parts, as well as related challenges such as limited access to venues and staffing shortages.

### 2.1 Aim 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”*.

#### **Total children and young people participant numbers increased considerably, with a particular increase among Access projects**

YMI projects included in this period benefitted a total of 362,483 children and young people (178,398 participants via Formula Fund projects and 184,112 via Access projects), over 80k more than in 2019/2020. As in previous years, the vast majority of Access participants (nearly 3/4) were reached via the Scottish Book Trust's (SBT) Bookbug project (134,752), including approximately 54,000 online participants between 2020-2022.

<sup>7</sup> End of March 2021 to end of May 2021, as well as beginning of January 2021 to beginning of April 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Some therefore moved from the previous reporting period into this reporting period.

<sup>5</sup> The number is usually 33 Formula Fund projects; however, this year, one Local Authority did not submit their EOP in time for inclusion in this evaluation.

<sup>6</sup> This is also a reflection of the slightly longer evaluation period covered by this year's annual impact report (January – July) compared to previous reports (July – July) as outlined in the introduction under section 1.2.1.



Excluding SBT data as an outlier, average participant numbers per project were by far the highest among the school-based Formula Fund projects; almost five times higher than among Access projects.

**Figure 3 YMI 2021/22: Number of children and young people participating in YMI**

	Formula Fund	Access	Total
<b>EOPs</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>74</b>
CYP involved across all projects	178,398	184,112 (SBT: 134,752 <sup>9</sup> )	<b>362,483</b> <b>(SBT: 134,752)</b>
Average number of CYP involved per project	5,575	1,204 <sup>10</sup> (excluding SBT)	<b>3,120</b> <b>(excluding SBT)</b>

Source: BOP Consulting (2022).

A longitudinal analysis of total children and young people participating in YMI shows that whilst overall YMI figures have consistently increased over the past six years, type of involvement has slightly changed, with a decrease among both Formula Fund participants, but an increase in Access participants (including as well as excluding SBT's figures) (Figure 4). It is likely that this is at least in part due to YMI's budget slightly reducing and then remaining at a standstill since 2015/16, while costs for staff and overheads have increased, as outlined in section 1.1. Local Authorities have been particularly affected by this (resulting in a slight reduction in activity), while third sector organisations may have been able to increase match-funding from alternative sources.

<sup>9</sup> This figure includes both online and in-person participants.

<sup>10</sup> Including SBT, the average number of participants involved per project is 4,384.

<sup>11</sup> Note that in previous years, this table included beneficiaries of Strengthening projects. However, as Strengthening does not include CYP participants but rather sector member beneficiaries, the decision has been made to change the reporting approach and move reporting on Strengthening data to section 2.3, which reviews

**Figure 4 Total YMI participants over the years<sup>11</sup>**

Strand	2021/22	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Formula Fund CYP participants	178,398	182,409	199,372	195,296	202,210	215,219
Access CYP participants	184,112 (SBT: 134,752)	95,732 (SBT: 88,736)	44,239 (SBT: 31,676)	45,357	40,604	41,235
<b>Total across all strands</b>	<b>362,483</b>	<b>277,864</b>	<b>243,611</b>	<b>240,653</b>	<b>242,814</b>	<b>256,454</b>

Source: BOP Consulting (2022) & Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (2019)

### Evidence suggests that Access participant numbers changed during Covid, with an increase in the proportion of small and very large projects

Notably, the number of children and young people benefitting from Access projects has increased significantly over the past six years, reaching a peak in the latest 2021/2022 reporting period, even when excluding figures from the Scottish Book Trust. This strong increase in participation numbers for Access projects may in part be explained by an increase in funded projects included within the reporting period (46 projects this year compared to 41 in the previous reporting period<sup>12</sup>). However, it is also explained by individual projects on average reaching significantly more young people this year: where the average number of participants per Access projects was below 200 in 2018/19 and 2019/20, it increased significantly to around 1,200 in 2021/22 (Figure 5).

**Figure 5 YMI average participant figures across all projects over the years**

Strand	2021/22	2019/20	2018/19
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outcomes against Aim 3. This means that the totals included here deviate from those presented in previous reports, which do include the Strengthening figures.

<sup>12</sup> Likely due to a combination of this report covering a longer evaluation period than usual and some projects finishing later due to Covid-related extensions, and therefore rolling into to later reporting periods. There are also a few projects who submitted two reports for consecutive projects within the evaluation period (see Figure 16, Appendix).

Formula Fund participants	5,575	5,528	N/A
Access participants	1,204 (excluding SBT)	175	182

Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

Evidence suggests that this may be due to the increase of online-based or blended-approach projects since 2020 due to the pandemic, allowing some projects to engage with a different and larger set of participants than through face-to-face delivery only. Several projects thus noted that the online nature of delivery enabled them to deliver activities to a wider group of children and young people, for example due to the breakdown of barriers including travel time (for both pupils and tutors) and physical space capacity.

“ The demand for the programme was such that we supported more geographical areas than expected ... This was particularly the case during COVID-19 when the delivery model was moved online, which enabled more young people to take part. (Project manager, end of project report)

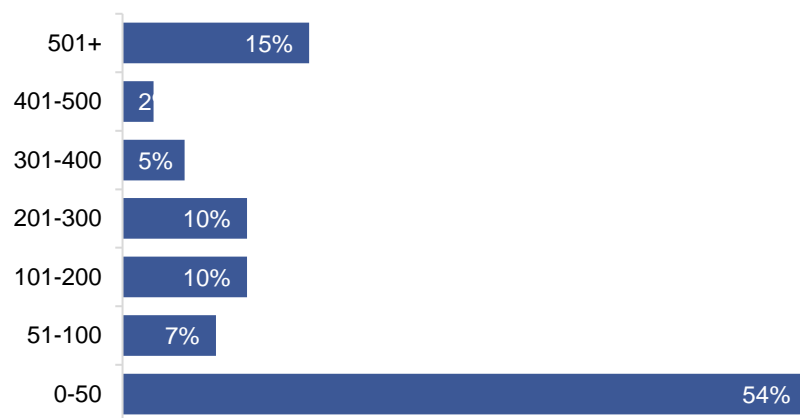
“ The unexpected impact of the Covid pandemic caused the way in which the club was delivered [...] to be reviewed quickly and effectively. By going online [our] project has become national with participants joining us from Glasgow as well as across Lewis and Harris. An unexpected bonus. (Project manager, end of project report)

“ We learnt that by embracing digital, we can engage more people in hard-to-reach groups, meet unexpected demand, stand out from the pack by going the extra mile for the people we support and save money while doing so. (Project manager, end of project report)

A more granular analysis of participant numbers across the Access strand indicates that the majority of projects either engaged a small (0-50) or very large (501+) group of children and young people, with little distribution in between (see Figure 6). Reflecting the increased overall average per project, the proportion of projects reaching a large cohort of pupils (501+) during this reporting period was double the proportion of the previous period in 2019/20 (15% vs. 7%). In contrast however, a little over half of the projects during this period reached groups of up to only 50 pupils. This differs from the previous reporting period in 2019/20, during which only a little over a quarter of projects worked with such small groups. While this contrasts with the notion of projects *increasing* their numbers through online delivery, this larger proportion of smaller projects might likewise be the result of the pandemic, with more projects working face-to-face with smaller groups than previously due social distancing measures or to enable more flexibility in order to deal with Covid-related challenges.

In summary, this distribution indicates that in some cases, online learning enabled Access projects to engage a larger group of youth participants, while in other cases, delivery was more individualised or focused on small groups, likely in order to comply with the constraints of social distancing, reduced capacity and mask mandates.

**Figure 6 Access to Music Making: Proportion of projects reaching different numbers of participants**



Source: BOP Consulting (2022). N=42

**Despite challenges with the pandemic and lockdown, the vast majority of YMI projects delivered their intended activities, with a notable increase in Access projects exceeding expected delivery**

During this reporting period, nearly three quarters of Access projects (77%) and three out of four Strengthening projects either delivered activities as intended or more than intended; a marked increase from figures from 2019/20 (see Figure 7). Most notably, 28% of projects delivered more activities than intended as compared to only 2% of projects the previous reporting period. This is particularly significant because Access and Strengthening projects submitted this year included projects which took place during at least one of the Scottish lockdown periods, as opposed to last reporting period which included only Access projects completed pre-pandemic. However, it suggests that compared

to the previous reporting period, many projects this time had already gained the knowledge, experience and systems to deal with the constraints of lockdown in previous years, and – now knowing about the constrained circumstances – were able to plan in appropriate approaches as well as the flexibility needed to deal with further lockdowns.

**Figure 7: Activities delivered as intended**

**Q: Did you deliver all the activities that you intended to deliver?<sup>13</sup>**

	Access		Strengthening		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
As intended	19	49	2		21	49
Less than intended	9	23	1		10	23
More than intended	11	28	1		12	28

Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

This is reflected in the reasons for their expanded programme that Access projects which delivered more activities than intended cited. These included strong reference to online delivery measures, which significantly increased with the onset of Covid and which the previous report showed were a strong area of development and learning for deliverers over the past two years:

- Online delivery enabled the project to reach young people in additional geographic areas
- More training opportunities for trainees with online delivery, leading to greater support in delivering more sessions with smaller groups
- Support from peer mentors / trainees in providing additional sessions
- Increasing awareness of the project in the community and involvement with local organisations' or businesses' events

<sup>13</sup> Figures for Formula Fund were not included in the End of Project Reports submitted during this period.

Likewise, the majority of Formula Fund projects were able to give their pupils the intended 12 hours of music making by the time they leave primary school, with the exception of six local authorities (19%), leading 6,236 pupils to not receive their 12 hours of music making.<sup>14</sup> Reasons for this included:

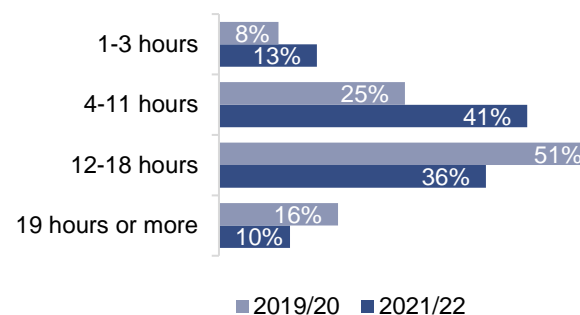
- Staffing capacity issues preventing all projects from taking place
- Social circumstances of children supported at the particular school, leading to poor attendance to classes
- Accommodation issues within schools for instrumental programmes

### Levels of involvement shifted amongst Formula Fund and Access projects

Level of involvement for Formula Fund projects is measured by the *hours* of involvement received by participants in each project.

Compared to the previous reporting period, Formula Fund projects in 2021/22 showed more varied levels of involvement, with a decrease in the proportion of pupils receiving 12 or more hours of music education (Figure 8). Instead, levels of involvement have shifted to a larger proportion of participants receiving fewer hours of engagement. Nearly equal proportions of participants in this evaluation period either received 4-11 hours (41%) or 12-18 hours (36%) of music education – a shift from 2020/21, where half of participants received 12-18 hours and only one-quarter received 4-11 hours. Coupled with the annual reduction in total Formula Fund participants noted previously, this further suggests that Local Authorities have been forced to adapt or reduce delivery due to levels of YMI funding not increasing in recent years while costs for staff and overhead have risen considerably.

**Figure 8 Formula Fund: Hours of involvement received by participants**



Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

Level of involvement for Access projects in turn is measured by the *nature* of the involvement offered to participants.

Comparing levels of involvement for Access projects over the last three reporting periods suggests Access projects' greater emphasis on sustained engagement with participants (Figure 9). While one-off activity has decreased to more than half that of the previous period, ongoing drop-in activity, ongoing planned involvement, and "Other" involvement have overall increased. This trend may be reflective of the pandemic period during which these projects ran. During periods of isolation and online learning, regular, planned engagement with one group may have not only been easier to deliver than one-off activities, but also may have been considered important for participants' mental wellbeing. Indeed, feedback from End of Project Reports and case studies highlighted how valuable projects felt their weekly (online) sessions were for young people who otherwise had little opportunity to socialise and little variation in their day-to-day life (see also section 2.2, impact of YMI on bonding and friendship).

<sup>14</sup> One project did not include how many pupils did not receive their 12 hours of music making, only indicating that not all students received this number of hours.



**Figure 9 Access to Music Making: Nature of involvement offered**

	Access to Music Making (excluding Scottish Book Trust <sup>15</sup> )				
	2021/22		2019/20		2018/19
	N	%	N	%	%
One-off activity	2,359 <sup>16</sup>	19%	3,981	47%	40%
Ongoing drop-in activity	3,647	29%	1,384	16%	14%
Ongoing planned involvement	4,466	35%	2,984	35%	31%
Other	2,148	17%	116	1%	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,620</b>		<b>8,465</b>		

Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

### Formula Fund projects continue to serve children and young people in areas of high deprivation, whilst reaching more younger children and those with mental health issues

Aligned with a number of Scottish Government plans and strategies, YMI specifically aims for its funded projects to target their music activities at those children and young people who would not otherwise have opportunities to engage. This is the case both for Formula Fund activities delivered via local authority services to schools 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 children and young people and care leavers

- Young people in areas of social and economic deprivation ranking high on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (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

Formula Fund activities are differentiated between projects that targeted certain groups by design, and those that reached particular priority groups through non-targeted activities (i.e., activities open to all). As in previous years, the largest proportion of projects specifically targeted children and young people living in areas of high social and economic deprivation as well as young people who are disabled or have additional support needs. Non-targeted projects again most commonly reached young people in areas ranking high in the SIMD, as well as young people from ethnic minority backgrounds and looked after children and young people.

However, this year, Formula Fund projects also showed particular strength in increasing their *targeted* provision for those in the early years (0-5 years) of their life, while an increased proportion of non-targeted projects reached young people experiencing mental ill health. This firstly suggests a **conscious shift towards exposing children to music education at an earlier age**. It also suggests an **unintended shift towards projects involving young people with mental health issues**. This strongly reflects the many reports which noted that delivery organisations encountered young people with mental health issues such as social anxiety and lacking confidence as a consequence of living through the pandemic-induced lockdown, and that **involvement in YMI-funded**

<sup>15</sup> This table also excludes one project that did not specify the level of involvement of its 2,148 participants.

<sup>16</sup> This figure does not include video viewings for the Scottish Brass Band Association (39,250).

**activities supported young people in addressing their mental health issues** (see section 2.2).

Additionally, more than half of Formula Fund projects reported reaching young people experiencing or at risk of experiencing harm or neglect through non-targeted activity, although this figure cannot be compared to 2019/20 as this target area was not recorded. This suggests that this factor is often tied in with the other priority groups which projects reached in high numbers.

In contrast, Formula Fund projects delivered in 2021/2022 were less effective in reaching those with disabilities. 56% of Formula Fund projects' activities targeted those with disabilities (compared to 67% in 2019/20), and 44% of Formula Fund projects' activities reached those with disabilities via non-targeted activity (compared to 58% in 2019/20).

**Figure 10 Formula Fund: Priority groups reached (Targeted and Non-Targeted)**

Priority groups	Projects that targeted these groups (%)		Projects that reached these groups through non-targeted activity (%)	
	2021/22	2019/20	2021/22	2019/20
Young people resident in areas of social and economic deprivation ranking high in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)	59%	58%	63%	58%
Looked after children and young people (as defined by the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) and care leavers (as defined by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014)	22%	15%	56%	58%
Children in the early years (0 to 5 year) of their life	47%	33%	16%	15%

<sup>17</sup> In 2019/20, this target area was listed as "YP who are less likely to participate for other reasons (e.g., poor mental health)".

Young people from minority ethnic backgrounds	3%	0%	59%	64%
Young people who are disabled and/or have additional support needs	56%	67%	44%	58%
Young people who are at risk of offending or who have previously offended	9%	12%	41%	48%
Young carers (as defined by the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016) or young parents	16%	12%	38%	42%
Young people experiencing mental ill health <sup>17</sup>	25%	24%	50%	39%
Young people experiencing or at risk of experiencing harm or neglect	16%	N/A	53%	N/A
Young people experiencing homelessness or who have been homeless	3%	N/A	34%	N/A

Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

**Access to Music Making continues to predominately target and reach participants resident in areas of high social and economic deprivation**

Overall, across all priority groups, similar proportions of Access projects in 2021/22 targeted each of the priority groups as in 2019/20. The priority groups that the highest proportion of Access projects set out to target in 2021/22 were the same as in 2019/20: in both years, nearly all projects targeted children and young people resident in areas of social and economic deprivation ranking high on the SIMD (89% vs. 95%), followed by children and young people who are disabled and/or have additional support needs (44% vs. 44%), and children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds (42% vs. 41%).

Despite a slightly lower proportion targeting children and young people resident in areas ranking high on the SIMD in 2021/22 compared to 2019/20, a larger

proportion of projects ultimately managed to reach this priority group than previously (69% compared to 51%). In 2019/20 in contrast, Access projects reached a greater diversity of participants across different priority groups, including children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are disabled, when compared to 2021/22.

**Figure 11 Access to Music Making: Priority groups reached**

Priority groups	Projects that targeted these groups (%)		YP reached across all projects in each group (%) <sup>18</sup> (excluding SBT for 2019/20)	
	2021/22	2019/20	2021/22	2019/20
Looked after CYP and care leavers	40%	41%	5%	3%
YP resident in areas of social and economic deprivation ranking high on SIMD	89%	95%	69%	51%
YP from minority ethnic backgrounds	42%	41%	8%	18%
YP who are disabled and/or have additional support needs	44%	44%	7%	13%
YP at risk of offending or who have offended	29%	20%	4%	3%
Young carers or parents	31%	22%	3%	3%
Children in the early years (0-5 years) of their life	18%	20%	5%	9%

Source: BOP Consulting (2022), n = 45 (% of projects, 21/22), n = 5767 (% of YP, 21/22)

### The focus group and case studies further reflect YMI projects' ability to reach a wide range of young people

The above data findings, which highlight YMI projects' ability to reach a wide range of young people including from groups that may encounter barriers to

engagement elsewhere, tie in with the grantee focus group's discussion around YMI projects (or organisations delivering YMI projects) being accessible to a wide range of children and young people - aiming, as one case study interviewee highlighted, on achieving engagement of a wide range of young people, rather than focusing purely on achieving musical excellence.

Focus group members felt that this is supported by YMI's longevity of funding/ willingness to repeat fund, ability to fund both inside and outside schools, promotion of organisational partnerships and the breadth of funding to children and young people across different age groups. One focus group member, for example, spoke about running a long-standing open-access project which effectively had become a 'community resource' over the years, based on being well-known locally, having strong local connections and providing a trustworthy, "solid experience" for young people: "a place everyone knows, where they can come from our project to another project".

The wide reach that YMI projects are able to encourage was also reflected in the End of Project Reports and the case studies, which highlighted organisations' keenness to involve children and young people from the priority groups and provided insight into how such engagement is developed and maintained.

This suggested that alongside...

- working directly within areas of high multiple deprivation and
- connecting with education partners, referral organisations and relevant cross-sector partner organisations<sup>19</sup>, a further element that shines through is the way that...
- broadening the offer of the project helps to draw in a wider range of young people:

<sup>18</sup> 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.

<sup>19</sup> such as partners in community justice or those working with care experienced young people; see section 2.3 for more on projects working with partners

- “ To generate interest in the project we contacted the schools of the local areas in which we work. Many of these schools are located directly in the areas of high SIMD<sup>20</sup> and the majority of their kids are within catchment area of these SIMDs. (end of project report)
- “ Through our partnerships with organisations who work with targeted groups we have been able to meet and engage with young people from marginalised groups who would be unlikely to access these opportunities, including young people struggling with homelessness, from BAME backgrounds, who identify as LGBTQ, are in hospital or who are in full time residential care. (end of project report)
- “ A close partnership with the [the primary school’s] leadership team enabled to prioritise specific young people from the most deprived families. This consistent partnership has worked really well for ensuring the project reaches its target participants. (end of project report)

## Findings from the case studies

### Reaching out to a wide range of children and young people

Several of the case studies developed for this evaluation similarly spoke of working with young people in the priority groups:

- **Canongate Youth** operates its Creative Hub project in an area with high indices of multiple deprivation, and some of the local schools are underfunded and under-equipped. Consequently, for some participants, the project is their only available access to music tuition. Some

participants are referred to the project by schoolteachers and guidance staff; others find their way to the project under their own volition. In the past years, the organisation has extended the range of activities offered, which has extended their reach and given opportunities for non-music players to get involved (e.g., by adding photography and film, with participants doing photoshoots for the bands). Canongate largely work with children aged 12+ through their YMI-funded activity, but also work with some primary schools, which they say acts as a feeder when pupils reach an age to join the Creative Hub.

- **Limelight Music’s Designs on Performance** project at primary schools, again located in areas with high indices of multiple deprivation, merged music with graphic art. It was felt that this approach worked well in drawing in young people, including shy children who normally did not engage or those struggling with mental health issues such as ADHD as the project “*had something for everybody*”. As the lead artist said, some children found the music more accessible, others the art.
- **A.R.Ts Afternoon’s** project similarly focuses on areas of high multiple deprivation and receives referrals from schools and other partners of young people struggling with social anxiety and other mental health challenges. Well-known as being able to work with such children and young people, they have recently seen an increase of neurodiverse participants.

## YMI achieves regional spread through both its formal and informal funding strands, including to Scotland's rural areas

By way of example, additional geographical analysis of all informal awards that were handed out in 2021/22 shows that once again, both Formula Fund activity (with awards given to all 32 Local Authorities in Scotland) as well as informal YMI activity (Access and Strengthening projects) took place across the breadth of Scotland, including both its urban and rural areas.

<sup>20</sup> Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation



It should be highlighted that this analysis is indicative only: many projects undertake activity across several Local Authorities, with no way of knowing how much activity takes place in each one (or, by way of analysis, how much of the grant should be allocated to each of the listed areas). To provide an insightful picture, our analysis therefore looks both at the number of projects that delivered (to any extent) in each Local Authority; and the total amount of funding that went to each Local Authority, as far as this is possible (see Figures 18 and 19 in the Appendix)

The analysis shows that as in the previous reporting period, Scotland's largest urban areas - Edinburgh and Glasgow - again between them hosted the largest number of projects compared to other individual Local Authorities (15 projects delivered in Edinburgh and Glasgow, compared to 42 delivered in any other LA); these two areas also attracted the largest amount of funding between them. These figures are not surprising given that they reflect the high number of residents (and i.e. potential participants) living in these areas. Similarly, a relatively high number of projects (5) were delivered across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

Nevertheless, beyond that, this year a relatively large number of awards also went to the Highlands (6 projects), while a large proportion of Local Authorities were host to at least one informal YMI project, highlighting YMI's overall spread. This spread is also reflected by the amount of funding distributed: total funding to Edinburgh and Glasgow (around £445k) lies just slightly below that which went to all other Local Authorities that hosted an informal project (around £447k); with a further £308,5k going to projects delivering at a national level (or in 5+ Local Authorities).

As also concluded in the previous annual evaluation report, this demonstrates again that **YMI funding is accessible to organisations - and thus participants - across Scotland, including its less densely populated and more rural areas.**

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

### A different approach to evidencing impact on participants

This section focuses on YMI's second aim of “*enabling children and young people to achieve their potential in and through music making*”; in other words, it considers the impact of taking part in YMI activity on the participants' learning and development.

Review of the outcomes listed against this aim highlights the breadth of impacts that YMI is considered as having on its participants – from music-related skills and knowledge to more general life skills – and past reports have provided evidence of YMI's success across these areas. Rather than reviewing End of Project Reports and case studies against each of these specific outcomes as in previous years, this year a more open approach was taken to understanding how YMI impacts its participants. This was based on hearing first from the representative grantee focus group about where they believe the programme's 'most significant' impacts lie. A few of the impact areas highlighted by the group were then selected for deeper analysis through the case studies and a review of the qualitative information contained in the End of Project Reports.

### Focus group participants highlighted YMI's progression and mental wellbeing impacts on participants

Focus group members highlighted two broad impact areas, which they felt stood out in terms of YMI's impact on its participants:

- Focus group participants highlighted YMI's ability to **provide pathways for children and young people to progress** from early music education to training and in some cases a career.
- Focus group members also highlighted how YMI activity **contributes to participants' mental health and wellbeing** in two ways:

- Firstly, they discussed how the 'informal', flexible and joyful approach to music education, often including youth-led activity, singing and performance, leads to participants gaining enjoyment, reduced stress, skills, confidence and via this, improved mental health and wellbeing.
- Secondly, the group noted YMI's ability to positively impact the mental health and wellbeing of its participants due to its ability to encourage bonding and friendship among participants.

Across these areas, it was evident that the focus group members felt that **YMI's unique set-up** – its longevity, willingness to repeat-fund, spread across schools and other institutions throughout Scotland as well as its 'informal' approach to music tuition – **supported the achievement of these impact areas**. Each of these three areas is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

### 2.2.1 YMI creates pathways that lead young people from early music education to training and careers in the sector

Focus group members highlighted the YMI's ability to provide **opportunities for children and young people to progress** from early music education to a career by supporting 'a pathway of projects' through which children and young people can move as they get older and progress. Notably, this strongly aligns with the YMI's 20th anniversary message of “*Youth music can build careers, pathways, and sector development*”.

The focus group highlighted a **number of key characteristics of YMI, which they felt contributed to supporting this pathway**:

- The longevity of the fund, which has now provided funding for 20 years
- The fund's willingness to support organisations or specific projects repeatedly, thereby allowing projects to offer activities on a longer-term basis
- The fact that funded activities permeate a wide range of institutions inside and outside of school
- The fact that funding covers all ages from 0 to 25, meaning that children and young people are able to move between projects as they get older.

This latter point was seen as particularly valuable in creating a pathway of projects through which participants can progress. Members highlighted that they encourage young people to move through available projects to eventually become trainees within funded projects and that the availability of projects at each stage helps to keep young people involved in music:

- “ We can go all the way up to age 25 – other funders only fund one particular age range. (Focus group member)
- “ We try to get young people who have been part of our programmes to come through as trainees. (Focus group member)
- “ [We have participants who] came to YMI aged 10, are still with us aged 16, go to college, stay as assistant tutors – [it’s a] circular pattern. (Focus group member)
- “ You need to create a pathway, otherwise somebody else snaps them up – the connection between primary and secondary school helps. A pathway has to be there through the service. Once they finish school, we pass them on to further education, to community groups.

Interestingly, it was also felt that within projects, having young people who are within a certain age bracket involved helps young people to develop, as younger participants have “*something to aspire to*” in terms of development in looking at the accomplishments of slightly older participants, which are however not too far removed and therefore clearly at an “*attainable level*”. Moreover, this was generally highlighted as helping children transition between primary and secondary school. One focus group member reported that “*we have a broad age range. They come in at the end of P6, get to know young people in S1...then when they get into S1 they know people in S3. So, this helped with transition into secondary school.*” This was also reflected in some End of Project

Reports, with one project for example noting how younger children benefited from being around older peers, whilst the latter gain from the opportunity to “*model positive behaviour and leadership with the younger ones*”.

Within the context of providing funding for participants up to the age of 25, focus group members also particularly **highlighted YMI’s approach to encouraging projects to embed traineeships within their activities** (inclusion of a trainee is a requirement for all Access to Music Making-funded projects that receive more than £15k through YMI). Members suggested that this is a valuable way in which to support young participants to move into sector careers (or at least to trial the possibility of a career in the sector). One participant referred to this as a “*shining example*”, whilst another reported that their organisation had now built in a similar approach to offering traineeships within their non-YMI work. It was felt that such traineeships result in a significant benefit for participants, as it “*[provides] training, broadens horizons, provides work portfolios and hands-on experience – it serves [the trainees] as they move forward*”.

- “ We had similar success through trainee posts in programmes. They came through when they were 10, are still with us at 16, become tutors assistants, go to college for music, stay as assistant tutors. It’s lovely to see that circular pattern, they have learned so much, are now mentoring young people themselves. (Focus group member)

### Findings from the case studies

#### Creating pathways for young people to build their musical ability as they grow

Several of the case studies provided additional evidence of pathways that projects can create for their participants in different ways with the support of YMI funding. Among them,

- **Canongate Youth** noted that through their Access-funded project, they are keen to get people volunteering and can see the benefits in

confidence this engenders. In this context, they recalled “one former participant, [who] started at 11, became a volunteer, is now a trainee youth worker, and another is a music tutor”. The project also has two full-time paid trainees, with applications often coming from those previously engaged as players or volunteers.

- Reflecting on a **YMI-funded Access project based at Edinburgh College**, the project lead found that whilst not a primary intention, the location at the college appeared to help young people consider and take the option of moving on into studying music, hinting at the value of being able to gain funding for projects for ‘older’ young people: “One of the key components is the kind of ‘side-door aspect’ of being based in a clear progression route environment. [...]. Its intention isn't like ‘now that you're here, you're going to go to college’, but there's an ownership and a sense of belonging to the place that comes from being in the place without the formalities attached to it. So, I think that's quite important for people and several of our participants have gone on to study music with the college, but also in some cases elsewhere.”
- **A.R.Ts Afternoon's Pulse of Place** takes place in primary as well as secondary schools for pupils aged around 10 to 17. Supported by regular funding over the years, this means that the project can create pathways between groups for different age groups, along which pupils can move as they grow older and progress musically. Children are introduced to music early, realise they can do it and become better equipped at getting through hurdles such as auditions. When they move to secondary school, they are then more likely to have the confidence to go for instrumental tuition. Further down the line, the project has seen several former participants move into related youth work or music careers, including some who have come back post-school to support the project. The project director also noted how being among older children who have already made the transition helps young people move from primary to secondary school.
- **Mull Music Makers** also noted bringing together children and young people of different ages to play together, and progress together. They have developed special arrangements that allow less experienced

players to play alongside more skilled players and the tutors are keen for the older children to actively put themselves forward to help younger people and ‘take charge’.

- The **Scottish Brass Band Association** runs three bands that progress from age 9 to age 22, starting with a focus on joyful engagement for those younger and less experienced to high-level standards for those with real talent, “opening opportunities for young people to be involved in senior brass bands”. The organisation sees a high proportion of continuing players who move through these levels, sometimes leading to careers in the sector. Of those playing in the senior band in 2016, the majority are still playing, with one playing trombone for the Hallé, one conducting and one working at the BBC.

### 2.2.2 YMI-funded activities positively impact participants' mental health and wellbeing

The focus group members were emphatic in highlighting what they felt to be a significant impact of YMI participation on children's and young people's mental health and wellbeing. This strongly aligns with another of YMI's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary messages: “Music brings joy, it has the power to change our emotions, make us happy and generally feel good about ourselves”.

Overall, focus group members agreed that “**music itself is a tool**” in achieving mental health and wellbeing outcomes. As another noted, “mental health and wellbeing outcomes – that is almost a given”. Focus group members referred to **YMI's recognition and understanding of this ability of music to support mental health**, which they suggested helped organisations to support their participants in this area:

- “ Music improves mental health; getting funding that recognises that, rather than having to make the case for music among mental health funding bodies, is brilliant. (Focus group member)

More specifically, however, evidence from the focus group and End of Project Reports highlighted a number of **characteristics of YMI-funded music tuition, which they suggested particularly helped to encourage mental health and wellbeing impacts:**

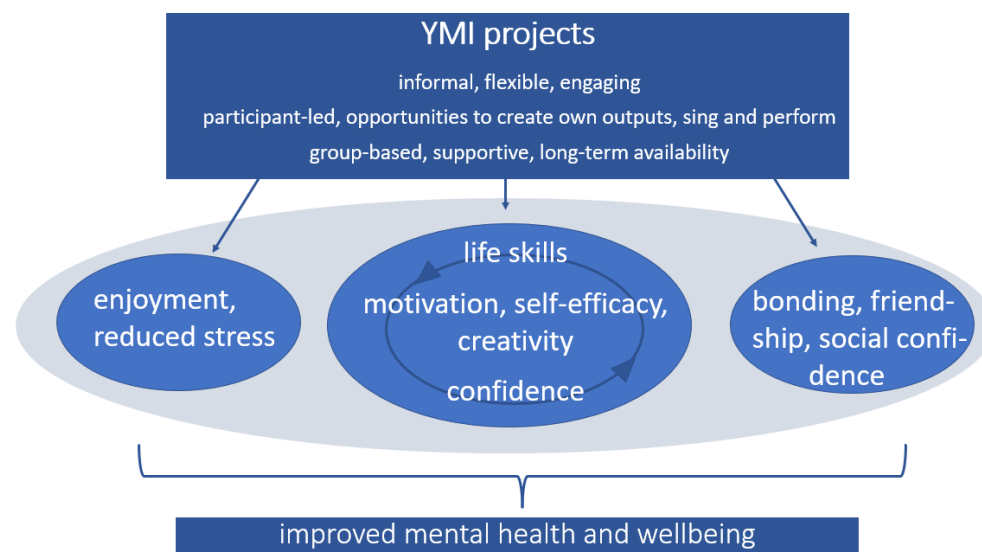
- These centred first around the flexible, informal, engaging and creative approach of projects, which often provides opportunities for young people to participate in ‘youth-led activity’ and create their own outputs, work in groups and to sing and perform. Evidence suggests that these characteristics lead to enjoyment as well as to participants gaining skills, self-efficacy (i.e., the belief in one’s own abilities), confidence, and through this, to improved mental wellbeing.
- Secondly, evidence highlights the group-based nature, supportive environment and often long-term availability of projects, which encourages young people to bond, make friends, increase their social confidence and through this, improve their wellbeing.

Existing evidence clearly connects all the outcomes listed above – enjoyment, motivation, agency, self-efficacy and confidence as well as social connections – to mental health and wellbeing.<sup>21</sup> These pathways are visualised in the graphic in Figure 12 and then considered in more detail in the following sections. However, it should be kept in mind that whilst looked at separately here, impacts in real life often support each other, with new friendships and new skills leading to confidence, enjoyment, self-efficacy and vice versa.

Notably, focus group members suggested that YMI’s flexible approach encourages and enables the inclusion of ‘youth-led’ activities and/or activities which let young people create their own outputs. As one member pointed out, delivering activities which are led or influenced by the young participants themselves means that *“sometimes the outcomes don’t match what we were funded to do”* as projects change along the way. However, the fact that *“YMI is*

*very flexible and accommodating that way”*, enables such an approach. Notably, one end of project report suggested that involvement in YMI activity may for many participants be the first opportunity they have to take part in such open and creative music education (*“none of the young people had taken part in a project like this before, where creating new music was at the core of the outcome, even those with some prior instrumental learning experience”*).

**Figure 12 Impact of YMI activity on participants’ mental health and wellbeing**



Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

<sup>21</sup> Mental health charity Mind for example provides information for young people about the importance of self-esteem and confidence on their mental health (<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/confidence-and-self-esteem/>). Work by John Haworth, visiting Professor in Well-Being at the University of Bolton, for example highlights the importance of enjoyment on well-being (see e.g., [Enjoyment and Wellbeing | CWiPP | The University of Sheffield](#)). In reverse, the NHS for example lists low mood, low self-esteem, lack of motivation and enjoyment as symptoms of depression (<https://www.nhs.uk/mental->

[health/conditions/clinical-depression/symptoms/](#)). A range of research furthermore connections the value of social connections with mental health and emotional stability; notably, the NHS lists good relationships with other people as a key step to mental wellbeing (<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/>)



## YMI promotes enjoyment and reduced stress through supporting informal, youth-led music education

Several focus group members suggested that YMI's more informal, fun, 'high-energy' approach to musical education (one participant referred to it as 'musical experience') was initially met with concern (including in schools) about the quality of "what was going to be achieved". However, focus group members suggested that evidence has underlined the success of this approach, based not least on the **enjoyment that young people get from their involvement**: "young people have thrived, achieved what they wanted and beyond: they love what they are doing, want to practice and come back". In this context, some focus group members mentioned proactively bringing schoolteachers into YMI activities, in order to show them the impact participation had on their pupils.

This sense of enjoyment from engagement came through strongly in the End of Project Reports too, with many projects referencing how participants enjoyed the projects or key elements of the activity. One project for example noted how participants described it as 'fun', 'enjoyable', 'engaging' and 'creative'. Another project noted how participants "provided evidence through their key workers saying how much they enjoyed and had fun in the music sessions, helping to foster a love and appreciation for music". In the same vein, a third project reported how "pupils and parents expressed their ongoing joy and excitement at learning to sing new songs and learning to play the clarsach and more recently the Ukulele ...".

“ I loved almost all of it as I can remember it so vividly and with excitement it was one of the most fun things I've done in a long while. (Participant, End of Project Report)

The notion of 'enjoyment' was tied in with YMI project characteristics such as self-directed activity and being encouraged to be creative and create one's own outputs, as well as performing.

“ Even just the structure of it...the going outside and having their moment of coming on stage [...], the kids really enjoyed....and I

think just really because they were able to add their own...spin on it...they were able to make it their own...so there was that wee bit creativity element as well. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ The idea of creating new music that they would then perform was very attractive to the young people (as opposed to simply learning music that already exists). The concept of expressing their own experiences through music scored very highly as an attractive part of the project for the participants. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

In this context, a few End of Project Reports highlighted the joy of being able to play in a room together again once social distancing measures were reduced. To quote one:

“ So great to make music face-to-face. The kids are all playing so well and we had so much fun. We were all so emotional, but in a good way. Happy tears may have been shed. (Participant, End of Project Report)

Focus group members as well as End of Project Reports suggested that **enjoyment was evidenced not least by how keen young people are to be involved**, and to take their musical journey further. One member recalled how they see young people join in (school-based) YMI-funded projects "who don't particularly want to do music later on, but want to stay in the group, come to ensemble rehearsals, just want to play for the fun of it. They don't necessarily make the transition, it's just that they enjoy it. It's fun!" Similarly, one end of project report noted how "tutors and staff observed the children eager and confident to join in with the music sessions each week".

Taking this a step further, one focus group member noted not only how the YMI activity impacted the mood of individuals, but the wider environment. Recalling the eagerness of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) school to re-start YMI

activity following the end of the Covid lockdown period, he felt this suggested the “*huge value of music education: it had an impact on the mood of the whole school*”.

Connected to enjoyment, some projects also noted in particular the value of working in **non-pressurised environments, and how music helped their participants de-stress and relax.**

“ So many more kids should get the chance to busk with 'real' musicians, and to perform in such a fun, unpressured way. (Parent, End of Project Report)

“ Singing and music-making have particular benefits in terms of children’s mental health and well-being by reducing stress and providing an outlet for creative expression. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

Unsurprisingly, some mentioned this in connection with the difficult situation that children and young people had to live through due to the Covid pandemic. As one end of project report noted:

*“This year has been particularly challenging, and it was fantastic that you were able to adapt your delivery and provide our young people with the joy of music both face to face and through virtual mediums too. Music and the arts were even more crucial for our children this past 12 months as it provided them with joy and an opportunity to be creative under stressful circumstances. Our main focus this year was the health and wellbeing of the children and ensuring that they came through the pandemic feeling supported and heard. These sessions encourage the children to express emotions, play co-operatively and allow them with an opportunity to relax and have fun, all of which they really needed.”*

“ Online live music sessions quickly became sources of support for pupils during a difficult time. As [one participant] said, ‘I like

playing the drums and making up my own rhythms. Sometimes I feel stressed in the mornings and music helps keep me calm’. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

Reflecting this, some participants’ quotes show just how important the project sessions were for some young people, in particular those struggling during Covid:

“ I don’t know where I would be in my life or in my music if it weren’t for [the YMI project]. (Participant, End of Project Report)

“ Music’s been a life-saver for me through all of this (Participant, End of Project Report)

### **Activities support skills development, self-efficacy and confidence**

In addition to connecting mental wellbeing with enjoyment, focus group members and End of Project Reports made the **connection between project activities, skills, confidence and wellbeing.**

In this context, the qualitative evidence again highlighted the **value of participant-led approaches** within projects. It referred to young people being able to put their mark on activities and being encouraged to create their own musical outputs, suggesting that such activities contribute to a **breadth of learning and life skills** such as leadership, communication, team working, and compromise as well as musical skills. Anecdotally, one end of project report noted that 85% of participants agreed that the project had helped them improve their skills.

“ Sessions are decided by the young people. Having a voice, having regular discussions about where we are going. [This develops] leadership skills, budgeting skills! [It works] by being transparent, almost being a mentor rather than leader. (Focus group member)

“ Through drumming, the young people developed group working skills. [...] They also made choices by choosing the order that people would play in and accepted choices that others made. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ Fast forward to the end of the project, and the transformation was incredible. Every pupil excelled in confidence in themselves, their musical ability and in their social and interactive skills. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

Evidence from the focus group members as well as End of Project Reports suggested that gaining opportunities to put their own mark on activities further supports children and young people in development areas such as

- opening up, getting insights into what they like or are good at and expressing this, and
- **being motivated** and increasing their self-efficacy.

These lead to **confidence-building** and on to increased willingness to try out new things and **be creative**. One focus group member referred to a project which included young people who struggled with English and public speaking, but who ended up writing and recording a radio show. Further quotes provide similar evidence:

“ Often it was the opportunity to collaborate and create without prescribed boundaries that encouraged them to try new things. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ Some who started out with little to no ‘voice’ now speak out and lead activities and express their ideas openly. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ The youth band and the collective encouragement we get to play really helped with my motivation and dedication to the pipes. (Participant, End of Project Report)

“ I enjoyed making the music in general in whatever form that took, it just made me feel so happy with my own work and helped with my confidence, and it made me feel like I was part of something. (Participant, End of Project Report)

“ Music is my life. Without my poetry, without music, without a creative outlet I don’t know where I would be. Being able to develop this talent that I didn’t always know I had has built up my confidence. It helps me in other areas of my life. (Participant, End of Project Report)

Several project reports tied such development areas in with increased happiness or wellbeing. For example, one project reported that 91% of their participants felt that the YMI-funded activity had helped them be more creative, 80% felt it had inspired them, and 90% felt participation had made them feel happier. Similarly, another project reported distributing a short survey before and after the project to enable them to assess the project’s impact on participants’ mental health. The assessment was based on the WEMWBS scale<sup>22</sup>, which assesses respondents based on statements including ‘I’ve been feeling confident’, ‘I’ve been interested in new things’, ‘I’ve been feeling good about myself’ and ‘I’ve been feeling cheerful’. They found that whilst 18% scored ‘low’ on the wellbeing scale and 40% reported struggling with mental

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<sup>22</sup> Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/about/>

health at the beginning of the project, by the end, 86% agreed that their participation had a positive impact on their wellbeing.

A few projects also highlighted the **joy of joint singing or performance, with resulting impacts in confidence**. However, overall, this was not frequently mentioned, possibly as a result of many projects not being able to organise performances due to delivering during the pandemic. Projects that did observe the growth in confidence through group performance reported:

“ M. has so much fun being part of the group and there are so many positive sides to it. I would say the best thing is so many performance opportunities. She gets a real buzz from them and takes them seriously and it's great to see her so confident in front of big crowds like last weekend. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ The going outside and having their moment of coming on stage [...] the kids really enjoyed... (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ The schools' competition and performances gave our young people the opportunity to grow in confidence, spark a healthy level of competitiveness, and learn to appreciate how hard they and others have worked. They played in front of panels of judges and were critiqued in front of a huge crowd, and some of them played solo competition pieces, which really pushed them beyond their limits of comfort (Project manager, End of Project Report)

Interestingly, as seen above, some End of Project Reports however highlighted the value of activities taking place in a 'low pressure' environment, and reports connected this in contrasting ways to the notion of performances, with some highlighting taking away 'the pressure of a performance or competition' while others referred to 'performing in an unpressured way'. This perhaps suggests

how **performances and competitions can contribute to enjoyment and confidence-building, but that it is important to time them well and consider the level of pressure appropriate for the groups or individuals.**

“ Development weekends have given the opportunity for intensive learning in a relaxed fun environment without the pressure of a performance or competition looming. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

### Findings from the case studies

#### 'Informal', engaging music education leading to improved mental health and wellbeing

The case studies provided further evidence of the mental health and wellbeing impacts that participants gained through participating in engaging music projects supported by YMI. Among them,

- **Renfrewshire Council's *Beat Buddies Music*** project highlighted the significant difference in confidence and mental health levels between the start of their project following several Covid-related lockdowns, to the end the project: *"When we got back on site, the barriers then turned to...more mental barriers. Low self-esteem, anxiety [were] all really prevalent amongst the young people. From that isolated setting that they were in for the best part of a year... there was a real sense of low resilience levels and the way that you could tell that was children would just crack. [...] They didn't have that mental ability to deal with [small things]. [...] So, we set out what we called our ground rules: [...] best behaviour, best fun and responsible behaviour. [...] So, if you take that picture as being...at the start of September 2021 to December 2021 where all those children performed on a stage to the rest of the school, [...] they gladly and willingly and proudly [went] onto the stage."*
- **A.R.Ts Afternoon's** project highlighted the growth in skills, confidence and resilience among participants throughout the project, leading to participants being able to address other issues they have in their life. To

support this, the project leader felt that creating a fun, 'jokey' atmosphere is valuable, helping quieter children become more visible. Equally, being part of a band, where young people bond and play together, is felt to be important in building confidence. Then, *"as confidence grows, [we] come to talk to them about other things happening in their lives. Usually something happened at school. It helps build resilience and confidence to enable them to deal with bullying if it happens again. Especially kids aged 14/15 dealing with very difficult things in their life"*. The project director felt that in supporting young people and the creation of such an environment, YMI's approach to highlighting the importance of engagement over a pure focus on achieving excellence in musical ability was key.

- **Canongate Youth's Creative Hub** is strongly based on an informal approach to music tuition, providing sessions, group work, opportunities to create bands and to perform. Strong potential to pursue personal interests, work in teams, gain skills, confidence and friendships is seen in this – one participant for example contrasted this 'more relaxed' approach with the target- and success-driven approach of school. According to its music tutor, *"informality is a big thing here. People come with requests to learn specific songs. School tuition is more individual but here group work develops naturally – someone wants to learn a particular song on guitar, might mention to a drummer and ask if fancy joining in – sessions build up that way. So do friendships and teamwork. Pushing towards a goal, learning a song or performing, helps that."*
- **Limelight Music's Designs on Performance** project at primary schools merged music with graphic art. Each session began with warm-up games and songs to let the young participants relax as well as to provide time to think about music and what participants like. The approach of the whole project is focused on learning through play and self-expression. The workshop leads feel that art (and music) are a way of bringing everyone on board and together. *"There were no obstacles for the children – they understood and came up with a piece of music, but enjoyed being playful, too."* All came away feeling that the project

had been highly successful and enjoyable to all, enabling children who don't respond well to formal teaching approaches to participate.

- **Mull Music Makers** highlighted the balance they aim to strive between technically rigorous teaching and the creation of a dynamic, collaborative environment that motivates young people and brings joy.
- **Scottish Brass Band Association** has aimed to give participants a voice within their work for young people, for example by recruiting Young Ambassadors, one of whom is on the main SBBA committee to ensure young people have a voice. It also runs a "Youth Speaks" podcast, founded by two participants following an online roadshow for young people to maintain enthusiasm during Covid. As part of this work, SBBA has supported the development of a Wellbeing Charger, organised by young people for young people.

### **YMI-funded activities support bonding, friendship and social confidence among participants, thereby impacting on participants' mental health and wellbeing**

Lastly, the focus group highlighted YMI's ability to bring young people together through interaction in the projects, leading to bonding, friendships and mutual support – and in turn to increased social confidence and trust; with all of these factors again boosting participants' mental health and wellbeing. This feeds into two of YMI's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary messages, about boosting health and wellbeing, as well as the message that *"music can bring people together and build stronger communities"*.

Focus group members as well as case studies highlighted how this is supported by the **longevity of the funded activities**, which means that young people can take part in activity for an extended period of time, get to know staff and participants and feel they can rely on the availability of the activity, as well as the **group-based nature of many of the projects**. Members felt that the social aspect of the YMI activities were further supported by **the approach taken by tutors/staff** to support their participants: *"[We] create conversations so that*



young people can share ideas. It's a huge focus of what we do. What can happen from those conversations, is hard to put into a report. Mental health is such a big part of it. Great things can come from bringing young people together to have a conversation". Projects made similar points in their End of Project Reports, with one noting how they "create a supportive environment and promote teamwork and positive attitudes", and another pointing to the ongoing support from the project's youth worker for their participants. Several projects highlighted the positive impact of strong and supportive connections between project staff and participants.

“ [The youth worker] makes a point of checking I am safe, well and ensures that I am in the right mindset before encouraging me to push myself into situations I would feel impossible if on my own. (Participant, End of Project Report)

Most fundamentally, the evidence suggests that the nature of YMI-funded activities, with their focus on more project-based group and teamwork promotes this social interaction among participants. Focus group members highlighted how the funded activities **can bring together young people** in the first place, including young people **who would not otherwise meet**, "creating intimacy among young people who would never be connected otherwise". This was similarly reflected in some End of Project Reports, with one project – which worked largely online during the pandemic – observing how it brought together young people from different neighbourhoods, areas, schools and locations, "mixing in ways that they would not normally, working together and becoming friends through the project". Similarly, another project echoed this sense of bringing together young people from different backgrounds through their activity: "[There was] a long conversation between two lads about religion. [...] These two lads come from extremely different cultures and backgrounds and their connection and confidence to speak [at such depth], we believe is, in part, due to playing music together at the EC Sessions."

In bringing children and young people from diverse backgrounds together, focus group members highlighted that these are often people with similar interests, who **can inspire each other and bond over these mutual interests**. This was

likewise evident in the End of Project Reports. One project noted how it "brings members together through mutual passion and enables young people of all backgrounds to unite through shared experiences". Another project asked their participants what the best thing about the project was for them and received responses such as "getting to meet and collaborate with new people interested in a future in the music industry" and "meeting other people who are into music". Similarly, a third reported that 52% of participants stated that the project "helped them meet other people who they can do art or music with". This notion of young people gaining enjoyment from bonding with peers over a subject that they are interested in was evident in many of the participant quotes reported by projects.

“ I liked talking about music, about the songs I make, met new people, made cool things, heard new music. (Participant, End of Project Report)

Following on from bringing young people together in the first place, focus group members agreed that they saw **strong friendships emerging** between children and young people who joined in YMI activities. They reported how project participants often become **firm friends and/or develop small communities with a "sense of belonging for the group"**, as the project progresses. As one member recalled, this can be such an important fact that he has noticed that when some young people left an activity (for example because they had to start paying for it), others left, too. Again, this was reflected in the End of Project Reports, with projects referring to "the importance of being part of a team", the "community feel" of project groups and the enjoyment, confidence and social skills gained by participants from making friends and "enjoying the camaraderie".

Likewise, participants were quoted who reported "meeting new people and making new friends", being able to "talk to people and chat about life and music" and "engaging in a level of sociality that I had not done in a long while". Several projects furthermore pointed to additional skills gained through this, such as time keeping, team working and understanding that you are relied upon by others. One end of project report for example noted that half of their participants

mentioned that they felt their team working skills had improved due to their participation.

“ The camaraderie that comes from shared interests and achievements is visible within the group and young people are able to form friendships with others out with their immediate age group and from diverse backgrounds. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ [Our workshops] are a time for our young players to make new friendships, increase their confidence and social skills, enjoy the camaraderie, feel proud to be part of something, perform and have fun, all while increasing their musical and creative abilities. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

Both focus group members and End of Project Reports noted how such friendships formed through YMI were carried out of the project and into participants' day-to-day life, noting how participants met as friends outside of sessions or had formed bands which they met up with outside of the project.

“ For A., [the YMI project] has been very beneficial as he has started a band with a few friends and has made him more interested in music and kept him away from video games. [It] has given him confidence to perform in front of people and [make] new friends. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

Focus group members also reported finding **strong levels of mutual support among young people**, who inspire and are keen to help each other. One member suggested this was encouraged by the more informal, person-centred approach of YMI activities, supported by *“musicians who truly believe that everyone should be involved in music if they choose to be – this creates space for young people to support each other”*. As another member pointed out, this in turn *“helped foster collaborative skills”*. Interestingly, two case studies (see blue

box on p.32) highlighted how they found an enthusiastic and supportive atmosphere among young participants following the Covid lockdown period, with participants keen to re-join face-to-face sessions.

“ The peer support that young people offer each other! [We] had one participant who really struggled with instrumental instruction; came to one of the trad projects. The support he received from the other young people was absolutely key to him. (Focus group member)

Similar points were made by some of the End of Project Reports, with projects referencing peer learning (in particular from older to younger participants) and strong levels of nurturing and respect between the participants.

“ The participants are also teaching one another and taking responsibility for ensuring everyone feels welcome. There is a genuinely kind feeling amongst the project [participants]. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

“ [I like] making new friendships and having fun, [...] being with my friends, learning a new skill, how everyone helps each other out, learning and having fun, [...]. (Participant, End of Project Report)

Not surprisingly, many projects in their End of Project Reports contrasted the benefits of the social interaction brought upon by YMI projects with the **isolation that children and young people encountered during the height of the Covid pandemic**. Indicatively, several projects, including case studies, referred to the keenness of young people to re-join face-to-face activity following the Covid lockdown period, and to projects supporting young people in regaining their social confidence post-lockdown. However, projects clearly also had a strong value in providing a **point of contact during the lockdown periods**. Several projects pointed out how their (online) sessions became *“points of contact when [the young people] had little other than their family”*, helped young

people to maintain a “*sense of community [...] and togetherness*” during lockdown and highlighted the “*power of group singing and music making through times of social isolation*”. As one project reported how they provided young people with a place – albeit virtual – that provided enjoyment, laughter and ‘sharing’, another noted that “*the young people became very aware that music was important in keeping connected and bringing everyone together even at a time when everyone was (physically) apart.*”

“ Without [the YMI project], the pandemic would’ve been a lot harder. At least with this I can be like ‘oh I’m doing Ensemble’. I have had a different opportunity, different people to see, different faces. (Participant, End of Project Report)

“ I was really struggling with the lockdown. This project gave me focus. Meeting with others introduced me to other types of music, and sharing favourite lyrics helped me work out how I was feeling about everything. (Participant, End of Project Report)

Interestingly, one project noted that while they were worried that remote, online activity would lead to young people feeling estranged from one another, evidence suggested that this was not the case, with 67% of participants reporting that they were able to relate to others taking part in the project. However, one project pointed out that this was more challenging for vulnerable young people with emotional or behavioural issues, whom they found more difficult to engage through online sessions.

With regard to the latter, it is important to note that many projects highlighted the social wellbeing benefits of YMI-activities in particular with regard to **young people struggling with social anxiety or who are otherwise vulnerable or isolated from their peers**, helping them to join a social circle and become more confident in their social interactions. One focus group member for example spoke of a participant who had previously been a ‘school denier’ and completely isolated from his peers but was now (following his engagement in

the YMI project) in his third year of college, “*excelling as a musician, making friends, going out*”. This notion of increased social confidence was frequently mentioned by projects and participants as supported by being around others facing similar situations. As one participant noted, by “*being in touch with other people who [...] understand when you are having a bad day and you don’t have to keep explaining yourself, I felt less isolated*”.

“ My confidence when around other people and my trust for them has grown and is still growing. I have also noticed my anxiety has been easier to deal with knowing I am not alone with it. I have come to recognise [the YMI project] as safe, happy place where I can wind down doing something I enjoy, spend time with other people, and if I need help, I just need to ask. (Participant, End of Project Report)

“ It’s definitely helped with my social anxiety, with being able to answer the phone. [...] I think it’s because I’ve been using Zoom lots with [the YMI project]. I would say I feel more connected because I’m not just speaking to my family or really close friends. It’s nice having people outside of that to speak to. And it’s given me the confidence to apply for a part time job. (Participant, End of Project Report)

Several projects reported working **specifically with young people who are otherwise socially isolated due to struggling with mental health issues and/ or facing challenging home lives**. One project for example linked with the social work department, thereby allowing “*some of the most vulnerable young people to use music as a way to increase their confidence and reduce their social isolation*”. This project worked with young people with extremely low levels of confidence (hindering their ability to interact with others) and saw most of their participants increase their (social) confidence throughout the project. Another worked with young carers who suffered from isolation and stress due to their responsibilities, which had been further exacerbated by the pandemic. Again, they noted how being able to interact with others who have similar

experiences during the YMI activity helped the participants: *“they struck up friendships which continued beyond the music sessions, therefore feeling of isolation and not feeling included were greatly reduced. [...] Sessions were held in safe and supportive environments which reduced their stress levels considerably. Their overall mental and physical well-being was improved as a result of taking part. Personal confidence and self-esteem was also improved.”*

In a third example, a project noted working with young people who had experienced homelessness, with a considerable impact on their mental health, and who were now settling into new, permanent homes. Both were keen to engage in the YMI project and since joining, *“both young people have grown extraordinarily in terms of their confidence. Where before they struggled to speak to strangers, they are now attending group meetings, creating songs of their own as well as sharing their own stories of homelessness and their mental health. They have spoken on the radio about [the YMI project] and attended events to promote their songs and the album. [The project] has been transformational for both young people, giving them confidence, purpose and skills that will be lifelong”.*

## Findings from the case studies

### Participation in music projects leading to social connections and friendship, and through this to wellbeing

Here, too, the case studies provided ample evidence of the bonding and friendships that happen throughout the YMI-activity, often supporting young people dealing with social anxiety and with an impact on their mental wellbeing. Not surprisingly, the case studies again highlighted the negative impact the Covid pandemic and lockdowns had in this area, and how participation in the YMI activity helped participants overcome the negative effects of this experience:

- **Edinburgh College’s** project found that participants clearly relished being together again after months of isolation and how this showed itself in the intimacy and mutual support that quickly arose among the participants: *“When we went live again, there was such a sense of*

*coming back, togetherness and one of the things I noticed that I hadn’t noticed before COVID when we came live again was ... when we were in the big space together what I noticed more was participants teaching each other and helping each other with parts ... rather than turning to us and that’s what you want, you want to make yourself unnecessary in a way that that community can continue without you ... there was an intimacy that came very quickly when we went back to live that wasn’t there before.”*

- **A.R.Ts Afternoon** quoted one parent who again noted the negative impact Covid had had on their child, and how YMI participation helped her meet new people she would not otherwise have met: *“My daughter is now taking drumming lessons at school too. Making music is huge for her. Hard to remember how isolated she was. Now goes uptown with drumming friends. Some are from different schools she wouldn’t have met otherwise”.*
- **Canongate Youth** highlighted the effort they put in to create a welcoming, safe space at the YMI-funded Creative Hub for young people and how participants – including those who are initially anxious – start coming together through the music. According to staff, the Creative Hub enables participants to build their confidence, develop strong relationships and create friendships. These effects are supported by tutors and staff and achieved through regular tuition as well as opportunities to perform. It is felt that informal, group-based, participant-focused teaching is key to helping young people achieve confidence, connection and wellbeing. As Canongate’s music tutor reports, *“some were very anxious when they arrived, but sitting in a room together, playing together, they start to feel comfortable with each other. All of a sudden, they can go outside and have a meal together and stuff like that.”* The project notes how participants form their own bands, often bringing together young people who would not otherwise have met. The project has recently seen an increase in neurodiverse young people joining in, and the project director highlighted how these young people seem to thrive on being in a group with others facing similar challenges to themselves.

Similar to Edinburgh College, Canongate Youth also found a renewed enthusiasm to participate as well as a supportive atmosphere among participants post-Covid.

- **Mull Music Makers** also highlighted bringing together children and young people from across a wide geographical area and different age groups who would not otherwise meet, based on a mutual interest.
- The **Scottish Brass Band Association** similarly brings together likeminded young people from across Scotland through its summer camps and free Easter courses, allowing them to come together, play and socialise, and make friends. While some young people might find themselves the only young member of their band locally, coming together to spend a week as one of around 150 introduces them to another community and expands their interest groups.
- Project **Beat Buddies Music** found that they played an important role during the pandemic in providing something for young people to do. Finding many young people with low self-esteem, they addressed this through setting out 'ground rules' to define Beat Buddies' activity, promoting 'best behaviour', 'responsible behaviour' and enjoyable activity that was 'the best fun'. The project saw noticeable progress in improved confidence levels, culminating in a student performance in December 2021, which saw the participants "*gladly and willingly and proudly*" going onto the stage to perform.



## 2.3 Aim 3: Supporting the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of children and young people

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 children and young people through training and CPD. As highlighted by the cohort focus group, the development of the youth music sector is further enabled by partnerships and relationships across communities and sectors. As such, in addition to reviewing employment and training data, this chapter investigates the following notions mentioned by the focus group:

- the development of strong partnerships benefiting projects, participants and organisations, and leading to stable, relied-upon community resources
- the improvement of links between the informal and formal sectors, with a positive impact on the latter.

### 2.3.1 Employment and training

#### YMI projects have supported more posts than in the previous year, with strong increases in Access and Strengthening, but decreases among Formula Fund projects

During this reporting period, YMI supported 1,182 music education posts across its three programme strands; a considerably greater number than in the previous reporting period (989 in 2019/2020), but similar to the total in 2018/19 (1,196). Similar to the previous reporting period, the majority of YMI-funded posts were temporary, part time posts. **(Error! Reference source not found.)**. In addition to these posts, Access and Strengthening projects involved 181 and 19 volunteers, respectively, as well as 113 and 1 trainee, respectively.

Breaking down this year's figures, Access to Music Making saw a slight increase in permanent part time posts supported, but a high increase in temporary part time roles supported, with about 2.5 times more posts supported in 2020/21 than in 2019/2020. While this may in part be the result of the inclusion of more Access projects in this reporting period than previously,

comparison of average participants for Access projects shows that this year, these were double compared to the previous reporting period (14 participants in 2021/22 vs. 7 participants in 2019/20). This is especially noteworthy considering these posts were in place during the pandemic, when uncertainties and shifts in working approaches were key challenges. However, in effect it reflects the increase in total and average YMI participant numbers, suggesting, perhaps unsurprisingly, that more projects reaching on average more children also require more staff. It is also possible that this increase may in fact be a result of changes to delivery made due to Covid: we saw an increase of smaller as well as larger participant cohorts among projects and a larger number of smaller projects may require more tutors than a few larger projects.

Strengthening Youth Music projects similarly increased temporary part time posts by almost four times in 2021/22 as compared to the previous reporting period. Formula Fund in contrast saw decreases in both these types of post. Temporary part time posts funded in 2021/22 decreased by almost 1.5 times the number of posts funded in 2019/20. This suggests a link with the slight decrease of total participants and participant hours as seen above; as previously discussed, it is likely that these reductions are indicative of Local Authorities facing rising staff and other costs amidst decreasing or standstill funding from YMI since 2016/17.

Figure 13 YMI 2021/22: Employment created

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

Type of post	FF		AMM		SYM		Total	
	2021/22	2019/20	2021/22	2019/20	2021/22	2019/20	2021/22	2019/20
Permanent – full time	34	46	14	9	0	0	48	55
Permanent – part time	111	128	72	50	0	0	183	178

Temporary – full time	12	9	26	24	0	2	<b>38</b>	<b>35</b>
Temporary – part time	360	509	534	207	19	5	<b>913</b>	<b>721</b>
Total							<b>1,182</b>	<b>989</b>

Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

## The pandemic presented both challenges and opportunities for freelance YMI staff

Similar to the previous reporting period, the overall majority of posts being temporary and part time indicates YMI projects' strong support for employment of both music tutors and practitioners whose work is based on 'portfolio careers'. While these types of posts provide flexibility, some projects highlighted how this is a consequence of the one-year funding cycles, and can also be a source of instability and uncertainty both for...

- the hiring organisation or project (as one case study noted: *"[With longer-term funding], staff could have longer, more secure contracts and therefore enhance [our] ability to regain good staff, sometimes lost because people need security"*), as well as for...
- the staff in question. As one music tutor employed by one of the case studies reported: *"I have to go where the funding is. Luckily my girlfriend has [permanent employment], so we can get a mortgage, others can't"*.

Interestingly, it seems that changes to delivery due to the pandemic could have both negative and positive impacts on freelancers. Some projects reported how the **pandemic negatively impacted the stability of work for freelancers**:

- “ The lockdown was a difficult period as we had to pause many of our projects, so we didn't have a regular flow of funding and unfortunately our freelance staff had little work. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

- “ The impact on freelance staff was also an issue, as being self-employed within the creative industries can be challenging at the best of times. Saying this, some mentors applied and received support from the Creative Scotland Covid fund, which made a significant impact on their finances. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

In a few reported cases, however, the pandemic was also linked with a **positive impact on freelancers due to changes in the mode of delivery**. One project noted that this allowed them to engage a wider pool of creative practitioners while another found that changes resulted in a need for more freelancers:

- “ We found that the hybrid delivery format was beneficial from a number of points of view including ... the opportunity to involve a more wide-reaching and diverse pool of freelance creative practitioners to deliver online sessions (removing the need for travel). (Project manager, end of project report)
- “ Freelance staff were not affected in terms of their fees [for this particular project], and in effect were offered additional work with the increased number of sessions. (Project manager, end of project report)

In this context, it was also noted by a few projects that their **ability to hire freelance practitioners for YMI projects was highly valuable at a time when many saw other work streams drying up** due to the pandemic. As one end of project report noted:

- “ We have been able to work in partnership with freelance artists and creative practitioners at a time when much of their usual work was completely halted by the pandemic, which has supported them financially as well as enhancing the quality of

work that we were able to deliver. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

### Formula Fund provides an opportunity for engagement in music education for a wide of people, with teachers regularly ranking highest

Within schools, YMI supported a wide range of positions through the Formula Fund to create an ecosystem of different stakeholders and practitioners all contributing towards youth music education. The largest group involved in YMI delivery were parents or carers (5,027), professional musicians (2,666), followed by teachers (2,586).

While these total figures differ significantly from the previous reporting period, which showed a much lower engagement of professional musicians and parents/ carers, it is important to note that the high numbers in both these categories this year are overwhelmingly made up of two individual Formula Fund projects. Once such outliers are removed, figures for each category look very similar across the years, with the teachers – not surprisingly – regularly being the largest group involved, showing very little fluctuation.

While this data highlights the strong involvement of ‘formal education’ teachers and others involved in YMI delivery, qualitative information provides further nuance on the extent of involvement and learning gained (see section 2.3.2 on partnerships and collaboration, p.37).

**Figure 14 Formula Fund: Roles involved in delivery**

Role	2021/22	2019/20	2018/19
Teachers	2,586	2,627	2,592
Tutors	407	538	550

<sup>23</sup> 2,424 professional musicians were involved with YMI projects run by Stirling Council.

<sup>24</sup> 5,000 parents or carers were involved with YMI projects run by Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Professional musicians	2,666 <sup>23</sup> (242 excluding Stirling Council)	361	384
Administrators/managers	127	132	70
Adult volunteers	21	74	
Parents or carers	5,027 <sup>24</sup> (27 excluding Dumfries and Galloway Council)	68	3,063 <sup>25</sup>
Music students	15	51	93
Trainers	77	45	31
Youth workers	57	23	13
Other	51	28	

Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

### More people benefited from training and CPD than in the previous period, with anecdotal evidence suggesting positive benefits for staff, participants and the sector

Overall, the Strengthening Youth Music Strand reached 10,214 beneficiaries; a significant increase on the 585 reached in the previous reporting period. These 10,214 beneficiaries were largely made up of participant numbers reported by the Music Education Partnership Group (MEPG), whose project accounted for 10,000 of the 10,214 participants reached.<sup>26</sup> Discounting MEPG’s project, average numbers among the remaining Strengthening projects was at only slightly above 100; however, given that this strand focuses on strengthening the sector rather than participation impact, these figures are not unexpected.

<sup>25</sup> It’s unclear from the 2018/19 report why this figure is so much higher, it may be that it is due to specific projects focused on engaging parents in delivery.

<sup>26</sup> MEPG included all its ‘organisations and members’ as ‘individuals who benefited from the project’.

**Figure 15 YMI 2021/22: Number of Strengthening beneficiaries over the years**

	2021/22	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
<b>EOPs</b>	<b>3</b>					
Beneficiaries of Strengthening projects	10,214 (MEPG: 10,000)	585	509	86	0	9,078
Average number of beneficiaries of Strengthening projects	107 <sup>27</sup> (excluding MEPG)					

Source: BOP Consulting (2022).

Alongside the sector development activity taking place via the Strengthening projects overall, YMI projects across all strands support professional development opportunities through training and CPD. During this reporting period, 5,631 people benefitted from training and CPD linked to YMI activity, with three-quarters delivered via the Formula Fund (see Figure 16).

This figure is considerably higher than in the last reporting period, which supported a total of 3,411 participants, and exceeds the high total reported in 2018/2019 (5,052). Again, it should be noted that a significant proportion of Formula Fund participants supported through training activity were from projects run by one local Council (1,478). Excluding this figure, people benefitting from training and CPD for Formula Fund projects is roughly comparable to the figure from 2019/20. Similarly, for Access, approximately 300 people benefitting from training were linked to one project. Excluding this figure, numbers for 2021/22 roughly compare to those in 2019/20.

<sup>27</sup> Including MEPG, the average number part participants involved per project is 3,405.

<sup>28</sup> 1,478 people benefitted specifically from training activity run by Fife Council.

<sup>29</sup> Including 300 via Tinderbox Collective.

**Figure 16 YMI 2021/22: No of people who benefitted from training and CPD linked to the YMI activity**

	Formula Fund	Access to Music Making	Strengthening Youth Music	Total
2021/22	4,203 <sup>28</sup>	1,065 <sup>29</sup>	363 <sup>30</sup>	<b>5,631</b>
2019/20	2,473	846 <sup>31</sup>	92	<b>3,411</b>
2018/19	3,361	1,691		<b>5,052</b>

Source: BOP Consulting (2022)

These figures demonstrate that overall, projects managed to deliver their training activities despite the limitations of the pandemic, suggesting that by the time many of the projects planned their activities (in the knowledge of existing rules), they had found ways to deliver that worked within these constraints.

In addition to training accessed via Formula Fund, Access and Strengthening projects, YMI also provides training opportunities to sector organisations and individuals<sup>32</sup> via the YMI CPD and Training Fund. This is administered on behalf of Creative Scotland by the Scottish Music Centre. Both organisations and individuals can apply to support their training needs; for individuals, awards are capped at £750. Awards frequently cover costs for training sessions, but recently applicants have shown more creativity in how and which learning they are accessing, and the fund is welcoming this.

In this reporting period, the strand received 48 applications (with 39 from individuals), 44 of which were funded (including 36 individuals). As such, figures were similar to the previous two reporting periods (48 applications and 48 funded in 2019; 53 applications and 31 funded in 2018). Most applications were for instrument, voice and music theory training, followed by Estil, staff and Kodaly training.

<sup>30</sup> Including 300 webinar participants via Music Education Partnership Group.

<sup>31</sup> Including 256 via SBT

<sup>32</sup> Professional and amateur musicians, teachers, trainers, music leaders

Anecdotally, **feedback recorded in the Scottish Music Centre’s report suggests that training participants felt they benefited from the in-project training they had received.** This had a knock-on effect on participants and the sector, with participants highlighting learning around facilitation and engaging teaching methods for young people:

- “ This gives more tools for me to work with, to expand the experience of young people, to give them access to high quality equipment and software and the skills to use it. This increases confidence, life chances and opportunities for them and strengthens the sector.
- “ It will make me a better, more rounded group music facilitator, it will give me more variety of material to teach, and it will enrich the youth music sector by introducing a rich heritage of West African cultural music.
- “ I hope that my CPD training will help me strengthen the youth music sector here [...] by allowing me to resume a community music class for pre-schoolers which I held weekly pre-pandemic and [...] I hope to help set up a choir in the local primary school as requested by the headteacher.
- “ The project has reinforced for me the importance of composition education in youth music as it promotes music making that is collaborative and empathetic.

Similarly, one funded organisation spoke of training helping them *“enrichen the learner experience and create a more inclusive environment”*.

### 2.3.2 Partnerships and collaboration

#### **Strong partnerships and networks, supported by longevity of funding, benefit projects and delivery organisations, turning some projects into relied-upon community resources**

Members of the grantee focus group highlighted the strong presence and value of partnerships within YMI projects, aided both **by receiving YMI funds over several years as well as YMI encouraging the creation of (cross-sector) partnerships**. One focus group member here pointed out the value of YMI asking about project partners in their application forms, meaning that projects are *“required to consider partnerships from the application stage onwards”*. He felt this contrasted strongly to other sectors where there was more competition instead of collaboration between organisations. Importantly, it was felt that these two elements of long-term funding and encouraging partnerships go hand-in-hand, as longevity of funding then *“means you can plan and build relationships”*.

- “ How much we have been encouraged to build partnerships is probably one the biggest things that immediately springs to mind. That we collaborate rather than compete. (Focus group member)

These characteristics of YMI funding mean that projects are able (and supported) to create relationships and networks among different providers within a community, including schools, music organisations, local authorities and other community organisations.

- “ We have strong links around the city. (Focus group member)

Importantly, focus group members agreed that such networks and partnerships helped them **create a better offer for their participants**, as

- partnerships result in organisations learning from each other and improving their understanding of local needs, and



- partners can refer or guide young people from one project or organisation to another.

Taken together, one focus group member highlighted how this allows projects to become a “*stable, relied-upon **community resource***”: “*a place that everyone knows*” and “*a solid, reliable experience that is always there*”. Notably, this ties in with YMI’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary message of “*Music can bring people together and build stronger communities*”.

“ Although we don’t get guarantee of long-term funding, we go back and get it again and again. Unlike most other funders – many have a maximum of years [they will fund]. I understand why they do it, but it’s meant that we have been able to establish an incredibly solid experience for young people here. (Focus group member)

The **strong basis partnership within projects** and the notion that this **improves projects for young people as well as the delivery organisations themselves**, was similarly reflected in the case studies and End of Project Reports. Projects firstly linked partnerships in with being able to access a wider range of young people, including those who may otherwise be difficult to access (as seen in section 2.1) and creating a better offer for participants.

In their reports, projects referenced continuing ongoing relationships as well as creating new collaborations or partnerships with organisations from the third sector, local government, and education. This was equally reflected in the case studies, with Canongate Youth for example working with other local partners, enabling them to widen their offer and attract a wider range of participants. Mull Music Makers in turn proactively engages local community groups involved with Mull’s traditional music history. This includes the local Fèis Gaelic arts festival and the mòd Gaelic arts competitions, which encourages young fiddle players who have progressed in Mull Music Makers to enter.

Notably, reports show that partnerships did **not only include local organisations, but also nation-wide partners**. One project mentioned becoming a member of other sector forums (community justice and care

experienced young people in this case), attending regular networking and training events “*with the opportunity to share learning and new opportunities for collaboration between organisations*”. Others in the same vein reported collaborating with a range of national organisations supporting care experienced young people or working with young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

“ The group that attended the mini-conferences and workshops represents a network of individuals from academia, music education providers, and music education deliverers - e.g., local authorities - which is a powerfully useful network to have created. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

In addition, several mentioned partnering or **collaborating with freelancers** including musicians and artists. Again, this was reflected in the case studies, with Limelight for example working together with a freelance artist to bring a new element to their project activity.

Reflecting the focus group’s suggestion that **YMI supports and encourages the development of partnerships**, one organisation highlighted in their report how the YMI-funded project had helped them connect with their and other sectors and changed their organisational practice. The project included conducting a lecture series and presenting at a conference, and it was felt that these experiences “*have involved a significant transformation in the culture and outlook of our organisation and actually has made us a much happier and better place to work!*”

“ [We have] become a much more collaborative and outward looking organisation. Before this project, we were a fairly intellectually isolated and disconnected organisation - and after we are very connected with our sector, with new and resilient relationships developed with other providers in our sector, and members of the music education academic community. Their feedback has helped us to do the work necessary to enable us

to begin to engage significantly with the with academic community. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

Similarly, others mentioned how working with **partners had impacted their own work** – including their ability to reach young people, with one for example referencing how this impacted their marketing approach and how they were able to *“utilise partners’ networks to help reach more people”*. Similarly, another project referred to how they had, due to working with partners, decided to widen their project from a focus on working with young women and girls only to opening up to all that were interested, *“as the main goal was to increase access and remove barriers”*.

In addition, other projects **highlighted their position in the local community, reflecting the notion** – as mentioned by the focus group member – **of projects becoming a (local) community resource**. This was reflected in some of the case study projects, which have worked within their local area for a long time, creating reach into many local schools and offering opportunities for local young people to progress over time, such as Canongate’s Creative Hub and A.R.Ts Afternoon’s Pulse of the Place project. In this context, Mull Music Makers also noted their strong engagement of parents, who are key to young people being able to access the project and help to create a community around it.

End of Project Reports referenced organisations being able to increase their visibility within communities through project activity, engaging participants in the history of their local community, being able to “represent the community” or being able to bring enjoyable experiences to the wider community. One project reported that their impact on individuals and the community had been recognised through receiving a ‘Local Heroes Award’, *“shining a light on individuals, artists and companies who have demonstrated unwavering support for their local community”*.

“ During the pandemic, street drumming outdoors during the school day brought joy to members of the local community, who frequently engaged with us and even applauded, and we were able to perform a piece written by the upper school as part of [a

local street party] in 2021, further embedding out project in the local community and celebrating the achievements of children and young people within the local area. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

### **YMI supports the relationship between informal music tuition and formal education settings, with some evidence of involvement impacting the latter**

Finally, focus group members also talked about how they felt that YMI has played a role over the years in creating a relationship between formal (instrumental) instruction and the YMI projects with their more ‘informal’ approaches to music tuition. They noted having encountered what they described as fear or concern among formal instructors with regard to more informal approaches, pointing to concerns about quality and a sense of competition, and a resulting reluctance to engage. Positively, they however agreed that **YMI had over the years helped to bring formal and informal tuition closer together** and had *“played a direct role”* in reducing the tensions between the two. Members felt that to achieve this, it was invaluable to work in partnership, and for people more connected to formal (instrumental) tuition to be able to see the impact that informal tuition such as YMI projects can have, as *“the results speak for themselves”*.

This area was also touched upon by some case studies and End of Project Reports. Inevitably – and reflecting the high number of teachers reported as being involved in projects on a regular basis – the **notion of bringing informal tuition into a formal context was often related to work in schools, including both music tutors as well as ‘formal’ educators more generally**. One focus group member who runs an Access project here noted that it *“took years”* for them to engage with schools, while another noted how they were located nearby a school who *“did not want us to engage”*. The members acknowledged, as one member pointed out, that creating strong relationships across the two approaches takes time, requiring the building of trust and *“becoming a priority in a context where time is always stretched”*. To support development of understanding and collaboration, they felt it was *“really*

*important to see the teachers be involved*". One member pointed out how they for this reason require teachers to be in the classroom and take part in all their school projects, so that the teachers can see for themselves the impact the sessions are having. Both case studies Limelight and A.R.T.s Afternoon similarly highlighted **challenges in engaging teachers** (not necessarily music teachers) in their activities, due to both the limited time teachers have, and a perceived lack of skills and confidence among teachers to get engaged. This was the case despite Limelight for example meeting teachers prior to the project beginning in order to impress on them the benefits of joining in.

“ A lot of people just don't know what is going on because they have no time to look up. YMI helps to pay for people to do this. (Focus group member)

Focus group members also spoke more specifically of the **impact of engaging in informal music education on musicians who had been formally trained**, introducing them to new ways to working with kids, 'playing by ear', providing them with new tools and *"broadening their approaches and authenticity"*.

Evidence mentioned above suggests that this is in part supported through the CPD and training that is offered through YMI, including YMI's CPD and training strand, however, it is not clear whether those receiving training are necessarily members of the 'formal' sector or have already been involved in 'informal' tuition and are keen to learn more. Focusing here however rather on the insights gained by formal music educators/ musicians through engaging with/ taking in participant-focused YMI activity (rather than training), such learning was not brought up in many End of Project Reports and was not specifically touched upon by most case study projects. This may in part be due to the specificity of the subject matter, with many projects talking about partnerships without going into such specific detail.

Two case studies provided examples of such learning among formal musicians: A tutor working with Mull Music Makers who was trained in both classical violin and traditional fiddle cited how the YMI project enabled her to try something different, from recording and performing professionally to writing arrangements

for a range of beginners to advanced young musicians. She noted how it taught her the importance of trying new methods of teaching music to young children before assuming they are not willing to learn. This learning came from watching another YMI tutor connect with a young student she had not been able to engage and seeing the excitement of this student when taught in a different way. Similarly, the Scottish Brass Band Association's Education officer also works as a peripatetic brass instrument music teacher and found that his involvement in the YMI-funded youth activity for SBBA –working with young people as a band rather than individually - impacted on his job more generally.

In addition, several references were made of **projects providing insight and learning about 'informal' approaches to music tuition to a wider array of people from outside the informal music sector, including general teaching staff**. One project for example referenced a network of people coming together through their project, including YMI music tutors, as well as school-based music tutor as well as teachers and community musicians. They noted how these people *"came together to share knowledge, reflect on their practice and learn new adaptable skills. [...] New connections were made and from the training people took away practical activities and ideas, which they can use when working in their own settings."*

“ Some of the activities learnt during the conference have since been used and developed by those participating in the workshops and they have informally shared their successes with using these in their music practice. (Project manager, End of Project Report)

While highlighting challenges in engaging general teaching staff, case studies Limelight and A.R.T.s Afternoon also referenced examples of teaching staff acknowledging **the impact that projects can have on their pupils** and reported on positive feedback from teachers and headteachers. A strong example came from case study Beat Buddies Music, who noted how their school-based projects presented ways for teachers to engage students when teaching other subjects. One teacher interviewed for example reflected on the potential to use Beat Buddies' approach of body percussion and using everyday

objects to teach music in order to engage young students in other areas of learning. Likewise, End of Project Report quoted a primary school teacher who reported how much they had learned about teaching music creatively through the YMI project: *“I think about me coming out of university and being asked to teach a music lesson, I wouldn't have had a clue where to start, whereas that kind of gives you the tools and the structure...the online programmes are quite explicit and step-by-step so it takes you through in a manageable way to make it achievable. They're all involved in creating music as well...which is probably the part of music that I'm...least confident with”.*

Outside of a school context, a further project reported impacting prison staff, helping them build their confidence in offering or delivering music-making projects in the prison. The report quoted one prison Life Skills Officer who took part in a week-long music making course with prisoners:

“ I was sceptical at first - I wasn't musical before, but I learnt things, and had a great time. (End of Project Report)

Overall, despite these clear signs of improved and successful links between the informal and formal sectors, the focus group and case studies thus highlighted that this can still be a challenge. Some projects to support this are already underway. One project for example undertook research which highlighted their potential to *“aid non-specialist classroom teachers to have the skills and confidence to delivery music [...] even when they didn't previously feel confident about delivering music”.* Another project (whose lead was also a member of the focus group) reported being asked to join the founding committee for the Scottish Instrumental Music Teaching Network, with the aim of helping members who work in music to engage with informal and community settings. They are working to arrange more exchanges between organisations, to get people from the informal sector to visit projects in the informal sector and vice versa, to encourage understanding, supported by YMI. Nevertheless, the focus group members reported being **keen to further develop these links, raise awareness and promote increased knowledge sharing between the two.**

### 3. Enablers and challenges to successful YMI delivery

Across the focus group, End of Project Reports and case studies, feedback from those delivering projects highlighted a range of factors that either enable the successful delivery of YMI or pose challenges to delivery.

Inevitably, given that most of the Access projects included in this report were delivering during Covid lockdown periods (or at least periods of restrictions and reduced social interaction), comments on challenges to delivery frequently circle around the limitations that this posed. However, many of these projects planned and started their project in the knowledge of these limitations, as opposed to the previous report, which included projects which met unexpectedly with the catastrophic impact of the first lockdown and had to quickly find often entirely new ways to deliver. This means that the challenges around Covid presented by projects in this report are more nuanced, noting both positives and negatives of *planned* virtual delivery.

In this respect, they are insightful for the ongoing 'blended delivery' approach of face-to-face and virtual delivery that many projects are now taking.

#### Enablers to delivery

Across the focus group, case studies and End of Project Reports, projects highlighted a range of factors which they felt helped to enable successful delivery of their YMI projects:

- Highly positively, across the board, **key characteristics of YMI's structure and aims** were highlighted as aiding successful delivery, including:
  - The ability to fund repeatedly over time allowing projects to develop and build relationships, thereby becoming trusted and valuable resources
  - YMI's 'flexible and hands-off' approach as a funder, letting projects go ahead with what they are good at and limiting reporting requirements, whilst at the same time providing support and help where needed

- The informal, people-focused, project-based approach to tuition helping to engage a wide range of people and supporting bonding, learning as well as mental health and wellbeing
- The promotion of partnerships supporting the creation of strong projects, delivery organisations and community resources and helping projects reach out to priority groups

- Given that most projects have had to find **new ways of working online since the onset of Covid**, many projects referred to positive impacts with regard to working in this way, with several mentioning that they were keen to maintain a 'blended' approach to learning. Several mentioned how young people had been able to learn and progress through online learning beyond their expectations. In particular, positives included:
  - Increasing IT skills among staff and pupils,
  - Widening reach and bringing together new groups of people who would not be able to meet face-to-face
  - Allowing new approaches to delivery, by combining online interactive work with face-to-face meetings and providing a new platform through which to collaborate and communicate
  - Easing access into projects for some young participants, as a 'springboard' for in-person activity
- Contrasting this, many End of Project Reports however also highlighted how much young people (and staff) enjoyed **being back together** again post-Covid, showing renewed enthusiasm to collaborate, including through being mutually supportive. Overall, the message was that the whole period showed that on-site sessions hugely enable successful delivery, but that there is nevertheless also a place for online activity alongside this.

#### Challenges to delivery

At the same time, projects referenced a range of factors that challenged the successful delivery of their projects:

- Notably, compared to the many enabling characteristics of YMI mentioned above, projects largely mentioned **one key challenge around YMI's structure**, reflecting similar findings over the past years: YMI's one-year



funding model. While they acknowledged the value of being able to receive repeat funding in providing continuity and allowing projects to develop and imbed, it nevertheless means that projects cannot always run continuously, creating challenges around maintaining engagement. Moreover, projects reported how this limits the job security they can provide staff, in some cases reducing their ability to maintain staff and having an impact on the financial stability of staff. **Several projects thus highlighted being keen to “explore multi-year funding”.**

— Inevitably, projects reported on **limitations to delivery brought on by Covid:**

- While online delivery – at least as part of a blended approach – clearly has merit as seen above, it also posed challenges to teaching young people, due to limiting connections, requiring a more ‘one speaker at a time’ approach and technical issues such as internet synchronisation.
- Many projects highlighted the impact on confidence that the pandemic and prolonged isolation had had on young people, making it more difficult (especially early on) to open up and engage.
- One project also highlighted how online delivery limited their ability to engage young people in areas ranking high in the SIMD due to many not having easy access to a device or internet. It also limited their ability to go into the communities and schools to create interest for the project initially.

## 4. Conclusion

In summary, evidence shows that **2021/22 was once again a highly successful year for YMI**, with most projects delivering as intended, reaching large numbers of young people from across the priority groups and supporting high numbers of employment and training to sector members. While the data suggests that Local Authorities in particular have been required to slightly reduce overall activity in the wake of increasing costs, figures have overall remained strong across all performance indicators.

It is all the more remarkable that this happened in a period of ongoing challenges and uncertainty due to the Covid pandemic. This suggests that **projects benefited from the experience that they had been able to gain by the time of this funding round in delivering during pandemic-related restrictions**, allowing them to adapt to and plan in these circumstances and find ways to deliver successfully despite them. Data for example suggests that this led to an increase in smaller (Access) projects as well as an increase in projects attracting larger cohorts, likely based on online delivery. Qualitative evidence in turn provided many examples of projects delivering online, with some highlighting how successfully they were able to engage participants despite the limitations, providing a valuable weekly experience for young people at a difficult time.

It is noticeable how references to Covid were by no means all negative, with projects referencing new learning (in particular around IT skills and online tuition) and how **online delivery allowed** them to introduce **new forms of tuition and interaction, as well as to extend their reach**. Nevertheless, qualitative evidence unsurprisingly also highlighted how **keen delivery organisations and participants were to** 'get back to normal' and be able to **learn and play face-to-face** in one room, and the joy this gave. As such, this suggests – as in the previous report – that **YMI is likely to see ongoing blended learning approaches in at least some future projects**.

*And what of other key findings?*

We feel that removing the focus of this evaluation from YMI's existing outcomes to a **more open evaluation approach** was successful, **revealing some strong impact areas of YMI that have previously received less attention**:

The focus group highlighted impact around:

- **children and young people's mental health and wellbeing;**
- **children and young people's progression;**
- **sector partnerships and the creation of 'community resources';**
- **the ability of 'informal' YMI projects to impact the formal sector.**

The case studies and End of Project Reports were then used to investigate these areas further. While the former represent only a small (albeit representative) selection of all funded projects, taken together, these qualitative sources both showed that the outcomes highlighted by the focus group do happen, and provided rich detail on how.

Positively, what came through strongly here was that **these outcomes were not** just the result of 'another music lesson/ project' but were **hugely supported by key characteristics of YMI**, including both its

- **structure** (most notably its longevity and willingness to repeat fund, allowing projects to embed, create partnerships and provide a continued offer, with a positive impact on delivery), and its
- **approach** (in particular its promotion of 'informal' tuition based on enjoyment, engagement, group and youth-led music activities; and its promotion of cross-sector partnerships).

What perhaps shone through most strongly across all the qualitative evidence reviewed was i) **YMI's strong impact on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing**. This is particularly significant given the Scottish Government's focus on this area, and the fact that children and young people's mental health is known to have been significantly impacted by the Covid pandemic and resulting social isolation in recent years. Almost universally,

projects highlighted both their conscious support in this area (and its need), and the inherent impact YMI-funded activities are having **through providing enjoyment, skills and confidence as well as space for social interaction.**

This ties in with the ii) notion of **YMI providing – through its longevity and breadth of funding**, to a wide range of age groups and spread across schools and communities – **a pathway through which young people can move** as they grow older. Again, evidence suggests that this is valuable for young people in itself, **providing trusted continuity and relationships** among different age groups, with resulting benefits. However, it is clearly also hugely valuable in allowing young people to **progress their musical abilities**, allowing them to maintain an interest, improve their skills and consider potential career opportunities in the music or youth music sectors.

And further, these participant-focused outcomes link with a third outcome area particularly highlighted through this evaluation: of iii) **delivery organisations’ active development of partnerships** both locally and nationally, **leading to wider reach, improved projects** and, in some cases, to the creation of strong, stable **community resources** for young people, often in areas of high multiple deprivation. While the focus group highlighted specifically the extent to which they felt YMI as a funder promoted the creation of partnerships, this also shone through in the case studies, with projects highlighting the **value of repeat funding to being able to embed, form partnerships and maintain a presence.**

This longevity was further mentioned in reference to iv) **promoting more informal-style approaches to music tuition within the formal (music) education sector**, generally considered as beneficial and as having been supported by YMI. While there were several examples of projects impacting on members of the ‘formal’ sector, it was insightful to see the case studies suggest that some are still finding teachers reluctant to engage. This underlines the focus group’s **message that more could be done to bring the two together**, for the mutual benefit of both, as well as for the benefit of the participants.

Nevertheless, overall, a picture presented itself of a **strong network of projects and collaborators from across a range of backgrounds** having developed over the past years **for the support of children and young people,**

**supported by YMI’s longstanding and wide-reaching funding and promotion of partnerships.** This underscores just **how important YMI’s third aim of sector development is in developing projects that are successful for the young participants.**

Taking together all the above points around projects’ impacts on young people’s wellbeing and their ability to create long-lasting resources for a wide range of young people, supported by partnerships across the informal and formal sectors, this perhaps suggests that **fundamentally, YMI is not just a ‘music programme’** (indeed with strong existing evidence of its success in improving music skills, knowledge and engagement). **Just as much, it is a ‘youth programme’, which supports children and young people in a range of ways:** one that is based on the ongoing delivery of engaging, joyful, accessible, impactful and reliably present ‘music experience’.

## 4.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings across the report and the conclusion above, we suggest the following recommendations:

- We suggest **formally adopting mental health and wellbeing as an outcome within YMI’s evaluation framework** under Aim 2, both as it is a key aim of the Scottish Government, and because projects are already achieving much in this area and feel it is supported by YMI’s characteristics. Integrating it within the existing participant outcomes would formalise this impact, making evident that this is a key aim that you are striving for, and thereby supporting and encouraging projects to consider and embed this within their work.
- Along with the above, formal integration into the framework also means that **evidence can be collected more specifically against this outcome** going forward. This could be done by adding ‘mental health and wellbeing’ as an outcome to be reported against in the End of Project Reports. However, if changes are being planned to move away from reporting against each outcome area, other ways could more found to look more specifically at this outcome in future evaluations.

- The data suggests Access projects were able to reach more young people due to online delivery, and evidence suggests that at least some projects are considering a blended approach moving forward. It would therefore be **useful for future monitoring data to provide finer-grained information about the number of participants reached through either online or face-to-face delivery** (bearing in mind that in many cases participants would fall into both categories); and how both are being used as part of one project. This would enable further understanding of the extent to which blended delivery allows for broader/ larger reach, and whether this impacts on the type or level of engagement that participants receive.
- As yet, we found no evidence of changes to delivery due to the changing context of school-based music tuition, with the onset of free instrumental music tuition in parallel to YMI projects. Indeed, when asked we found that several case study interviewees seemed unaware of this change. This may be a reflection of the fact that these changes are relatively new and still embedding. Given this, we suggest that if of interest or concern, some **targeted research could be done to understand the impact of the changes to instrumental music tuition on local authority delivery and participants** further down the line.
- Some reference was made across the case studies and End of Project **Reports of collaboration with artists from other art forms**. Given in particular the background of wider youth arts funding in the previous year (with current insecurity as to whether this will continue), it **would be interesting to track this in future projects**, to understand how many projects are undertaking such collaborations, and how they feel it benefits their music projects.
- Focus group members felt that it would be beneficial to **further develop the links between formal and informal education, in order to share knowledge, collaborate and allow young people to move from one project to another**. Several suggestions were made as to how this could be done, including:
  - Creating an online database/map of projects in the different regions across the informal and formal sectors, in order to share ideas, promote collaboration, allow projects to direct participants to other projects and also to see at a lower geographical level where there are no activities taking place. Focus group members suggested whether updating such a database could be made a pre-requisite of the funding.
  - Local Authorities connecting teachers in order to help them see the bigger picture of what impact YMI is having across age ranges and across the board (rather than knowing only about their own activities). Suggestions for this included a 'national project that connected the YMI projects', or, at a local level, events such as school concerts inviting both primary and secondary schools, to allow teachers to see what is happening in their area.
- Overall, the evaluation team felt that the approach taken in this evaluation to remove the focus from YMI's existing outcomes to a more open evaluation approach (beyond ongoing reporting of key metrics) was very successful. We feel in particular that it lent itself to an ongoing programme that has been evaluated on an annual basis for a number of years now and continues to be evaluated annually. It allowed identification of some impact areas that have not previously received much attention, and more in-depth investigation of a smaller number of key impact areas. The development of detailed case studies meanwhile provided in-depth and nuanced insights as well as creating a real sense of what the programme is 'about'. As such we would **recommend considering similar approaches in future evaluations to ensure that the annual evaluations continue to identify new insights** rather than simply adding further material to YMI's existing body of evidence.

## 5. Appendix

### 5.1 Access to Music Making projects included in the reporting period

Eight projects that took place before or after the end of the UK lockdown periods<sup>33</sup> are highlighted in blue.

**Figure 17 Access to Music Making projects included in the reporting period**

Organisation	Start date YMI funded activity	End date YMI funded activity	Local Authority	Amount awarded
Hope Amplified	November 2018	October 2019	South Lanarkshire, Glasgow	£18,374
Hope Amplified	April 2020	February 2021	South Lanarkshire, Glasgow	£20,000
Tynecastle Youth Community Pipe Band	March 2017	March 2019	Edinburgh	£22,380
Tynecastle Youth Community Pipe Band	February 2019	February 2021	Edinburgh	£27,414
Eildon West Youth Hub	March 2018	February 2019	Scottish Borders	£9,661
Fèis Rois Limited	January 2017	May 2019	Highlands	£54,950
Olivia Furness	September 2018	December 2020	Edinburgh	£40,000

Jess Abrams	September 2019	December 2021	Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian	£19,750
Firefly Arts Ltd	March 2019	August 2021	West Lothian	£18,050
Reel Kids Music Club CIC	May 2019	March 2022	Glasgow	£10,000
National Piping Centre	February 2019	October 2020	National	£90,000
The Scottish Brass Band Association (SBBA)	March 2019	March 2021	National	£90,000
The Scottish Brass Band Association (SBBA)	April 2020	March 2021	National	£90,000
The Sound Lab	June 2019	June 2021	Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire	£39,650
Dunoon Burgh Hall	September 2018	Summer 2020	Argyll & Bute	£19,800
Gardyne Theatre	November 2020	July 2021	Angus	£20,000
Limelight Music	March 2021	September 2021	Glasgow	£14,175
Scottish Music Centre (Music Plus)	March 2020	April 2021	National	£90,000
A.R.Ts Afternoon	June 2020	August 2021	Edinburgh	£40,000

<sup>33</sup> End of March 2020 to end of May 2020 (first lockdown); October-early December (second lockdown); tight restrictions over Christmas 2020/21; January 2021 - beginning of April 2021 (third lockdown).



Uig Church of Scotland	N/A	N/A	Highlands	£2,085
The Children's Wood	June 2020	August 2021	Glasgow	£20,000
Canongate Youth	October 2020	August 2021	Edinburgh	£26,224
The Spartans Alternative School	October 2020	June 2021	Edinburgh	£4,356
Sistema Scotland	July 2020	February 2021	National	£84,000
Sunny Govan Community Media	June 2020	November 2020	East Ayrshire	£10,000
MusicALL	September 2020	June 2021	Glasgow	£19,250
Sound Waves SCIO	August 2020	July 2021	Argyll & Bute	£17,000
Mobilize Music Project	February 2021	August 2021	South Lanarkshire	£6,352
National Youth Orchestra of Scotland (NYOS)	July 2020	August 2021	National	£85,000
Artsplay Highland	August 2020	December 2021	Highlands	£39,774
The Nurture Nursery	August 2020	August 2021	West Lothian	£4,280
Tinderbox Collective	April 2020	March 2021	Dumfries & Galloway, Dundee, Edinburgh, Scottish Borders	£40,000
Wide Events CIC	September 2020	January 2021	National	£19,950

Intercultural Youth Scotland	July 2020	July 2021	Edinburgh	£15,000
RIG Arts	August 2020	December 2021	Inverclyde	£14,948
Findhorn Bay Arts Ltd	April 2021	March 2021	Moray	£20,000
The National Piping Centre	February 2020	August 2021	National	£85,000
Loretto Care (Wheatley Care)	July 2020	September 2021	Glasgow, South Lanarkshire, Falkirk, Stirling	£37,000
Where's the One <sup>34</sup>	N/A	N/A	Scottish Borders	£4,812
Soundsystem Project CIC	July 2020	February 2021	Dumfries & Galloway, North Ayrshire	£27,000
Stirling Carers Centre	August 2021	December 2021	Stirling	£5,000
The BIG Project	May 2021	April 2022	Edinburgh	£29,878
KOR! Records	March 2021	June 2022	Glasgow	£14,921
National Youth Choir of Scotland (NYCOS)	April 2020	July 2022	National	£90,000
Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO)	September 2021	June 2022	Glasgow	£12,000
Nevis Ensemble	September 2020	July 2021	North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire	£19,600
Scottish Book Trust	2020	2022	National	£74,420

<sup>34</sup> This project's end of project report was completed in the wrong form, which did not include the data required for this evaluation; the data tables in the findings section therefore exclude any data from this project. As it is a relatively small project, this is likely to have minimal impact on the findings.

## 5.2 Strengthening Youth Music projects included in the reporting period

All four projects took place during the UK lockdown period.

**Figure 18 Strengthening Youth Music projects included in the reporting period**

Organisation	Start date YMI funded activity	End date YMI funded activity	Local Authority	Amount awarded
Music Education Partnership Group	April 2020	March 2021	National	£16,600
Station House Media Unit	June 2020	September 2021	Aberdeen	£15,000
Fèis Rois Limited	July 2020	June 2021	Highlands	£4,500
ABC Creative Music	February 2019	July 2020	National	£20,000

## 5.3 Regional distribution of funds 2021/22

The following two tables look at the geographical spread of funds distributed in the year 2021/22 (as opposed to the projects included in this evaluation period).

**Figure 19 Number of informal projects delivered in each Local Authority (2021/22)**

Local Authority	Number of Access & Strengthening projects that delivered in the Local Authority
Edinburgh	10
Highlands, including Western Isles, Shetland Isles, Orkney Isles	6
Glasgow	5
Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire	5
National	6 (including two projects listing 5+ Local Authorities they delivered in)
Stirling	3
Dundee	2
Argyll and Bute	2
West Lothian	2
Falkirk	2
Perth and Kinross	2
South Lanarkshire	2
Scottish Borders	2
Fife	1
Midlothian	1
North Ayrshire	1
East Ayrshire	1
East Lothian	1
Inverclyde	1

North Lanarkshire	1
Dumfries and Galloway	1

**Figure 20 Awards distributed per Local Authority & merged (2019/20)**

Local Authority	Funding to Access projects within the Local Authority	Funding to Strengthening projects within the Local Authority
National (including two projects listing 5+ Local Authorities they delivered in)	£268,551	£40,000
Glasgow	£195,000	
Edinburgh	£180,007	
Edinburgh and East Lothian	£70,000	
Stirling	£69,842	£19,698
Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire	£59,887	£10,000
Aberdeenshire, Edinburgh, Glasgow	£9,885	
Highlands, including Western Isles, Shetland Isles, Orkney Isles	£66,612	£4,500
Highlands & Argyll and Bute	£29,950	
Argyll and Bute	£20,000	
North Ayrshire	£30,000	
Perth & Kinross	£28,841	
Dundee	£25,000	
South Lanarkshire	£15,020	
North Lanarkshire	£15,000	
Scottish Borders	£13,500	
Inverclyde	£13,480	
Falkirk		£10,090
West Lothian	£6,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,116,575</b>	<b>£84,288</b>

*Access & Strengthening funding merged across strands and geographical areas*

National	£308,551
Edinburgh (including one project that delivered in Edinburgh + East Lothian)	£250,007
Glasgow	£195,000
All others	£447,305
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,200,863</b>