

Irish Association of Youth Orchestras CLG

Strategic Plan

2018 - 2020



IAYO
promotes interest in and
fosters the development of
Youth Orchestras

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Irish Association of Youth Orchestras CLG

The Irish Association of Youth Orchestras CLG (IAYO) is the all-Ireland resource organisation for youth orchestras.

IAYO was founded by its members in 1994. It is a non-profit organisation that was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in 1998 and became a registered charity in 2001.

IAYO has 86 member organisations throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland comprising over 120 youth orchestras and ensembles with a combined participation of more than 5,000 young instrumentalists.

Mission

The Irish Association of Youth Orchestras aims to promote interest in and foster the development of youth orchestras by the following means:

- Encourage co-operation between all organisations and groups involved in the development of youth orchestras;
- Create a network for advice and information in relation to youth orchestras;
- Foster excellence in the youth orchestra movement by facilitating training courses for conductors, teachers and students, access to libraries of music and sharing of unusual instruments, and by offering performance opportunities;
- Act as a forum with an all-Ireland and international dimension for all those involved in youth orchestras;
- Present excellence in the youth orchestra movement to a wider public through youth orchestra festivals.

Vision

The Irish Association of Youth Orchestras will be an integral part of a vibrant and flourishing youth orchestra community in Ireland.

IAYO will provide resources and activities that are relevant to and well-focused on the needs of youth orchestras and young instrumentalists.

IAYO will provide a strong point of connection for youth orchestras to the areas of youth music, youth arts and the professional organisations that are, or could be, stakeholders in the development of youth orchestras.

Impact

The impact of our activities will be the increased quantity and quality of participation in youth orchestras and ensembles in Ireland.

Foreword from the Chairperson

It is a great pleasure to introduce IAYO's Strategic Plan 2018-2020. The plan is extensive and is a reflection, not just of the huge variety of projects undertaken by IAYO itself, but a demonstration of the richness, vibrancy and diversity of the youth orchestra movement in Ireland. Since it was founded in 1994, IAYO has evolved from primarily a voluntary organisation, to employing 3 full-time professionals, which has facilitated an expansion of activities, with IAYO providing support to ConCorda, the Irish Youth Wind Ensemble and more recently the Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra, Irish Youth Brass Band and the Esker Festival Orchestra. More importantly it has allowed us to build solid foundations for the continued development and improvement of our core work detailed in this plan. Because of the breadth of activity undertaken, it is crucial that IAYO continues to focus on doing what it does well. We are always aware of balancing ambition and vision with the need to operate within the constraints of our finite resources and we strive to lead by example in delivering excellence and quality in all the events and supports that we offer and choose to engage in.

The annual Festival of Youth Orchestras remains our cornerstone annual event, very much valued by our members and key in promoting interest in youth orchestras nationwide. It also offers a life-enhancing experience for the young performers who take to the stage each year, and in preparing for it, fosters the development of participant orchestras. Challenges lie ahead in the next few years, with the closure and re-development of the National Concert Hall fast approaching. But it is timely for us, as we will use this opportunity to review the Festival and engage our members and stakeholders in this review to enhance the event. Performances both outside of NCH during the closure period and on our return to the hall will allow us to explore putting on an expanded event in the new spaces at our disposal, and accommodate increased interest from our members in being involved.

IAYO is extremely fortunate to have an excellent team working in the office and the exceptional contribution of the Director, Allin Gray, over the last 11 years must be noted here. The delivery of our last plan and the recent significant increase in funding to allow us to move into a new phase of development could not have happened without him. Finally, the dedication, commitment and extraordinary talent of the teachers and musicians who give so much of their time, often voluntarily, must be acknowledged as being at the heart of this plan, as well as parents who provide access to instrumental tuition and orchestra rehearsals for their children. Supporting this is even more important in these uncertain times - instilling the joys of music, community spirit and cooperation, as well as the discipline of practice, attendance and performance is what orchestral performance is all about and is what we hope will help to secure a better future for our children.

Claire Daly
Chairperson

Introduction

IAYO was founded in 1994 so that youth orchestras in Ireland could benefit from seeking advice and assistance from each other and from advocacy at a national level. Its mission - *to promote interest in and foster the development of youth orchestras* - and the associated aims provided a wide remit for the organisation. Although there has been much positive change in the intervening years, the aims are still relevant and the development of activities and resources in line with those aims is ongoing.

This plan is largely an update of the 2011 Development Plan, aiming to build on progress to date and incorporating the new national ensembles that have been developed under the wing of IAYO. Good progress has been made on all the aims of the previous plan with the exception of the music library, which is in need of advice and strategic development and needs a more efficient evaluation system, i.e. an online library with sample scores.

Activities and Resources

The activities and resources provided by IAYO work in two main streams: those directed towards youth orchestras, primarily member organisations, and those directed towards young instrumental players. They represent a balance of targeting local development and facilitating the development of ensemble music making at a high standard nationally. Maintaining a good balance between these has been difficult at times: production activities, being deadline dependent, tend to command more immediate attention than the provision of resources and services that help in the general development of youth orchestras. The increased staffing from 2017, supported by an increase in funding from The Arts Council, will help to ensure balanced development of activities over the duration of this plan.

Network Contexts and Geographical Remit

The first two aims of the IAYO mission create a very wide context in which we network and aim to create connectivity. Encouraging *co-operation between **all** organisations and groups involved in the development of youth orchestras* and creating *a network for advice and information in relation to youth orchestras* cover a large number of actual and potential stakeholders in the arts, in education, and in youth work - from local to national, to European and international levels. IAYO's role in facilitating such co-operation and connectivity is something that, in theory, could use all the current resources of the company without being in any way exhaustive.

It is very desirable for IAYO to act as a conduit and filter for information of relevance to youth orchestras; connecting not only to areas of arts, education and youth, but also to the community and voluntary sector, to government, to providers of training and others. The

amount of information produced these days is overwhelming and our communication channels can deliver relevance at a reasonable volume to youth orchestras.

Our most effective approach to developing our network is to network well ourselves, as time and resources allow, and to use our connectivity to connect organisations, groups and individuals that have mutual interests to each other without our further involvement. Aiming to be a node on a network, albeit a visible and significant one, is preferable to trying to manage the network in terms of what can be achieved by the network itself.

IAYO should be cognisant of the changing landscape in Ireland and communicate with other providers of education and opportunities to ensure that our combined activities enhance, and do not unnecessarily duplicate, each other.

Geographically, IAYO claims to be an all-Ireland organisation and, while we do have members in Northern Ireland, our presence there is certainly less prominent than in the Republic. One specific reason for this is that the resources we provide, and often the information, is more relevant in the Republic. The music education system that operates in Northern Ireland is more advanced and better resourced so that the resources we offer are, in ways, not relevant. It is in terms of community that we see our most important potential contribution; through connecting youth orchestras across the border and tending the idea of a single community of young musicians on the island rather than two distinct countries. IAYO in Northern Ireland is something that needs an investment primarily of time in order to discover and facilitate the pursuit of mutual interests. Given the lack of clarity around the international border between the Republic and Northern Ireland post-Brexit, we can only formulate a response once the outcome is known.

Internationally, IAYO is a member of the European Orchestra Federation (EOFed), an umbrella organisation for amateur and youth orchestras and, through EOFed, a member of the World Federation of Amateur Orchestras, the European Music Council and the International Music Council. There could be greater benefit derived from these associations, especially in terms of connecting youth orchestras, young players and staff to each other for exchanges and in sharing of best practice. While music education in Ireland is lacking compared to many of our European counterparts, the culture of participation in ensemble music making is very strong here by comparison to the resources available and Irish youth orchestras compare well to those of other countries where access to music education is greater. It is an aspiration that Irish youth orchestras engage more with their European counterparts using funding available for exchange through the Erasmus+ programme and it is intended that developing and promoting opportunities through Erasmus will be a focus of working with members in the future.

Cooperation and Collaboration

IAYO should be open to cooperating with other music education providers in the delivery of exemplary projects that develop music education and participation in Ireland. Of note in recent years are our collaboration with music schools and Music Generation education partnerships in Carlow and Laois in developing internet teaching and teacher-training programmes for oboe and our support for the Royal Irish Academy of Music in developing a Viola for Violin Teachers course. It is useful where such projects are of fixed duration, with the planned exit of IAYO as a partner after a time from the continuing programmes. We should not eschew once-off or short-term projects where these stimulate developments within the community.

National Youth Ensembles

IAYO's support for the Irish Youth Wind Ensemble and the ConCorda Chamber Music Course for Strings have proven to be a very strong model of collaboration. Both courses benefit from an independent artistic lineage and involvement of staff with strong historic links to the courses. IAYO is in a position to provide legal, financial and administrative continuity and stability, essentially allowing artistic staff to get on with what they do best and thus providing the best experience for the young people involved. The Esker Festival Orchestra has been supported in its development by IAYO, specifically through support in applying for and managing funding through the Young Ensembles Scheme run by The Arts Council. This funding has, from 2018, been included in IAYO's core funding under the new Arts Council Strategic Funding scheme. Two new ensembles were launched in 2017, the Irish Youth Brass Band and the Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra, the latter in collaboration with the Irish Baroque Orchestra. The expansion of the artistic programme in this way is efficient as it gains more value from existing processes and resources in place in the company. It also allows other organisations and individuals to develop their outreach and education capabilities without having to set up legal and administrative structures. Developing the company as a production hub in this manner makes good sense given that we now have the staff resources to do so.

Amateur Orchestras and Ensembles

Whilst providing support to amateur ensembles is not within the remit of IAYO, it is acknowledged here that these ensembles have no national representative or support organisation and, as such, are not in a position to benefit from supporting each other or to gain access to supports at a European level, particularly the music libraries of the larger European orchestra associations that are available to IAYO. IAYO is open to approaches from amateur orchestras wishing to form such an association and is willing to provide such resources as are useful to them in running a voluntary national association. IAYO maintains a mailing list to pass on relevant information and opportunities to amateur orchestras.

Advocacy for Access to Music Education

The lack of instrumental and musicianship training available to young Irish people is an issue that is of great concern to IAYO. Ultimately, we see that the consistent provision of basic musicianship training as part of formal education is a prerequisite for equality of access to participation in ensemble music making. However, it is beyond both the remit and the resources of the company to tackle this lack alone. We remain committed to cooperating with other organisations with respect to advocacy for universal access to music education. Unfortunately, at present, there is no umbrella body or other group leading this advocacy and IAYO is not presently in a position to take the lead in this. We continue, as part of our ongoing work, to invite and engage with public representatives, government advisors and others at our programmed events and to advocate for access to youth arts with the National Youth Council of Ireland.

Advocacy and Campaigning

As a representative organisation, IAYO engages in campaigning and advocacy on issues relating to the provision of performance opportunities for young people, music education and musical infrastructure. Campaigning in recent years has included support for the European Union Youth Orchestra, which had lost its funding and, more recently, to avert the merging of the RTÉ orchestras. Such campaigning, of its nature, can not be planned in advance and is engaged in to the extent that current programming allows.

Governance

Along with many organisations in the non-profit sector, IAYO has committed to adopting *The Governance Code: a code of practice for good governance of community, voluntary and charitable organisations in Ireland*. The adoption of the code will, in the long run, ensure the effective operation of IAYO in achieving its mission and provide accountability and transparency to all stakeholders. IAYO will develop and commit to a programme of board development and ongoing education to ensure continuing good governance.

Compliance

Compliance with legislation has become increasingly onerous in recent years and takes up a significant amount of staff time. It is hoped, however, that we can spread the benefit of this work to our co-producing individuals and organisations and to member organisations and others working in youth music, thus gaining more value from IAYO's investment of staff and other resources.

IAYO will work with member orchestras, where appropriate, and take advice from other national organisations in the generation of policy templates and procedures that can be

adopted by others in the sector.

Marketing, Communications and Profile Raising

Over the course of this plan, IAYO will develop a comprehensive marketing plan: a document to be used and updated on an ongoing basis. It will contain:

- promotions plans for courses, performances and events;
- editorial policies for our news streams and social media feeds;
- plans for consultation with member organisations and other stakeholders on their needs and on the activities and resources to be provided by IAYO;
- plans for maintenance and development of information resources and information provision.

An overarching aim for communications and marketing will be the promotion of participation in music, ensembles and orchestras for young people, using the examples of excellence of our co-producing courses and ensembles and the promotion of member orchestras and ensembles.

Risk

The primary risk to the company in the recent past has been a problem of scope and scale. IAYO engages in the provision of a wide variety of resources and activities. This has been largely ameliorated by an increase in funding from The Arts Council and a consequent increase in full-time staff.

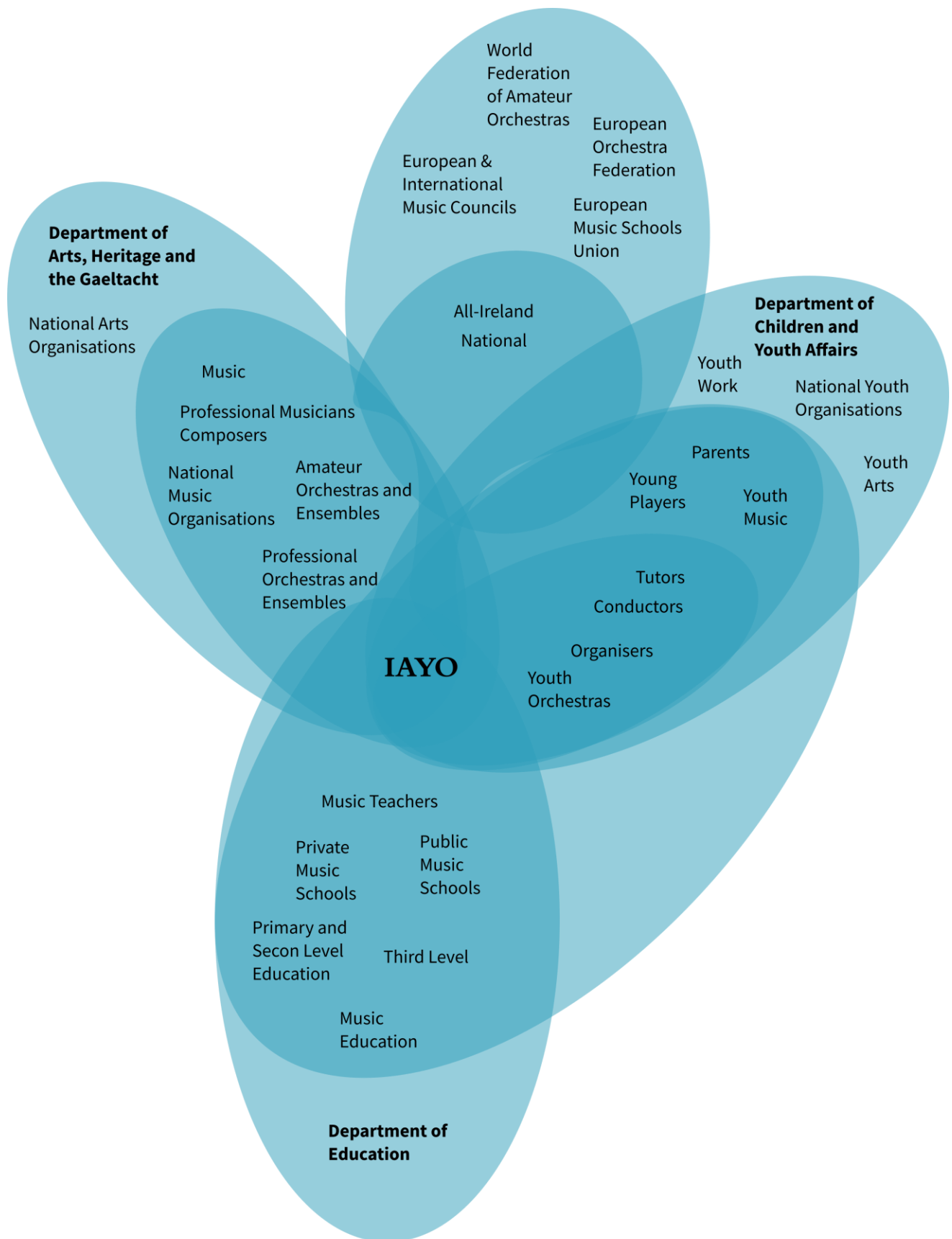
Currently, the contribution of The Arts Council of 40% to 50% of turnover is significant. While not identified as an immediate risk, cuts to funding would have a significant impact on the organisation's ability to continue in its current form. Maintaining a good working relationship with The Arts Council, abiding by funding requirements and keeping The Arts Council well informed of our activities are very important in retaining our current level of funding and increasing it if circumstances allow. Developing other income-generation activities will not directly offset this risk but will help the organisation develop and consolidate and is, therefore, important.

Conclusion

This strategic plan does not express its ambition in a large expansion of the organisation or its activities but, rather, seeks to continue gaining more value from existing activities and to increase the impact of the youth orchestra community as a whole. The main aim is to sustain and improve what is already in place, to consolidate and participate in the realisation of the ambitions of others; our member youth orchestras and our partners and co-producers at a national level. This is how IAYO can have its greatest impact: to be a facilitator and partner of

others in our community; to see that things get done, and done well, rather than to try and do everything ourselves.

Allin Gray,
Director.



The IAYO Network: the depth of colour is roughly indicative of our level of interaction.

Aims

Encourage co-operation between all organisations and groups involved in the development of youth orchestras.

- Encourage communication and collaboration between member organisations.
- Bring related local, regional and national and international organisations and individuals into contact with IAYO and youth orchestras. Encourage and actively engage in collaborations with these organisations and individuals. Provide opportunities for youth orchestras to meet and network with these organisations and individuals.
- Act as an advocate at a national level for the development of youth orchestras, youth ensembles, youth music and youth arts, engaging with other organisations to collectively promote our shared agendas.

Create a network for advice and information in relation to youth orchestras.

- Provide youth orchestras with news and information in a structured and accessible manner.
- Allow youth orchestras access to appropriate advice by way of information sheets, books and periodicals, internet sites, related organisations, advice from IAYO staff and advice from other knowledgeable parties.
- Actively engage with youth orchestras to establish what issues they face or might face and attempt to find solutions with an appropriate amount of input from IAYO.

Foster excellence in the youth orchestra movement by facilitating training courses for conductors, teachers, and students, access to libraries of music and sharing of unusual instruments and by offering performance opportunities.

- Continue to manage and further develop the instrument bank and the music library.
- Engage in an ongoing training programme for conductors and facilitators.
- Engage in training provision in relation to instrumental teaching in collaboration with other organisations.
- Access training for organisers through other organisations and provide training directly where needs are youth-orchestra specific.

Training and performance opportunities for students

- Provide training for young players through courses and workshops.
 - Encourage the development of young players in orchestras through the provision

of one-session and one-day workshops with conductors, performing artists and instrumental specialists.

- Encourage chamber music playing as a means of developing young players in orchestras.
- Promote and support the provision of high-quality training and performance opportunities for young players by other organisations and groups.
- Encourage and engage with professional and amateur ensembles to provide opportunities for youth orchestras and young players to develop.
- Maintain existing relationships and develop new opportunities for young players in national-level ensembles and courses including ConCorda, Irish Youth Wind Ensemble, Esker Festival Orchestra, Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra and Irish Youth Brass Band:
 - Where appropriate, allow these organisations to derive their legal status from IAYO while continuing their own lineage of artistic direction and on-course management.
 - Provide administrative support and promotions.
 - Seek new funding and sponsorship opportunities.
 - Work with partners to expand these ensembles and courses as appropriate and feasible with more courses, performances, tours and junior and senior ensembles.

Act as a forum with an all-Ireland and international dimension for all those involved in youth orchestras.

- Create opportunities for youth orchestras to voice their opinions and to influence the policy of IAYO in forwarding their own agendas at a national level.
- Take part in international networks including the European Orchestra Federation, European Music Council and International Music Council to increase international contact and opportunities for Irish youth orchestras and young instrumentalists and to grow Ireland's reputation for youth music and orchestras internationally.

Present excellence in the youth orchestra movement to a wider public through youth orchestra festivals.

- Develop the Festival of Youth Orchestras at the National Concert Hall, taking advantage of new spaces and opportunities.
- Encourage member-led initiatives in collaborative performances and festivals.

Programme Summary

Resources and Services

- Network Development
- Advocacy
- Information & Advice
- News Service
- Workshops for Conductors and Artistic Staff
- Organisational Workshops
- Youth Orchestra Achievement Awards
- Instrument Bank
- Music Library
- Public Liability Insurance Scheme
- Garda Vetting

Artistic Programme

- Festival of Youth Orchestras
- ConCorda Chamber Music Course
- Irish Youth Wind Ensemble
- Esker Festival Orchestra
- Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra
- Irish Youth Brass Band
- IAYO National Chamber Music Workshops
- Orchestra and Player Workshops

Programme

Network Development

Building the community surrounding youth orchestras is a primary focus of IAYO. It is a constant process of networking ourselves, enabling contact, collaboration, sharing, exchange and mentoring.

Actions

- Keep up-to-date profiles on member organisations and youth orchestras in Ireland.
- Actively connect with organisations and individuals that are, or could be, stakeholders in the development of youth orchestras.
- Use the draw of programmed events to enable networking.
- Create networking time at programmed events, especially the Annual General Meeting and the Festival of Youth Orchestras.
- Encourage member organisations to publicise themselves, seek assistance etc. through IAYO news channels.
- Connect youth orchestras directly with those with whom they might collaborate, share, exchange or enter into mentoring relationships.
- Increase engagement with youth orchestras in Northern Ireland.
- Participate in European Orchestra Federation (EOFed) as representatives of Ireland and Irish youth orchestras.
- Use membership of EOFed to develop the international network for Irish youth orchestras seeking exchange opportunities.

Outcomes

- IAYO acts as a point of connection between current and potential stakeholders in the development of youth orchestras.
- Youth orchestras are laterally networked and use IAYO's connectivity to access other networks, facilities, resources, training and other opportunities.
- Young instrumental players use the IAYO network to access opportunities for training, development and performance.
- The community of youth orchestras, young instrumentalists and related stakeholders have a high degree of awareness, communication, collaboration, sharing, exchange and mentoring relationships.

Advocacy

IAYO has traditionally played a part in advocating for music and was involved in the setting up of the Forum for Music in Ireland in 1988 / 1989. This role is closely linked to the development of the network, gaining interest, co-operation and support from related organisations, professional music ensembles and organisations and local and national government structures and individuals.

Actions

- Advocate to funding agencies, local and central government on the value of youth orchestras, youth music, youth arts and the arts generally.
- Advocate, with other organisations, for music education as standard within the formal education system.
- Encourage communication and collaboration amongst music course providers.
- Encourage professional and amateur ensembles and organisations to engage with youth orchestras in their work through workshops, open rehearsals, performance opportunities and as audience members.
- Support and participate in the National Campaign for the Arts.
- Support and participate in the work of the National Youth Council of Ireland in advocating for youth arts.
- Regularly review these activities with regard to the effective use of staff time.

Outcomes

- The quantity and quality of participation in youth orchestras and youth ensemble music making will increase.
- Youth orchestras and ensembles will be empowered to develop through greater support and collaboration with other organisations in related sectors.
- The value of youth orchestras and youth music making will be enhanced and greater appreciated.
- The value of the arts to young people and society will be enhanced and greater appreciated.

Information and Advice

Actions

- Be visibly available to youth orchestras for advice and information.
- Be in a position to provide sound and informed advice to those who seek it within areas relevant to youth orchestras.
- Use IAYO's network to facilitate the provision of advice and mentoring. In particular, be aware and active in relation to the networking benefits that can be gained from introducing youth orchestras to each other and to other stakeholders, stepping back and letting them develop their own relationships.
- Systematically collect, order and store relevant information: where feasible, publish this information on the IAYO website(s). Information should be structured so that it acts as a resource to staff members, board members, youth orchestras, their staff, participants and other stakeholders.
- Create and, if necessary, commission fact sheets and guides. Update the publication, *Touring with a Youth Orchestra*.
- Provide links on the IAYO website to information resources provided by other organisations.
- Provide training to staff so that they develop knowledge bases appropriate to their positions.
- Attend conferences and events to develop IAYO's connectedness and to increase available knowledge.
- Promote the availability of advice and information through IAYO's news streams and websites.

Outcomes

- Youth orchestras, their staff and participants and other stakeholders will have access to a range of information and advice suitable to their needs.
- IAYO staff will be in possession of, or in a position to source, knowledge appropriate to the needs of youth orchestras, their staff and participants.
- Information, advice and resources will be available on the IAYO websites in a well-structured manner.
- Youth orchestras and other stakeholders will have their attention drawn to information of relevance to them through IAYO's news streams.
- The network for youth orchestras and young instrumentalists will be strengthened by the encouragement of lateral networking.
- Youth orchestras, their staff and participants and other stakeholders will be aware of

the information and advice available from and through IAYO.

News Service

The IAYO news service fulfils the following functions in relation to youth orchestras, their staff, participants and other stakeholders.

- It allows IAYO member organisations to feel part of a network of youth orchestras and music organisations in Ireland and internationally.
- It keeps youth orchestras well-informed in areas of relevance to them:
 - Music education;
 - Youth orchestra activity and developments nationally and internationally;
 - Funding opportunities;
 - Legal requirements and policy;
 - Performance, touring and exchange opportunities;
 - Programming and repertoire;
 - Training opportunities for organisers, facilitators, conductors and teachers;
 - Courses and opportunities for young instrumentalists;
 - Best practice in running youth orchestras and youth projects;
 - Activities of related orchestral, music, youth and arts organisations.
- It promotes best practice in relation to young people.
- It promotes the raising of standards in instrumental teaching and orchestra conducting / facilitation.
- It provides a platform for youth orchestras to promote their own activities and create partnerships, nationally and internationally.
- It provides a space for youth orchestras to ask for assistance, advertise for teachers and musical instruments.
- It promotes participation of young players in national and international courses and ensembles.
- It promotes participation of facilitators and organisers in training at all levels.

Newsnotes (Paper edition)

- Four issues annually.
- 8 pages in black and white.
- Circulation 250 hard copies.
- Distributed by post, at IAYO / related events and online as a pdf.

Newsnotes Online

- Blog style newsletter.
- Updated on an ongoing basis.

Email Newsletters

- Monthly general round-up of the latest news with links to Newsnotes online and relevant websites.
- Targeted emails with specific items of interest / importance to youth orchestras, young instrumentalists and other stakeholders.

Social Media Streams

- Links to IAYO Newsnotes online, sharing of member activities, announcements and items of more general interest in music education, philosophy of music, humour, etc.

Actions

- Provide news and information to youth orchestras, young instrumentalists and other stakeholders.
- Keep the paper edition of Newsnotes in place. Survey members every two years to ensure that it remains a relevant and useful distribution channel.
- Revise and update the Newsnotes editorial policy.
- Revise and maintain mailing lists on an ongoing basis. Segment mailing lists so that information can be specifically targeted.
- Research contributors and commission relevant articles.
- Act as a filter for youth-orchestra-specific news and information by subscribing to mailing lists and visiting websites of relevant organisations.

Outcomes

- Youth orchestras, their staff and participants and other stakeholders are well informed of matters that relate to their practice and feel part of a community involving youth orchestras, orchestras, music, arts, education and youth.

Workshops for Conductors and Artistic Staff

Actions

- Provide training and resources for conductors and other artistic staff working with youth orchestras:
 - Conducting and direction;
 - Programming;
 - Score reading and preparation;
 - Rehearsal techniques;
 - Youth involvement;
 - Instrumentation (wind for string players etc.);
 - Viola teaching for violin teachers and other instrumental development programmes;
 - Selection and interpretation of repertoire, including contemporary music;
 - Other relevant training as needs and opportunities arise.
- Provide an annual week-long conducting course with practical workshops.

Outcomes

- The standard of artistic facilitation of youth orchestras and young instrumentalists will continue to increase.
- The range of orchestral instruments that can be learned in different locations will increase.
- The quality of performance of youth orchestras and young instrumentalists will increase.

Organisational Workshops

A large range of courses are provided for arts and non-profit organisations through Business to Arts, The Wheel, Tusla, the National Youth Council of Ireland etc. IAYO will encourage youth orchestra staff and volunteers to access suitable training through these agencies. IAYO will only engage directly in areas of training where the subject matter is specifically and exclusively related to youth orchestras / youth music.

Actions

- Ensure adequate training is available for:
 - Touring with young people and orchestras;
 - Sourcing artistic personnel;
 - Child protection and welfare;
 - Fundraising and sponsorship;
 - PR, marketing and advertising;
 - Advocacy and networking;
 - Planning and development;
 - Governance;
 - Board and committee development;
 - Sourcing and managing volunteers;
 - Ensuring legacy and continuity;
 - Legal and financial responsibilities of managing a society, club, or company;
 - Event management;
 - Audience development.
- Provide appropriate training for the organisers of youth orchestras where such training is not available through other organisations.
- Make youth orchestra organisers aware of training opportunities through third parties and encourage participation in appropriate training.
- Encourage best practice amongst member orchestras through encouraging participation in appropriate training.

Outcomes

- Youth orchestras will have access to a range of training opportunities relevant to their activities and stage of development.
- Youth orchestras will engage in best practice in relation to child protection and young people.

Achievement Awards

The Youth Orchestra Achievement Awards are presented annually at the Festival of Youth Orchestras. They acknowledge achievements by youth orchestras and those that have contributed significantly to youth orchestras.

The Agnes O’Kane Award, honouring the founding Honorary Administrator and, later, Chairperson of IAYO, is presented annually at the Festival of Youth Orchestras to acknowledge the particular contributions that volunteers have made, and continue to make, to the development of youth orchestras in Ireland.

Current Awards

- Award for Development of the Youth Orchestra.
- Special Achievement Award.
- The Agnes O’Kane Award.

Actions

- Review the categories of the achievement awards, the number of categories and the financial reward.
- Draw up new criteria and an assessment process for the achievement awards, including specific plans for acknowledgement of those orchestras that are nominated but do not receive awards.
- Publicise the awards recipients and their projects and contributions as part of the publicity for the Festival of Youth Orchestras.

Outcomes

- Orchestras, their staff, volunteers and participants will feel validated and recognised for their work and achievements and inspired to continue, improve and expand.
- Excellent ideas and practices will spread throughout the community, raising artistic standards and the quality and quantity of participation in youth orchestras.

Instrument Bank

The instrument bank provides:

- Long-term loans of expensive or unusual instruments to allow players to begin and continue on instruments and to allow orchestras to develop the playing of particular instruments in their ensemble;
- Short term loans of unusual instruments and items of equipment for specific performances / tours etc.
- Instruments available for workshops and courses;
- Instruments for strategic development projects.

Actions

- Maintain the instruments currently in the instrument bank.
- Make contact with all borrowers on an annual basis to ensure that instruments are in use and that they are in good condition.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date information on the whereabouts and condition of instruments.
- Seek funding annually under the Music Capital Scheme for maintenance, repairs and new purchases.
- Seek new funding streams and sponsorship for the purchase of new instruments.
- Promote the idea of a national percussion and rare instrument bank, available to youth and amateur orchestras, bands and other non-professional and professional ensembles.
- Purchase and use instruments for strategic development projects, particularly in relation to lesser-played instruments. Engage with member orchestras and other partners to increase the range of instruments for which tuition is available.
- Provide information and assistance to youth orchestras to gain funding to purchase their own instruments.

Outcomes

- The IAYO instrument bank is operated effectively in the development of youth orchestras and young instrumentalists.
- Member orchestras develop their balance and ability to perform music as scored.
- Young instrumentalists have access to expensive instruments and / or second / alternative instruments to trial.
- The range of instruments on which tuition is available increases outside of the main population centres.

- Youth orchestras develop their own instrument resources.
- Potentially, movement is made towards the establishment of a national percussion and rare instrument bank.

Music Library

The IAYO music library contains music for full orchestra, string orchestra, string and wind chamber music and music for mixed / flexible ensemble available to member organisations and other stakeholders.

The music library has not been operating effectively in recent years and there may be better ways to serve the wide variety of member needs. In particular, member orchestras have, collectively, a large store of repertoire that might be shared through a scheme operated by IAYO.

Therefore, it is proposed to engage in research to establish the needs of members and define how they may best be met.

Actions

- Seek professional advice and recommendation on the existence of the IAYO Music Library.
- Engage in research on the feasibility and costs of an inter-orchestra loan system mediated by IAYO.
- Specifically, seek advice from:
 - The International Association of Music Libraries (UK & Ireland) Branch;
 - The European Orchestra Federation (which runs an international loan system);

Outcomes

- IAYO's approach to access to musical materials for youth orchestras in Ireland will be clarified and rejuvenated.
- Youth orchestras will have access to suitable repertoire and performance materials.
- Youth orchestras will have access to advice on suitable repertoire and the suitability of repertoire.

Public Liability Insurance Scheme

Actions

- Research and negotiate with insurers to ensure that reasonably-priced and suitable public liability insurance is available to youth orchestras.
- Keep youth orchestras aware of this option for their insurance by carrying reminders in Newsnotes editions, on our website and other news streams.
- Encourage the insurance provider(s) to advertise in the IAYO Festival programme.

Outcomes

- Youth orchestras will have access to suitable, competitively-priced public liability insurance.

Garda Vetting

Actions

- Ensure youth orchestras and other youth music providers are aware of this service provided by IAYO.
- Ensure youth orchestras and other youth music providers are aware of their legal obligations with respect to vetting.
- Encourage take-up of the service and best practice by member organisations in relation to staff and volunteers.
- Provide vetting services to non-member organisations that do not have an alternative provider of vetting services.

Outcomes

- Member organisations and other youth music providers meet their legal obligations with regard to vetting.
- Best practice is followed in the engagement of volunteers and professional staff.

Festival of Youth Orchestras

The Festival of Youth Orchestras, IAYO's flagship event, has been held annually at the National Concert Hall since 1996. The Festival is non-competitive and is open to all member orchestras and ensembles and provides, for many young players, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to play on their national stage.

The Festival forms the main annual focus of IAYO's promotion of youth orchestras to the general public. PR around the event aims to promote the participating orchestras, young players and youth orchestras generally.

The Festival offers excellent organisational experience for young people involved in music; the majority of the 30-strong paid and volunteer staff on the day are aged 25 or younger, including the backstage- and stage-managers.

Actions

- Hold a multi-stakeholder review of the Festival and related activities.
- Build around the current format of the Festival in line with facility / space developments at the National Concert Hall:
 - Hold artistic workshops throughout the day, bringing orchestras and young players to the Festival;
 - Provide workshop orchestras with tickets for one or both performances;
 - Hold a trade show for summer and other instrumental courses. Use the opportunity of having representatives present to introduce them to each other and discuss any common issues;
 - Hold networking events on the day.
- Offer workshops to participating orchestras to help them prepare for the festival and realise their ambitions for their performance.
- Increase voluntary staffing in courtesy to increase the networking benefit of the Festival.
- Re-examine the possibility of making the Festival international.
- Encourage greater participation of orchestras from Northern Ireland.
- Develop a programme of free / reduced price tickets with the aim of introducing those without access to classical music and providing access to the festival to those learning music in the new class teaching models that are appearing in DEIS schools.

Outcomes

- Young players from all around Ireland have the opportunity to play on the national stage.

- Young players and orchestras will perform to the highest standard that they are capable of.
- The Festival will act as an annual gathering for the youth orchestra community and other present, and potential, stakeholders in the development of youth orchestras.
- The Festival will act as a national platform for youth orchestras from all over Ireland.
- The Festival will build awareness of what is being achieved by youth orchestras around Ireland and encourage greater participation in music making.
- The Festival will produce young professional and amateur musicians that are confident in dealing with logistics and the organisation of large-scale events.

ConCorda Chamber Music Course

ConCorda is a chamber music course for advanced string players, also including chamber orchestra, choir and improvisation / drama activities. The course is held annually, in August, and facilitated by members of the Irish Chamber Orchestra and ex-ConCorda participants who are now professional string players.

ConCorda has, since 2005, been funded through IAYO and derives its legal status from IAYO. It is administered by IAYO and retains its own artistic direction.

ConCorda is supported by both IAYO and the Irish Chamber Orchestra.

Actions

- Continue the positive working relationship with ConCorda artistic staff and alumni.
- Continue to provide the necessary administrative supports that are needed by ConCorda.
- Take part in long-term planning with ConCorda stakeholders on the maintenance and development of the course including current desires to:
 - Raise the average age of participation on the current ConCorda course, aiming for an age range of 18-26;
 - Initiate a 'Junior ConCorda' course to facilitate those that will not be able to access the current course;
 - Present more masterclasses, workshops and presentations on the older-age course including chamber music performances by Irish and international performers;
 - Run weekend courses in the autumn and spring;
 - Enable young quartets by providing resources for quartets and instrumental teachers on the ConCorda website.

Outcomes

- High-quality chamber music facilitation will be available to young string players.
- There will be more frequent opportunities to participate in chamber music training.
- Young chamber ensembles will be enabled to work together year-round.

Irish Youth Wind Ensemble

The Irish Youth Wind Ensemble (IYWE) is an instrumental course and national ensemble for woodwind, brass and percussion players between the ages of 16 and 25. It is held annually in August with concerts around Ireland. The ethos of IYWE is to offer young wind, brass and percussion players an opportunity to study, perform and experience music specifically composed for the wind ensemble medium and to present music that otherwise would not be heard by Irish audiences.

IYWE has, since 2005, been funded through IAYO and derives its legal status from IAYO. It is administered by IAYO and retains its own artistic direction.

Actions

- Continue the positive working relationship with IYWE artistic staff and alumni.
- Continue to provide the necessary administrative supports that are needed by IYWE.
- Take part in long-term planning with IYWE stakeholders on the maintenance and development of the course including current desires to:
 - Develop the public audience for IYWE performances;
 - Perform annually at the National Concert Hall;
 - Commission new works;
 - Tour abroad;
 - Engage in at least one other weekend activity / performance per year;
 - Develop activities relating to the ensemble and participants (e.g. saxophone ensembles, wind chamber music, big band);
 - Potentially work towards the development of senior and junior ensembles.
- Assist in the growth of the national and international reputation of the ensemble.

Outcomes

- The Irish Youth Wind Ensemble will continue to thrive and offer a high-quality artistic experience to young woodwind, brass and percussion players from around Ireland.
- The opportunity for young players to participate in IYWE-related activities will increase.
- IYWE will showcase work of young Irish bands and orchestras to larger audiences at home and abroad.

Esker Festival Orchestra

The Esker Festival Orchestra (EFO) was set up in 2014 to provide a high quality, beneficial and meaningful musical opportunity for young emerging musicians from all across Ireland. The orchestra was set up to allow young musicians from across the country to perform together, socialise and to build relationships that will be essential during their personal and professional lives, to promote and develop orchestral music in Ireland by nurturing the talents of its emerging musicians and to provide all of this with no financial burden on the musicians themselves. It is unique in that it is entirely led and run by its members for its members, allowing those taking part to gather invaluable experience in the world of orchestral music.

EFO has been funded by the Arts Council Young Ensembles Scheme through IAYO from 2015 to 2017 and has been included in IAYO's core funding for 2018.

Actions

- Continue the positive working relationship with EFO artistic staff and retain the participant ownership model.
- Continue to provide the necessary administrative supports that are needed by EFO;
- Take part in long-term planning with EFO stakeholders on the maintenance and development of the ensemble.

Outcomes

- Esker Festival Orchestra will provide a youth-led and youth centred opportunity for young amateur, professional and aspiring-professional orchestral players from the Republic and Northern Ireland.

Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra

The Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra (IYBO) will be an ongoing collaboration between the Irish Baroque Orchestra and IAYO, taking advantage of the expertise and resources of each organisation.

Currently, it is envisaged that there will be a single course per year with performances. In the longer term, there will be two or more courses per year along with once-off associated activities as opportunities present.

Entry is open to applicants from 32 counties of Ireland. Participants on the courses will be aged between 18 and 24 with opportunities for exceptional players outside of that age range.

Actions

- Work with the Irish Baroque Orchestra and other partners to develop IYBO.
- Create an instrument bank and work with other partners to have period instruments available to participants.
- Arrange training on period instruments in advance of courses and availability of period instruments for those taking lessons on a year-round basis.

Outcomes

- The art of playing baroque music will develop in Ireland.
- Young instrumentalists that wish to specialise in baroque music will have opportunities to develop their skills in Ireland.
- There will be an increase in stylistic awareness amongst young amateur and professional players.
- Irish baroque ensembles and projects will, in the future, have access to a greater number of Irish specialists that are competent in the field.

Irish Youth Brass Band

The Irish Youth Brass Band (IYBB) gives exceptionally gifted young brass and percussion instrumentalists the opportunity to perform advanced music and receive the highest quality teaching, thus nurturing the next generation of players musically and socially. The course program will be designed to enhance their playing, improve their musicianship, broaden their musical horizons and support their general well-being.

Participating members of the course will receive expert tutelage during intensive rehearsal days, culminating in prestigious performance events.

The ensemble will provide a platform for young brass and percussion musicians to engage with professional musicians, interact with fellow instrumentalists from across Ireland and showcase their talents in a unique ensemble through a varied repertoire.

Whilst the repertoire and target audience are more ‘band’ than ‘orchestra’, it is useful for IAYO to be involved in the IYBB as it makes use of our existing processes and facilities. Also, in the long term, it will, we hope, contribute to bands and orchestras being understood as less mutually-exclusive activities for all players.

Actions

- Work with Artistic Director and committee to develop the IYBB as a national ensemble for youth.
- Potentially develop a junior ensemble also.

Outcomes

- Young brass players will avail of a high-quality artistic experience.
- The work of young instrumentalists in bands will be showcased at a national level.
- The gap between orchestras and bands will be further bridged in the future, enabling both to increase participation and increase the quality of their performance.

IAYO National Chamber Music Workshops

The IAYO National Chamber Music Workshops is an annual weekend residential course for junior strings, woodwind and brass. The course changes location every two years in order to bring the experience of chamber music playing and music courses to new players and new areas. It is aimed at 9- to 14-year-old players as an introductory course.

Actions

- Invest in the course so that participants get to play in quartets and quintets rather than larger mixed ensembles.
- Include a variety of activities including instrument choirs, move and play, singing and other musical activities.
- Be confident in running the course in peripheral areas despite low numbers of participants. Look at low numbers as need for development.
- Use a mixture of local teachers and reliable regulars as tutors with the aim that the regulars pass on the benefit of their experience and local teachers are in a position to continue chamber music programmes on an ongoing basis.
- Include follow-up chamber music days in areas where the course has been held.
- Make performance materials available to teachers and chamber ensembles through the IAYO music library.
- Create opportunities for the progression of young instrumentalists through development of the national programme of ConCorda.
- Keep fees for IAYO chamber music courses to a minimum in order to encourage participation.

Outcomes

- Young instrumentalists get the opportunity to play chamber music for its own sake.
- Young instrumentalists gain confidence in taking responsibility for their own performance.
- Youth orchestras are strengthened by the experience and confidence of young players that play chamber music.
- Chamber music, as a genre, develops nationally.

Orchestra and Player Workshops

Orchestra workshops help ensembles to develop and can provide young players and their conductors with new ways of working, new experiences that help promote interest in participating and techniques for improving the quality of the orchestra with current resources. Once-off workshops can prove very useful in motivating orchestras and players and developing specific aspects of ensemble work. In addition to providing opportunities directly, IAYO will work with partner organisations and individuals to take advantage of touring ensembles and musicians.

In line with the aim of raising standards at the Festival of Youth Orchestras, we will aim to place emphasis on those orchestras that are participating, or interested in participating in, the Festival of Youth Orchestras; assisting them in realising ambitions for their performance at the National Concert Hall.

Workshop Types

- Full orchestra workshops.
- School orchestra workshops.
- Strings or wind section.
- Genre-specific (e.g. Baroque, Contemporary).
- Repertoire specific.
- Instrument workshops (viola, crossover days etc.).
- Orchestra leaders' workshops.

Actions

- Create or provide workshops that help orchestras achieve specific artistic or organisational aims.
- Create opportunities for young instrumentalists to develop their skills.
- Develop collaborations with professional orchestras and ensembles such that engaging with youth orchestras becomes part of their normal programming.
- Encourage orchestras participating in, or interested in participating in, the Festival of Youth Orchestras to use the opportunity to develop and implement specific artistic or organisational goals.

Outcomes

- Orchestras and young instrumentalists will improve their performance skills through a variety of workshops.

Finance

IAYO did relatively well throughout the recession in keeping the overall reduction in core funding to 16% and keeping other income streams consistent. In 2017, received a 50% increase in funding from The Arts Council towards the development of new programmes and an increase in staff for which support we are very grateful.

IAYO generates a large amount of its income outside of its core funding, through other funding, fees from participants, membership fees, ticket sales, programme advertising and as benefit-in-kind: goods and services acquired for free that would otherwise have to be paid for in cash. In the financial year ending 31 May 2017, core funding from The Arts Council comprised 39% of total income.

Sponsorship is an area that has remained underdeveloped and could benefit from significant time resources invested. Sponsorship for the Festival of Youth Orchestras from the Irish Aviation Authority was lost in 2011 due to the volcanic eruption in Iceland rather than the recession and the Festival has remained without a main sponsor since. Many of IAYO's programmes are suitable vehicles for sponsorship, philanthropic support or corporate social responsibility programmes. It is intended that, under this plan, the Director, freed up by staff restructuring will have more time to engage consistently in sponsorship-seeking and develop these potential resources for IAYO along with the board and, potentially, outsourced fundraising expertise.

Actions

- Maintain strict control over budgeting, projections and cashflow, ensuring value for money is always a priority.
- Regularly assess financial risks and take mitigating action where necessary.
- Engage in training and engage external expertise in developing existing and new income streams.
- Develop and pursue new sponsorship, CSR and other income-generating opportunities for activities including:
 - Festival of Youth Orchestras;
 - Youth Orchestra Achievement Awards;
 - Irish Youth Wind Ensemble;
 - ConCorda;
 - Esker Festival Orchestra;
 - Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra;
 - Irish Youth Brass Band;
 - IAYO Chamber Music Workshops;

- Instrument Bank;
- Music Library.
- Continue to focus on gaining relevant resources through non-cash benefit-in-kind.
- Continue to avail of funding for the instrument bank through the Music Capital Scheme.
- Investigate and pursue, as applicable, new funding streams through:
 - The Department of Education and Skills;
 - Department of Health and Children;
 - Cork City Council;
 - EU Culture and Erasmus+ Programmes;
 - Trusts and philanthropic organisations;
 - Other programmes that may apply to IAYO.
- Engage in crowd-funding campaigns and fundraising events for specific events / purposes.
- Keep charges to members and participants static and provide more opportunities for scholarships and discounts.
- Continue to support youth orchestras and independent youth ensembles and projects by providing information, advice and direct assistance in securing income from relevant funding schemes. Money brought into the sector is of benefit to the mission of IAYO, even if that money does not flow to or through the company.
- Remain constantly aware of the potential competition with the interests of member orchestras when fundraising.

Outcomes

- IAYO will be well-funded to deliver on its mission.
- IAYO will increase the scale of delivery of its mission by developing its financial resources and those of youth orchestras.
- IAYO will deliver value to those that invest in it.

Company Structure

IAYO exists with the involvement of professional staff and volunteers. The distinctions are sometimes blurred as contracted staff are often paid for artistic work whilst also volunteering as welfare staff, etc.

The company structure is as follows:

Honorary President and Honorary Vice President: These are honorary positions currently held by Joanna Crooks and Adrian Petcu, respectively.

Board of Directors: Directorships of IAYO are voluntary. The board of IAYO is presently comprised of nine members, representing youth orchestras, young instrumentalists, those with specific relevant skills and other interested stakeholders.

The Company Secretary: The Company Secretary is responsible for ensuring that the company fulfils its legal obligations. As this plan goes to print, the role of Secretary is being passed from the Executive Director to a board member in line with best practice.

Members: The members of IAYO are the de facto owners of the company. Membership is renewed on an annual basis through subscription. The members' direct contribution to the direction of the company is facilitated through the Annual General Meeting where they may vote on matters of company policy and on elections to the Board of Directors.

Full-time Staff: There are presently three full-time staff – a Director, Administrator, and Marketing and Communications Officer. The development of a position of Programmes Manager may be desirable in the longer term along with a redistribution of current responsibilities.

Community Employment Staff: IAYO has a single part-time member of staff on CE placement as a Marketing and Communications Assistant.

Contract Staff: Festival and course directors, tutors and workshop facilitators, festival crew, ConCorda and IYWE director's, course managers, tutors, and residential staff (also volunteers).

Volunteers: Volunteers for the Festival of Youth Orchestras, workshops and courses. These include young volunteers, transition-year students and others.

Actions

- Maintain and implement all relevant policies relating to employment and volunteering.

- Maintain accurate job descriptions for all positions, both voluntary and professional and ensure all staff are aware of, and competent to perform, their respective duties.
- Ensure all staff are clearly aware of their duties and their responsibilities in relation to young people.
- Maintain and update the Staff Handbook and related resources in line with changes in legislation.
- Source information on appropriate salaries, fees and conditions for employees in the sector.
- Ensure all staff are resourced and supported in their work.
- Ensure staff are valued and recognised for their work.
- Develop further opportunities for volunteering within the range of IAYO activities. Focus on presenting opportunities for development for young participants in youth orchestras, particularly those that aim to become professionals in music.
- Attract new board members or advocates who can assist the company in promoting and financing itself, effectively carrying out its operations and ensuring its long-term survival.

Outcomes

- All those working for IAYO, in a professional or voluntary capacity, will be clear of their duties and responsibilities and the impact of their work. They will be well-resourced and supported in their work and acknowledged appropriately.

Governance, Compliance, Best Practice

IAYO has undertaken to fully implement *The Governance Code: a Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland*. The code provides the basis for transparency, accountability, compliance with legal obligations and the pursuance of best practice.

Actions

- Complete the implementation of *The Governance Code: a Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland*.
- Establish a Register of Compliance to ensure that the IAYO board and staff are aware of, and compliant with, all relevant legislation, funding requirements and other obligations.
- Be aware of, and follow, best practice in relation to the work of IAYO.
- Maintain and develop Standard Operating Procedures and other documents that assist in the work of IAYO and preserve corporate memory.
- Establish a subcommittee of the board that oversees the implementation and maintenance of the Governance Code and compliance register and works to ensure that IAYO is aligned to best practice in its fields of operation.

Outcomes

- IAYO will be governed and managed well and will be transparent and accountable to all of its stakeholders.
- IAYO will fulfil its legal requirements.
- IAYO will operate in line with best practice in its fields of operation.
- IAYO will preserve and develop corporate memory and ensure its own continuity.

Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Actions

- The Director shall provide regular reports to the Board of Directors on the progress of implementation of the plan.
- Aspects of the plan will be reviewed on a rotated basis by the Board of IAYO.
- A general review of the plan will take place annually in the autumn to set operational and financial priorities for the coming year and the longer term.
- Feedback shall be sought from participants and staff in all programmed activities.
- Membership surveys shall be conducted on a biennial basis to inform of the current needs of youth orchestras, their staff and young players.
- A report on the implementation of the plan shall be made annually to the Annual General Meeting and published on the IAYO website.
- Member organisations and other stakeholders will be encouraged to make known their views on the plan and its implementation.

Outcomes

- The Strategic Plan shall form a constant frame of reference for the activities of IAYO.
- The relevance and success, or lack of, of the plan shall be evaluated on an ongoing basis.
- The plan will be altered or updated in line with the results of evaluation.
- IAYO will continue to achieve its mission effectively through its provision of resources and activities to youth orchestras and young instrumentalists and through its networking and advocacy activities.

Company Information

Irish Association of Youth Orchestras CLG

Honorary President

Joanna Crooks

Honorary Vice President

Adrian Petcu

Directors

Clare Daly (Chairperson)

Niall Catney

Carol Daly

Mona McMahon

Brian Murray

Ed Phelan (Treasurer)

Marianne White

Staff

Allin Gray (Director)

Bertie Buckley (Administrator)

Sinéad Ryan (Marketing and Communications Officer)

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Company Registration Details

The Irish Association Youth Orchestras CLG is a company limited by guarantee without a share capital registered in Ireland.

Company Number: 296500

Charity Number: 20045623

Registered with the Revenue Commissioners as CHY 14198