



**MUSIC
FOR YOUTH**



**YOUNG LIVES
TRANSFORMED
THROUGH MUSIC**

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES RECRUITMENT 2025





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WELCOME TO MUSIC FOR YOUTH



Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees at Music For Youth (MFY); a national youth music charity that provides life-changing musical experiences for young people aged 25 and under.

Music for Youth brings together over 40,000 young people a year to perform in live music festivals and concerts across the UK. The charity uniquely provides open access to young people, from whatever background or ability, to perform live to audiences: from grass-roots community halls to the Royal Albert Hall. We develop their musicianship, showcasing the richness and diversity of their music through our impactful live performance and development programmes. The wider social and life skills developed by participating in our events benefits all who take part and propels some of the UK's most promising young musicians onto career-changing platforms.

Our vision is to ensure that every young person in the UK can achieve their musical potential by performing the music they love. We believe that music, and the chance to participate in high-quality musical activities, should be open to every young person.

As Chair, you will guide a committed and experienced Board of Trustees, working closely with the CEO and senior leadership team to drive strategic growth, strengthen partnerships, and champion our cause at the highest levels.

This is a crucial time for Music For Youth, as we navigate a changing funding landscape and continue to innovate to reach even more young people.

If you are an experienced leader with a passion for the vision, mission, impact and potential of this unique organisation, we would love to hear from you.



ABOUT US

Who We Are

Music For Youth is a national youth music charity that works with schools, youth groups, music hubs, and community organisations to break down barriers to music-making and showcase the incredible talent of young musicians.

Our Programmes and Impact

Each year, Music For Youth reaches over 40,000 young people across the UK, offering them platforms to develop their musical talents across all music genres, and gain confidence. Many of our alumni have gone on to successful careers in the music industry and beyond.

National Music Festivals and Concerts:

We produce and stage high-quality professional standard live music events (including gigs, concerts, and festivals) for young musicians, both regionally at grass roots level, and at the UK's most prestigious live music venues.

Young Artist Development:

We nurture and develop young musicians so they can realise their musical potential, by initiating adventurous collaborations, commissioning new music, and providing a robust music mentoring programme.

Creative Skills Development:

We provide skills and training development for young people looking for a career in the creative industries in non-performance and stagecraft roles such as stage management, sound engineering, lighting and digital production skills.

Advocacy for Young Musicians:

We campaign to highlight the brilliance of young musicians.

Our work takes place across the whole of the UK with events in all nine regions of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. This coverage enables us to support and tour the work of other partner organisations so they can reach young people further afield.

For over 50 years, Music for Youth's annual cycle of regional festivals, local events, a national festival and showcase concerts has made a significant contribution to the music education calendar, bringing together regional providers and young performers, and putting young people's own achievements into a wider national context:

- **The Music for Youth Regional Festival** is a collection of festivals across the UK aimed to inspire musicians at every level of experience and across every genre of music. This collection of regional festivals forms the UK's largest festival for young musicians. 30,000 musicians take part every year and many go on to perform again at the Music for Youth National Festival and Music for Youth Proms.
- **The National Festival** is a coming together of musicians, bands and ensembles from across the regions to perform on world-class stages including Symphony Hall, and the CBSO Centre. It is a key date in the Music for Youth calendar, hosted by the city of Birmingham in July. Over 12,000 young musicians aged 4-21 from across the UK take part, featuring all styles, instruments and genres of music.
- **The Music for Youth Proms** takes place at the renowned Royal Albert Hall in London. This two-day showcase celebrates the incredible diversity, talent and creativity of young musicians from all corners of the UK. From orchestral ensembles to choirs, bands, soloists, and more, these talented young performers get the unique opportunity to showcase their skills and share their music with a wider audience.





Staff and Head Office

Given the charity's national reach, the head office recently relocated from London to Birmingham, now based in CBSO Centre (City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra) close to the city centre. The staff team of seven permanent staff are based across the UK, with hybrid home / office working arrangements.

Board and Governance

There are nine Trustees, each co-opted on to one (or more) subcommittees: the Audit & Risk Committee, Programmes Committee, and Fundraising Committee.

How Music For Youth is Funded

Music For Youth is one of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations, receiving 42% of its funds from the annual grant of £279,980 in 2023/24. In addition, the charity raises income from fundraising (sponsorship, institutions, individuals) totalling 33% of annual turnover £672,938 in 23/24, with 10.6% from earned income including event ticket sales of £71,785 in 2023/24.

The charity's turnover in 2023/24 was £672,938, ending the year with reserves of £101,224.

For further information, please see our latest Annual Account and Report [here](#).



THE OPPORTUNITY

We are excited to be seeking our next Chair of Trustees to lead the organisation, as our current Chair, John Dixon, comes to the end of his term of service.



With an energetic, skilled and focused Executive Team led by Phil Castang MBE - and a highly experienced supportive Board of Trustees bringing their wealth of collective experience spanning leadership in music, education, arts, fundraising and industry - now is an exciting time to join this unique national music charity, as we prepare for the next phase of development.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees will provide strategic leadership and governance to Music For Youth, ensuring the organisation is well-managed, financially sustainable, and delivering on its charitable objectives:

Leadership

- Chairing meetings of the Board and ensuring that it runs effectively, fulfils its duties and carries out resolutions.
- Creating an environment in which all Board members are encouraged to participate and challenge constructively and appropriately.
- Provide clear strategic direction for the charity, working with the CEO and Board to set long-term goals.
- Act as an ambassador for MFY as required, promoting our work and advocating for youth music at national and local levels.
- Support MFY in maintaining strong partnerships with funders, arts organisations, schools, and the wider music sector.

Governance & Compliance

- Lead an engaged and effective Board of Trustees, ensuring good governance and compliance with charity law.
- Manage, support and appraise the performance of the CEO, ensuring they and their senior leadership team have the resources and guidance to deliver MFY's mission.
- Oversee financial sustainability, risk management, and organisational policies.

Fundraising & Advocacy

- Work with the Board and executive team to develop fundraising strategies, securing income from grants, corporate sponsors, and individual donors.
- Represent MFY at high-profile events, engaging with stakeholders and championing the value of youth music.

What we are looking for

As our new Chair, you will share a commitment to the mission of Music For Youth. While it is not essential to be from a Music or Music Education background, we are looking for someone who has passion for the impact - and potential - of the charity and can demonstrate how their experience can help us navigate the pivotal years ahead.

We are looking for someone who can demonstrate the following:

- Strong leadership and strategic thinking.
- Financial literacy
- High level networking and advocacy skills.
- Knowledge of charity and corporate governance.
- Experience and confidence in managing risk, change and innovation.
- Understanding and awareness of broader social, political and economic issues.

In addition, please let us know if you are able to bring experience, skills or knowledge in one or more of the following beneficial areas.

- Board membership in the not-for-profit sector
- Working in or with organisations and with individuals in the cultural sector
- Working in or with public bodies or national policy makers

The organisation recently undertook a Skills Audit of the Board and identified the following areas where we are looking to continue strengthening the experience. While not essential for the role of Chair, alongside the core skills and experience outlined, we would certainly welcome individuals who may also be able demonstrate experience around:

- **Digital:** to take advantage of the potential for digital transformation
- **Finance:** to provide additional oversight and financial rigor
- **Fundraising:** with income from individuals a future opportunity to explore further





Time commitment

The Chair can expect to commit the equivalent of 12-15 days per year at - and in prep for - key Trustee meetings, including full Board Meetings held four times a year (at least one in person in Birmingham, where the charity is headquartered). This time also includes regular meetings with the CEO (the majority online), and regular comms with the CEO as required, which may ebb and flow, depending on the time of year. In person meetings are kept to a minimum.

In addition, the Chair would be expected to attend a minimum of two of our: Regional Festivals (March – April), National Festival (Birmingham or elsewhere, early-mid July) and the Youth Proms (London, end of November), to represent the Board and host key stakeholders, including funders.,

Term

We are looking for someone who can commit to an initial three-year term, which could then be renewed for a second term.



Learn more and apply

If you would like to have an exploratory conversation with the current Chair or Vice Chair about the charity or the role, please contact John Dixon (current Chair) by emailing john@mfy.org.uk.

Application Process

To apply for the role of Chair at Music For Youth, please submit:

1. A CV.
2. A cover letter (max 2 pages) detailing:
Why you are interested in this role.
How your skills and experience align with MFY's mission.
What you would bring to the organisation.

Please send your CV and Cover Letter to Phil Castang (CEO) at phil@mfy.org.uk with the subject line: Application for Chair of Music For Youth.

Deadline for Applications: Friday 27th of June at 12pm.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to the Music for Youth National Festival taking place between Thursday 10th to Saturday 12th July in Birmingham. (Please note - this is not a requirement of the application process but a chance for you to see the work of the charity in person).

Interviews: will take place on Wednesday 10th September in Birmingham.

The week before the interview (week commencing 1st September), you will have the opportunity to have an informal conversation with the CEO and other Trustees online. Date to be confirmed.

If you have any access needs or other practical questions - or if you would like to discuss any aspect of the role with the Vice Chairs before applying - please email phil@mfy.org.uk or phone us on 07415203144.



Equality & Diversity

Music For Youth is committed to diversity and inclusion. We strongly encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds, particularly those underrepresented in leadership roles within the music education sector.

We request that you complete and submit our Equality and Diversity monitoring form [here](#).

Completing this form will help us in monitoring our efforts towards achieving an inclusive and diverse workforce. This form will not be included in the information sent to the recruitment panel and the information recorded will be anonymised within the scope of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Thank you for your interest in Music For Youth. We look forward to receiving your application.

