

## Welcome from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chief Executive of Making Music.

Making Music is a remarkable organisation. At its heart is a simple but powerful belief: that making music together enriches lives, strengthens communities, and contributes to a healthier, more connected society. Every day, across the UK, our members bring this belief to life—through rehearsals in village halls, concerts in local venues, and the shared joy of creating music together. The board of Making Music is elected from our membership of 3,900 leisure-time music groups from all backgrounds, genres and abilities.

Making Music today is a strong and resilient organisation. We have a clear mission, a committed and knowledgeable team, and a loyal and engaged membership. Our current five-year strategy (2023–2027) is focused on ensuring that music groups are sustainable, connected and recognised for the vital role they play in society. We are delivering valuable services, advocating for our members at a national level, and building a more inclusive and collaborative community.

At the same time, we are operating in a rapidly changing environment. The ways people engage with music, with each other, and with technology are evolving. Financial pressures on community organisations continue, and the case for cultural participation must be continually made and reinforced—particularly in relation to wellbeing, social cohesion and public policy.

This is therefore a moment of both opportunity and responsibility.

We are looking for a Chief Executive who can build on strong foundations while leading us confidently into our next phase. A leader who will ensure that our services continue to meet the needs of members, that our voice is heard clearly and persuasively at a national level, and that we remain relevant, inclusive and forward-looking in a changing world.

I hope you feel inspired and encouraged to apply. We would be delighted to hear from you.

**Margaret Harrison**  
Chair, Making Music

## Job Description

### Terms of Appointment

Job Title	Chief Executive
Salary	£70K
Duration and hours	Permanent. Full time, flexible. 37.5 hours per week.
Location	Hybrid - minimum 2 office-based days a week in London: 4 London Wall Place, London EC2Y 5AU. Some travel.
Benefits	Holiday allowance – 33 days starting package, comprising 28 days incl. bank holidays, plus an extra 5-day wellbeing week in August. Additionally, a bonus day per calendar year of service up to a max of 5. Flexible working around 10am-3pm core hours, and 12 work-from-anywhere days per annum. Statutory pension - 3%. Employee Assistance Programme.
Reporting to	Chair of the Board of Trustees
Responsible for	Deputy CEO Membership & Business Development, Deputy CEO Lobbying & Advocacy, Finance Director and Marketing Director

### About Making Music

Making Music (the National Federation of Music Societies) is the UK association for leisure-time music groups. We represent over 3,900 groups comprising around 200,000 musicians of all types, genres and abilities.

### Our Purpose

Our mission is to support, connect, champion and celebrate groups of people making and presenting music in their communities.

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to be part of a music group.

We exist to help our members flourish, providing advocacy, practical support, expertise and networks that enable sustainable, vibrant music groups.

### Our Strategic Priorities

- Delivering practical services and expert support that strengthen the sustainability, governance and effectiveness of music groups.
- Advocating nationally for leisure-time and community music, influencing policy, funding and recognition of its social and cultural value.
- Encouraging participation in music as a contributor to personal wellbeing, social cohesion and community resilience.
- Fostering an inclusive, connected community where members share knowledge, experience and inspiration.
- Ensuring the relevance, stability and sustainability of Making Music through membership growth and diversification.

## Job Purpose

The Chief Executive provides strategic **leadership** for Making Music and its trading subsidiary, working closely with the Chair, Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team to develop and deliver the organisation's mission, strategy, and long-term sustainability. The CEO oversees sound organisational and financial management, leads on governance and compliance, develops a motivated team, and champions best practice.

As a **membership** focused charity, Making Music places leisure-time music groups at its heart. The CEO ensures members' voices inform strategy, services and advocacy, maintaining visibility and accessibility while fostering trust and engagement across a diverse national community.

The CEO leads external **advocacy**, lobbying, and **partnership** development, acting as an ambassador for Making Music and the wider leisure-time music sector. They represent the organisation and its members in the media, to policy makers, partners, stakeholders and funders; to strengthen recognition of the social, cultural, and wellbeing value of community music-making.

## Key Duties and Responsibilities

### Leadership

- Lead with empathy, clarity and tenacity, creating a culture of trust, transparency, inclusivity and shared purpose.
- Develop Making Music's strategy and next 5-year plan (2028-32), in consultation with the Chair, Board, staff, and volunteers, and in alignment with the wider sector.
- Implement and monitor the agreed strategy and 5-year plan, ensuring best-practice organisational and financial management, and adequate resourcing of budgets, skills and staff.
- Understand the environment in which Making Music operates, keep up to date with sector developments and opportunities including digital and technological transformation, deliver considered responses to changes, challenges and risks.
- Lead on revenue generation and sustainable income strategies from membership fees, member services, external fundraising and other sources.
- Deliver methods of measuring and communicating the impact of Making Music's work to the membership and external stakeholders.
- Enable good governance, advising and working in partnership with the Chair and Board of Trustees to fulfil governance responsibilities, providing timely and accurate information to support Board decision making.
- Ensure compliance of Making Music with current charity, company & other relevant legislation (e.g. tax, employment, data protection, health & safety).
- Lead on creation of Making Music HR policies to ensure transparency, fairness and compliance. Embed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion within Making Music policies. Ensure appropriate consultation, communication and management channels for staff and volunteer teams.
- Mentor and develop the staff team. Lead and manage the team in line with Making Music's objectives and policies. Enable openness and accountability, ensuring staff are appropriately motivated, skilled and remunerated.

### Membership

- Oversee the development of Making Music's membership recruitment and retention strategy.
- Oversee development of membership services, incorporating requirements from member consultations and surveys, insights from the wider sector, and benefits of digital and technological advances.

- Ensure strong membership engagement and good communication channels between the organisation and members.
- Foster positive relationships with the Making Music membership, including some personal contact to remain in touch with member voices and concerns. Contribute substantially to member events and communications.

## **Advocacy & Partnership**

- Act as an ambassador for Making Music and its members to external stakeholders and partners; policy makers, funders, organisations and key persons with the music, charity, community and arts sectors, as relevant.
- Campaign and influence at local and national level to prevent/remove threats to the leisure-time music sector and ensure it can thrive.
- Communicate Making Music's vision, mission, objectives and impact to stakeholders and partners. Promote Making Music and its members in the media and online, and by attending and speaking at local and national events.
- Lead on research to underpin Making Music's strategies, enable a coherent narrative about its impact, and support lobbying and advocacy activity. Coordinate data reporting from within Making Music, and commissioning or collaborating with academic and other researchers from external agencies.
- Initiate, build and develop partnerships with a range of organisations to strengthen Making Music, the leisure-time music sector, and the voice of members on relevant issues.

## **Person Specification**

### **Experience**

- Proven leadership experience in membership or service-orientated organisations focused on arts and culture, ideally in the charity or third sector.
- Strong financial and commercial acumen, with experience in business planning, managing budgets, revenue growth, cost control, diversifying income and ensuring financial sustainability.
- Demonstrable success in membership or service-user growth and retention strategies, managing change and improving service delivery.
- Excellent relationship-building skills, with the ability to engage high-level stakeholders, policy makers and funders.
- Expertise in supporting and advising a board of trustees, ensuring good governance and regulatory compliance.
- Track record in developing and implementing strategy, with the ability to translate vision into practical and measurable outcomes.
- Development of partnerships that generate income or value for members.
- Leadership of major projects to achieve organisational objectives.
- Experience of building, motivating, and developing high-performing teams, with a collaborative and inclusive leadership style.

### **Knowledge**

- UK government policy affecting the cultural, charity and community sectors.
- The funding landscape in the performing arts, charity and community sectors.
- Advocacy and influencing mechanisms at a UK, national or regional level.
- The nature and function of membership bodies, including listening to and representing a diverse membership.
- Digital and technological advancements and their potential benefits to service development and organisational effectiveness.

## Skills and abilities

- Strong communicator; written and verbal, presenter and ambassador.
- Excellent strategic thinking and planning skills.
- Flexible and creative, able to generate realistic and innovative solutions.
- Ability to summarise and explain complex issues, verbally and in writing.
- Strong interpersonal and negotiation skills to resolve complex issues constructively.
- Skilled at building and maintaining effective relationships with trustees, staff, members, and external stakeholders and partners.
- Ability to influence senior stakeholders, including government, funders, other sector leaders and stakeholders.
- A facilitator able to foster and develop the attributes and performance of individuals and teams.
- Enabler of a culture of idea and opportunity generation across an organisation.
- Clear and proven commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ability to use digital tools and platforms to communicate, analyse information, and make effective operational decisions.

## Personal Attributes

- Authentic, principled and values led.
- Empathetic and approachable, with the ability to build trust across differences.
- Resilient, pragmatic and adaptable.
- Collaborative and optimistic, inspiring confidence in others.
- Reflective and self-aware, open to learning and growth.
- A genuine interest in music-making.

## About the application process

We are looking for the best person for this role and understand that having different voices from all sections of society in our team will help us be the best organisation we can be and best support our diverse membership. We especially welcome applications from disabled people, people of the Global Majority or people whose socio-economic background has limited their opportunities.

The first stage of our application process is to complete three questions. These will be assessed anonymously to produce a longlist of 10. The questions can be found at the end of the job pack along with a link to submit your response online.

Longlisted candidates will be asked to provide a CV and social media handles. The assessors will produce a shortlist of five candidates for interview. This stage is not anonymous.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a panel interview on 20<sup>th</sup> July.

A final group of candidates from the shortlist will then be invited to:

- 30 July – a 30-minute online session with some Making Music staff. This will include a short presentation and facilitating a discussion.
- 11 August - a second panel interview.

Our strong preference is for both the panel interviews to be held in person at our Moorgate office, though an online option is available, if essential.

## Timeline

Applications deadline	Monday 22 June (9am)
Longlist decided. Candidates informed. CVs requested from successful candidates.	Friday 3 July
Deadline for CV submission	Friday 10 July (9am)
Shortlist decided. Candidates informed. Shortlisted candidates invited for 1 <sup>st</sup> panel interview.	Tuesday 14 July
1 <sup>st</sup> panel interview (in person)	Monday 20 July
If successful – staff engagement session (online)	Thursday 30 July
If successful – 2 <sup>nd</sup> panel interview (in person)	Tuesday 11 August

We are committed to making adjustments to our application process – please get in touch and tell us what we can do: we want you to have the best chance at demonstrating your capabilities.

We will consider accommodating alternative interview dates for selected candidates, subject to interviewer availability.

Please contact James at office [@makingmusic.org.uk](mailto:office@makingmusic.org.uk) or on 020 7939 6030. James can also help with any further information about the role or the application process.

## About Making Music

Making Music is the UK association for leisure-time music groups, representing over 3,900 members made up of around 220,000 musicians of all types, genres and abilities.

**Our Vision:** Everyone has the opportunity to be part of a music group

**Our mission:** To support, connect, champion and celebrate groups of people making and presenting music in their communities

**Our belief:** We believe in the value of leisure-time music groups (to individuals, communities and society)

The aims of our new five-year (2023 to 2027) are:

- Music groups make the most of MM as their home and ally
- Music groups are more sustainable
- Music groups are connected
- Leisure-time music is recognized and valued
- MM is sustainable

**Our values are:**

- We **believe in** the value of leisure-time music groups
- We are **facilitators**: we **empower**
- We are **respectful** of everyone we connect with
- We **listen**, we care, we are always learning
- We are **transparent** and value the trust we earn
- We share and **collaborate** generously
- We **do what we say** we're going to do

## Current strategic priorities

- Deliver practical services and expert support that strengthen the sustainability, governance and effectiveness of music groups.
- Advocate nationally for leisure-time and community music, influencing policy, funding and recognition of its social and cultural value.
- Encourage participation in music as a contributor to personal wellbeing, social cohesion and community resilience.
- Foster an inclusive, connected community where members share knowledge, experience and inspiration.
- Ensure the relevance, stability and sustainability of Making Music through membership growth and diversification.

## The future

Our current five-year plan concludes in 2027, and a key priority for the next CEO will be shaping the next phase of Making Music's strategic direction. Several major opportunities and challenges will require bold leadership and fresh thinking:

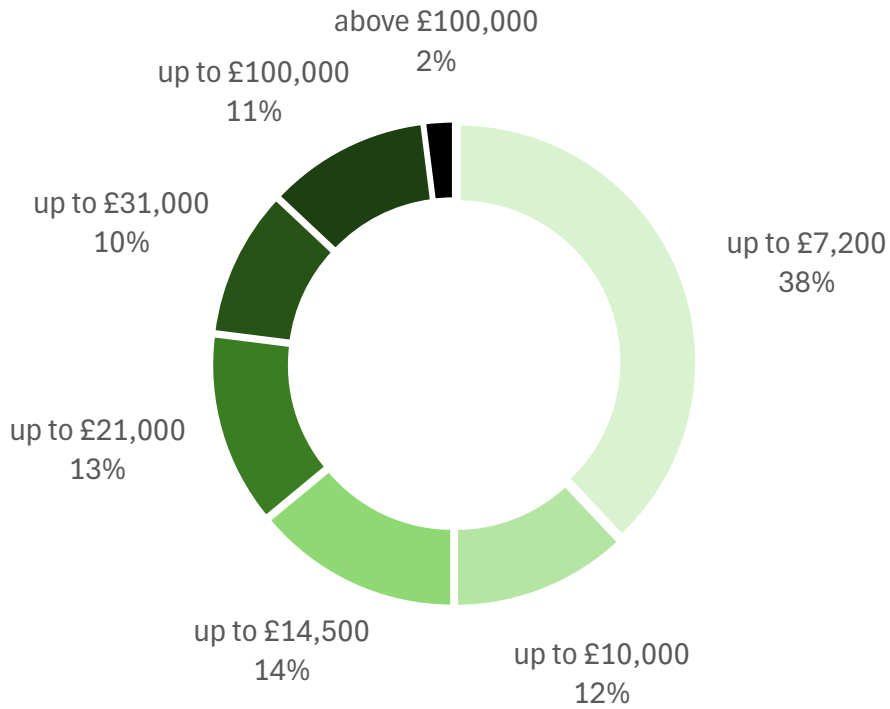
- Ensuring our new website (launching at the end of 2025) delivers measurable value for members.
- Growing and diversifying our membership so it reflects the full breadth of leisure-time music making in the UK.
- Positioning Making Music as the authoritative national voice for leisure-time music.
- Understanding and responding to rapid technological developments to ensure we remain relevant, future-focused, and equipped to support groups in a changing world.
- Supporting members to meet these same challenges: what does leisure-time music making need to thrive in the next decade?
- Ensuring the benefits of music making are recognised and embedded in health, wellbeing and social policy.

## About our members

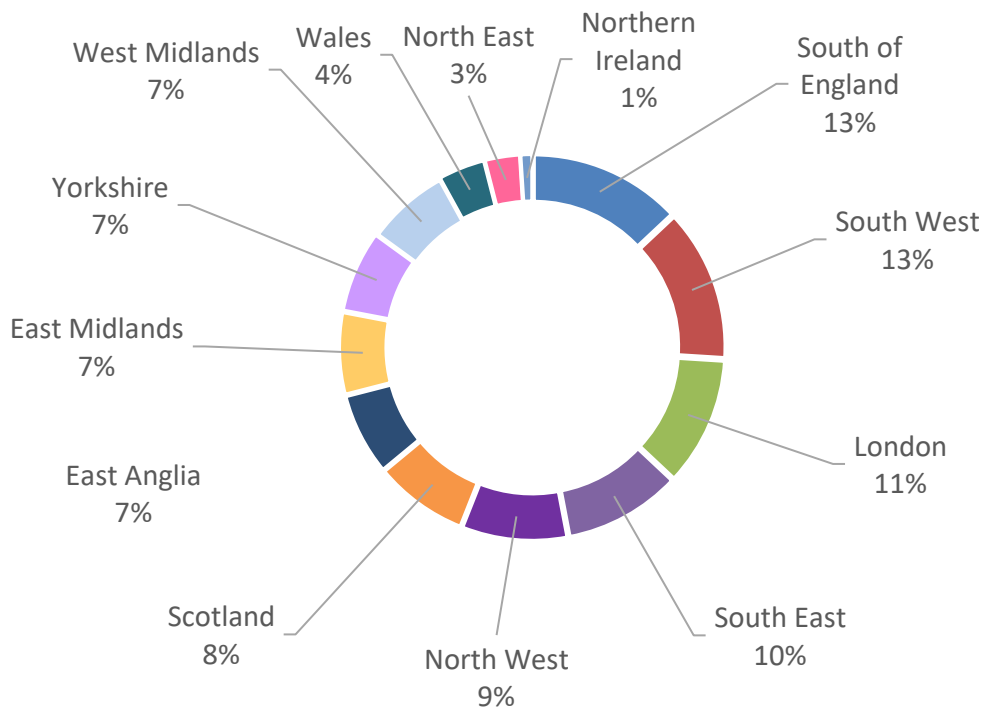
Our membership is open to any leisure-time music group in which the performers are not professional musicians. It also includes volunteer promoter groups who organise performances by professional artists. Most members are small, committee-led charities, but our community also includes informal groups and ensembles run by individual music leaders. While the majority focus on classical music, we are seeing small growth in other genres such as folk and jazz.

- 3,900 member groups
- 54% Vocal / 36% Instrumental / 10% Promoter
- 92% are charities / NFP
- Average 62 people in a group
- Our contact for groups are the leaders (chairs, treasurers, MDs, etc.)
- 21,500 performances each year
- Total audiences of 800,000

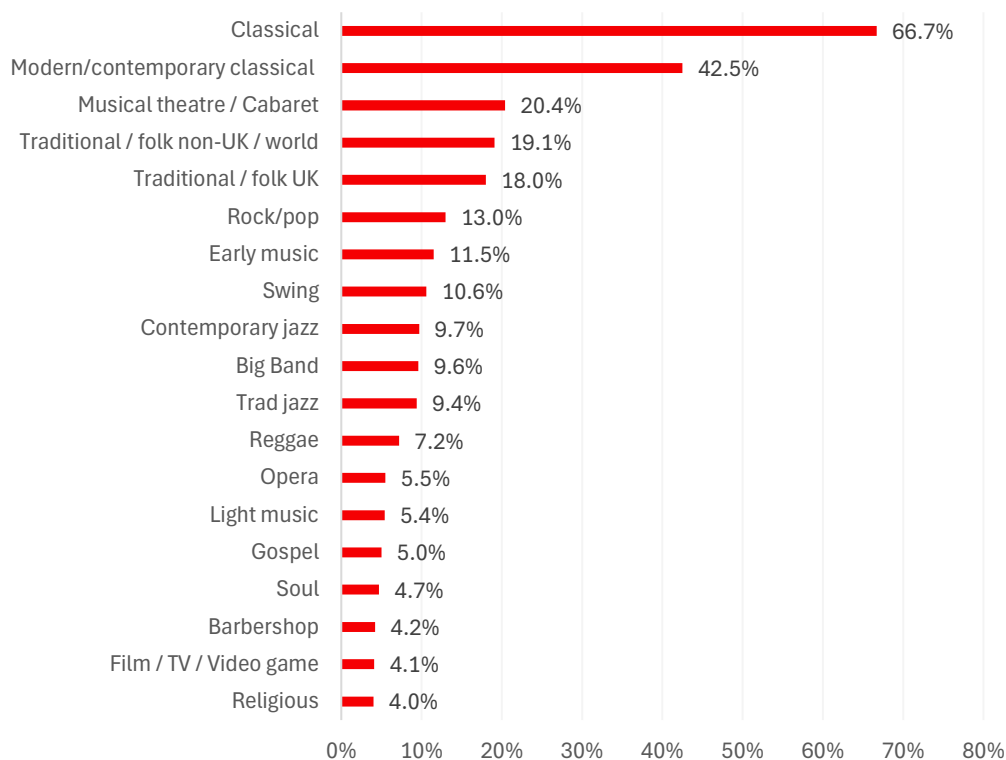
### Income bands of Making Music member groups



### Making Music member group regions



## Repertoire of Making Music member groups



## About our membership offer

Making Music supports, connects, champions and celebrates music groups. We offer our members practical services, artistic and networking opportunities, and speak on their behalf to policy makers and others.

### Summary of key services:

- Guidance and support – on a range of topics through online content as well as phone and email.
- Making Music Platform – a website and online admin tools to help members run their groups
- OTR / TTR – a service helping instrumental, musical theatre and opera groups claim back a % of their production costs in tax relief. Over £2.6m claimed so far.
- Insurance – comprehensive cover for music groups. Used by 94% of members
- Discounts – offered through our Corporate and industry partners
- Events – over 40 online events per year. A range of topic, speaker and discussion led to help keep groups up to date and connected with each other.
- Lobbying: Our main active campaign is lobbying the government for the introduction of tax reliefs for choirs
- Advocacy: our focus is finding new ways to promote and celebrate music groups and music making at a national level, with strong links to the wellbeing benefits of music.
- Partnerships: building industry partnerships to ensure our members and the leisure-time sector are represented and valued within the wider music sector

## About the Team

We have a passionate and dedicated team of 18 people (with some part-time staff it is 14 FTE). Thirteen are based in our London office and work hybridly, with at least 2 days in the office per week. Five are remote workers, including a manager in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland.

## Finances

Our total income for 2025 was £936K. £628K was membership subscriptions and £54k was grant funding. Net operating income was £69K. Our main costs are staff and service delivery. We had external funding over the last 3 years to aid post-covid recovery. Our core offer is now sustainable without funding, and we don't have any in place for 2026. We have a designated fund for 2026 to progress technological developments. Our reserves are strong and within our stated policy of 2-6 months operational cost. Our main financial risk is reliance on membership fees as our main income source, although membership retention has stayed at 95% for over 10 years.

## Governance

Making Music is the trading name of the National Federation of Music Societies, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no. 308632, registered charity in England and Wales no. 249219 and in Scotland no. SC038849. We have a trading subsidiary called NFMS Enterprises Ltd.

Our work is overseen by a board of trustees. Nine are elected from membership, with five co-opted places available. The board sets the strategy and the annual budget and ensures good governance. There are also Finance and Compliance, EDI and Nominations sub-committees.

The role of CEO is line-managed by the Chair and reports to the whole board. The CEO also attends all full board and sub-committee meetings.

*Please complete the task provided on the final page of this job pack.*

## Task Brief

### Note on the use of AI for your task responses

We value authenticity and transparency. If you want your application to stand out, using a generic AI-generated response isn't going to separate you from the crowd, even if it promises to personalise the response. If you do use AI, it should enhance your written application and showcase your best self. It's not about creating a persona that isn't you.

Whilst we do not prohibit the use of AI, we caution the following:

- AI-generated content may lack specificity and fail to address key criteria outlined in the job description.
- Personalisation is essential to convey individual skills, knowledge, and experiences effectively.
- Over reliance on AI-generated content is discouraged and may diminish the applicant's chances of success.
- Where AI has been used, we ask applicants to declare this in their applications in the interests of transparency.

## Tasks

### 1. Leadership

- Please provide an example of when you've used strategic insight to deliver results.  
(300 words maximum)

### 2. Membership

- What motivated you to apply to work for Making Music? How does your experience make you the right person to engage with and grow our membership?  
(300 words maximum)

### 3. Advocacy & Partnership

- Please provide an example of when you've successfully handled a challenging relationship with an external partner. What was your approach, the outcome and lessons learned?  
(300 words maximum)

Please submit your responses to the tasks by using our online application form at [makingmusic.org.uk/application-form-ceo](https://makingmusic.org.uk/application-form-ceo)