

Yorkshire Sound Women Network

Annual Review 2020-21



YSWN

YSWN enables the artistic and technical development of women and people of minority genders through access to resources, skill-sharing and creative opportunities.

Our work has two key areas: education and community activities to increase participation in music technology by women, girls and people of minority genders, and industry-facing advocacy activities.

Our mission is to inspire and enable more women, girls and people of minority genders to explore sound and music technology; we want to support a flourishing industry which welcomes, encourages, progresses and respects their inclusion into the workforce at all levels from studio floor to board room and reflects the diversity of its participating communities.



“I feel rejuvenated in my passion for equality and inclusion in the music industry, especially within the tech world.”
Training participant

Introduction

Opposite: Go Compose Electronic India workshop, University of Huddersfield, July 2019.

Cover image: Level Up! in Music Production, University of Huddersfield, March 2019.

Over the past year, Yorkshire Sound Women Network (YSWN) has adapted to new ways of working due to the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has brought significant challenges for the community YSWN serves, both for the creative sector and for women and people of minority genders more broadly. We know from published research and from our own consultation that women have been disproportionately affected, shouldering a greater share of childcare and home-schooling responsibilities, being more likely to lose work and having less time to be creative.

YSWN believes it is vital that recent work to progress gender equity is not rowed back: "Women's workplace equality will have been set back decades by this crisis" (Fawcett Society, quoted in *The Guardian*). So we have piloted new training to enable sound and music organisations to become aware of and take action to combat workplace gender imbalance.

“The content was fantastic and pitched perfectly for our organisation.”
Training participant

Elsewhere, YSWN has focused on supporting and sustaining its community. We have listened, reworked existing projects, shaped new activities in response to need and provided paid work opportunities.

We have gone online to help young people make recordings, explore sound design and use digital audio workstations; we have hosted inspiring digital seminars with high quality artists and audio practitioners offering insights to their practice and we have launched our own podcast series showcasing the expertise of some of the many skilled individuals within our network.

As face-to-face events return, YSWN will use what we have learned from these times to become stronger, more adaptable and more accessible. We are very grateful for the support of our community, Associates, working group, partner organisations, industry supporters and funders for helping make all this valuable work happen.

Twitter: @YSWN_

Facebook:

yorkshiresoundwomen

Instagram: yorkshire_sound_women_network

Web: yorkshiresoundwomen.com

Email: info@yorkshiresoundwomen.com

Yorkshire Sound Women Network CIC is a Community Interest Company Ltd by Guarantee, registered in England & Wales. Company No: 11360765. Yorkshire Sound Women Network, 3M Buckley Innovation Centre, Firth Street, Huddersfield, HD1 3BD.



“Time is precious and this was well spent. The practical info was useful.” Level Up in Audio seminar attendee

Our year in numbers

27 events delivered including education workshops, training and seminars

263 attendances at YSWN events

28 women paid to deliver activities through YSWN, including workshop leaders, seminar speakers and administrative roles

Social media reach:

2,149 Twitter followers (May 2021) & **303,640** tweet impressions (April 2020–March 2021)

1,322 Facebook followers (May 2021) & **22,804** organic post reach (April 2020–March 2021)

726 Instagram followers (May 2021)

“ I enjoyed having the chance to be creative with normal household items. It was really fun making soundscapes and going around recording ordinary sounds.” WIRED participant

Opposite: WIRED workshop with Kelly Jayne Jones, Leeds Beckett University, November 2019.

Our activities

During 2020–21 YSWN has delivered a variety of activities including:

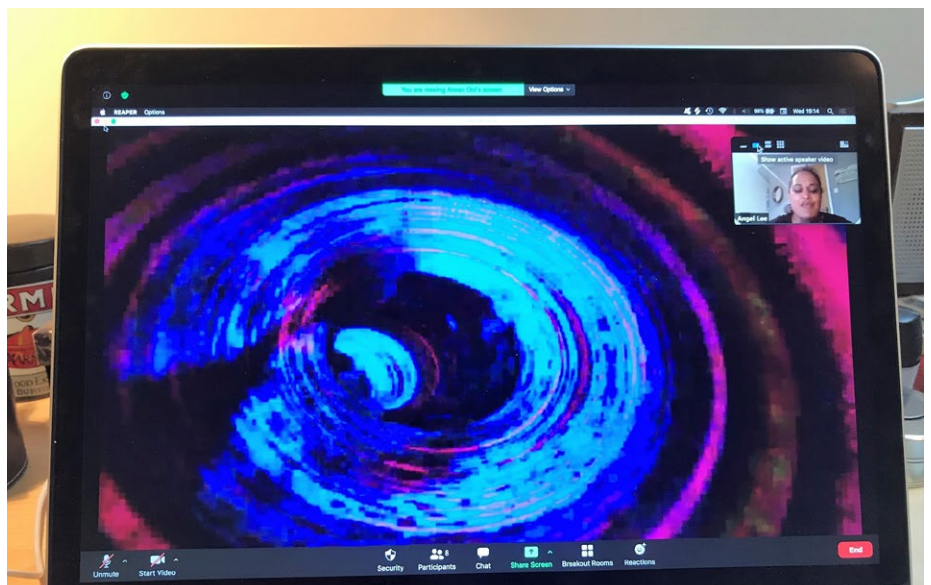
Three **WIRED online** courses funded by Youth Music offering girls aged 11–16 years old insight into different aspects of music technology: Introduction to Sound Recording, Editing with Audacity and Introduction to Sound Design.

Sound Adventures, an online education project enabling young women in Kirklees to record, sculpt and geolocate sounds to build an immersive soundwalk with an environmental theme. The project was delivered in partnership with Lawrence Batley Theatre as part of Our Biennale and funded by Arts Council England.

Level Up in Audio, a popular series of online seminars and workshops provoking discussion and providing insight into others' music technology practice, for both the existing YSWN community and new attendees. Offering a mix of artist talks and more skills-focused sessions, speakers have so far included Supriya Nagarajan, Kelly Jayne Jones, Mariam Rezaei and Sarah Angliss.

“The musicians were very friendly [and] made me feel that I could be at ease...I could slowly build my confidence and it wasn't as intimidating as doing it face to face.” WIRED participant

WIRED online sound design course with DJ Angel Lee and Aiwan Obinyan, August 2020.





Audio Club podcast artwork designed by Lois Iredale.

Launching our own podcast, **Audio Club**, hosted by musician and educator Caro C. Tackling a range of music technology topics in a friendly, accessible and informed style, each episode raises the profile of women and minority gender people in a wide range of audio roles and enables YSWN to reach a national (and international) audience.

Publishing ***Being Creative with Sound and Music Technology***, a new log book which young people can use to take them step by step through their Bronze Arts Award.

Piloting our **Gender Diversity and Inclusion training** with freelancers and audio companies ready to launch in 2021–22.

“The speaker had a powerful motivating inclusion message, lovely character and great useful practical info.” Level Up in Audio seminar attendee

Future Plans

During the coming year, YSWN will be guided by its new **Business Plan** for 2021/22–2023/24, focusing on supporting, growing and sustaining its community during a global period of recovery.

Through our **Permission to Play** project, we will empower new and existing YSWN-affiliated regional groups to increase access to music technology in their areas thanks to support from Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

Our postponed **Sound Pioneers** residencies and performances will take place, offering women and minority gender electronic music composers access to high quality studio facilities and performance opportunities, and we’ll deliver more podcast episodes and online seminars to inspire others.

Finally, we will launch **Volume Up: YSWN’s Audio Equity Standard** as a way for organisations to demonstrate their commitment to creating a more inclusive audio industry.



Level Up! in Music Production,
University of Huddersfield,
March 2019.

Finance

Income

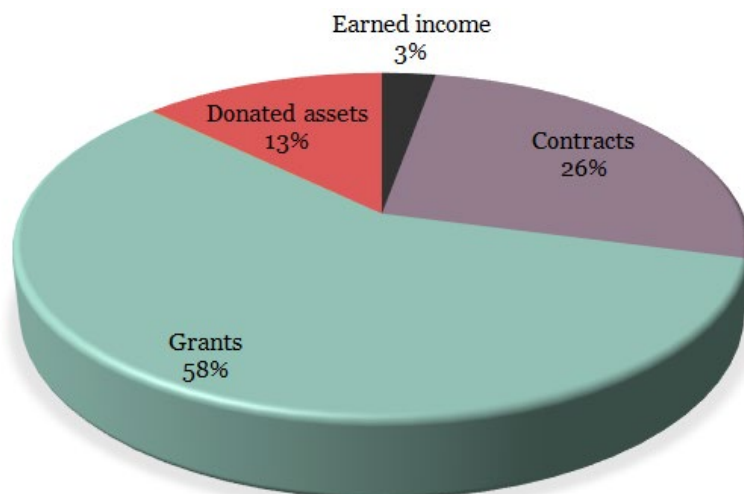
Earned Income
£893

Contracts
£7,974

Grants
£17,601

Donations
£10

Total income
£30,303



“I enjoyed learning about her creative intentions and interests as much as the technical approaches.” Level Up in Audio seminar attendee

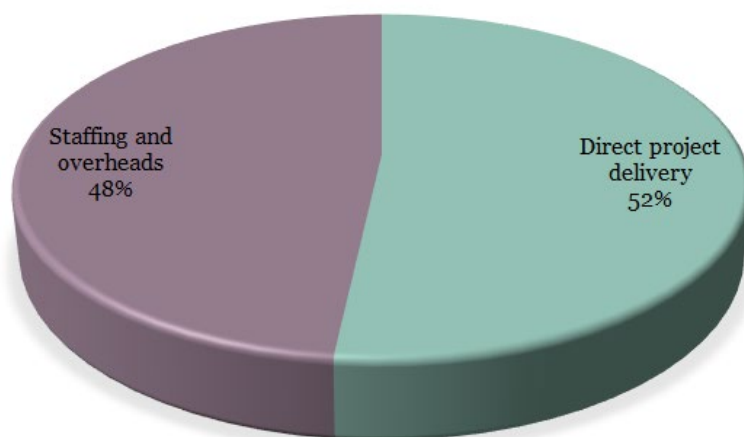
Expenditure

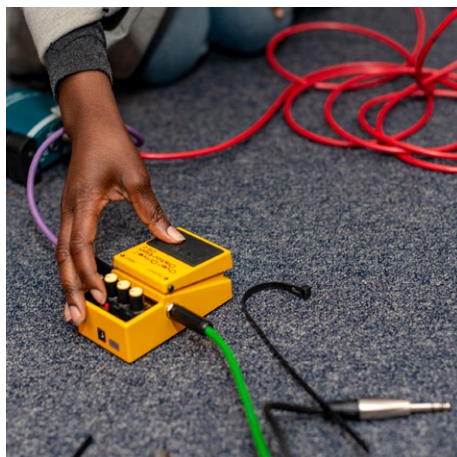
Direct project delivery
£13,333

Staffing and overheads
£12,436

Total expenditure
£25,769

Surplus
£4,534





Our thanks to:

Funders

Arts Council England
International Society for Music Education (ISME)
Music for All
National Foundation for Youth Music
PRS Foundation
University of Huddersfield

Higher Education Partners

University of Huddersfield
University of Hull

Cultural Partners

Brighter Sound Both Sides Now programme
hcmf//
Lawrence Batley Theatre
National Science and Media Museum
Our Biennale

YSWN working group 2020-21:

Abi Bliss (Director/Coordinator)
Amy Beeston (Associate)
Eddie Dobson (Director)
Jo Kennedy (Director)
Heidi Johnson (Development Manager)
Supriya Nagarajan (Director)
Irine Røsnes (Director)

YSWN Annual Review 2020-21 produced by Heidi Johnson and Abi Bliss. All photos by Laura Mateescu except for p.6 by YSWN.