



Yorkshire Sound Women Network Annual Review 2024-25



Yorkshire Sound Women Network CIC (YSWN) is a Yorkshire-based community interest company working nationally to champion gender equity in audio. We inspire and enable women and people of minority genders to explore sound and music technology, running projects devoted to artistic development, education and network-building. We also work with the audio industry to promote equality, tackle discrimination and increase opportunities.

The community we serve ranges from beginners to students and professional audio practitioners of all ages – all with an interest in the creative use of music technology – including sound designers, DJs, engineers, coders, producers and sound artists.

Our mission is to support a flourishing industry which welcomes, encourages, progresses and respects the inclusion of women and people of minority genders into the workforce at all levels from studio floor to board room and reflects the diversity of its participating communities.



[@yorkshire_sound_women_network](https://www.instagram.com/yorkshire_sound_women_network)



[@yyswn.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/yyswn.bsky.social)



[@yorkshiresoundwomen](https://www.facebook.com/yorkshiresoundwomen)



yorkshiresoundwomen.com



info@yorkshiresoundwomen.com

We Turn Tables DJ workshop at
The Golden Lion, Todmorden,
October 2024

Introduction

In 2024/25 YSWN continued making an impact in several spheres. We published the WIRED Toolkit series of evidence-based resources for educators and shared the learnings widely.

We launched our fresh and engaging Turn Up the Volume social media campaign to galvanise action on gender equity amongst the audio industry, accompanied by a podcast focusing on the experiences of women and gender diverse audio professionals and amplifying their insights.

And we supported emerging creators to experiment with equipment and write exciting new music through our Changing Gear talent development programme – while celebrating the centenary of a true sonic pioneer.

We're incredibly grateful for the support of our community, Associates, Working Group, partner organisations, industry supporters, funders and donors for helping make all this valuable work happen.

Above and cover image:
Helen Papaioannou
performing at the
Changing Gear concert,
National Science & Media
Museum, March 2025

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.

Our year in numbers

38 events delivered, including education workshops, training and seminars, with **499** attendances

48 women and people of minority genders paid to deliver activities, including workshop leaders, trainees, seminar speakers and admin roles

Our Instagram audience rose by 36% to **1965** followers

Our Facebook audience rose from 1530 to **1582** followers

Our Bluesky audience rose from 38 to **321** followers

Our activities

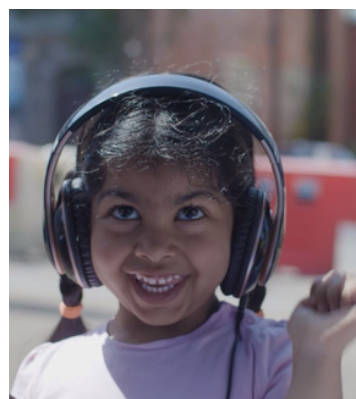
WIRED

We concluded delivery of our three-year Youth Music-funded WIRED education programme, which encompassed a series of music technology clubs for girls and non-binary young people across Yorkshire, outreach workshops and the launch of WIRED Online – a set of free video tutorials produced by diverse audio professionals to help girls, young women and minority gender people aged 11–25 learn all about working with audio. In 2024–25, a WIRED club was hosted in Beverley, East Yorkshire, outreach workshops took place at the WOW Festival, Rotherham and dBs Institute, Manchester, and we also teamed up with AMP Music and Flash Company Arts to offer workshops and support performance opportunities at the Switched On festival in Whitby.



WIRED Toolkit

To dig deeper into factors that may contribute to girls and people of minority genders disengaging with music technology, we commissioned independent research from Anni Raw & Associates, with additional input from Dr Eddie Dobson. This resulted in the WIRED Toolkit, which shares findings around the experiences of girls, women and minority gender young people in music technology learning settings: in particular, the reasons why some disengage from the subject, and ways in which educators can support them and create better learning environments. The WIRED Toolkit resources can be downloaded for free [here](#) and have been disseminated amongst educators, complemented by presentation of the findings at webinars and conferences.



Top: Callie O'Brien, who was selected to play Switched On festival in Whitby
Above: WIRED drop-in workshop at WOW Festival, Rotherham, May 2024

Our activities

Evaluation of WIRED found that the programme largely achieved three main outcomes:

Girls and young people of minority genders gained new skills and knowledge in using creative music technology.

‘I have learned how to use a DAW, make my own music and record with different objects.’

‘One participant said she has never realised there were so many ways to work with sound or known about the different roles that exist in the world of audio.’

Girls and young people of minority genders increased their knowledge and aspirations of careers in the sound and music industry and progressed in their musical journeys.

External music educators demonstrated increased awareness and knowledge of gender inequality and how to make their practice more gender inclusive.

‘I have adopted facilitation techniques that are mindful of gender differences and strive to create an environment where all voices are heard and respected.’

Internal evaluation also found that the project had a ‘deeper impact on young people...supporting them to form their own music making communities and discover their own identities in teenage years. Feedback from young people, parents and staff on the project reflects the power of the social connections for the participants’ personal and emotional development.’

Our activities

Turn Up the Volume & Volume Up

We devised and delivered a social media campaign and podcast series, Turn Up the Volume, with support from Rosa UK, signposting to YSWN's Volume Up scheme – our equity standard for the audio industry. The campaign was designed to inspire and promote action and highlight the wins within our community. Through a two-pronged strategy, we successfully engaged both our existing network and new allies, leading to increased visibility and new collaborations.

We gave the campaign a striking and upbeat visual identity to make it stand out and resonate within industry spaces. The campaign had a significant impact on expanding YSWN's network, leading to connections with new organisations across the UK. It reached 101,000 individuals engaged across multiple social media platforms, with 4,100 views on the callout video and 1,000 views and 61,000 impressions on YouTube for the professionally produced campaign video.



We supported the first two organisations to complete the Volume Up standard and delivered our gender diversity and inclusion training to six organisations. We also produced our own Turn up the Volume podcast series (eight episodes) hosted by our Audio Equity Champion Ngaio Anyia, featuring key figures such as Laura Lewis-Paul (Saffron), Xylo Aria (Music Production for Women), Isobel Anderson (Girls Twiddling Knobs), and Gnarly providing insights into gender equality challenges in audio, structured around the eight strands of our Volume Up framework. The campaign materials, videos and podcast remain as a valuable resource enabling YSWN to continue advocating for longer-term change.



Above: Turn Up the Volume campaign video
Left: podcast artwork, featuring Gnarly

Our activities

Changing Gear

YSWN joined PRS Foundation's Talent Development Network for the first time, with our Changing Gear professional development programme. This offered emerging music creators time, space and access to specialist audio equipment to develop exciting new works of music.

Three women creators (Helen Papaioannou, Sophie Russell/Cherry Seraph and Bethany Wells/Artists' Child) working across a range of genres were selected to create new music inspired by the life and work of electronic music pioneer Daphne Oram, in celebration of her centenary in 2025.

Each creator was commissioned to produce between 10–20 minutes of new, primarily electronic music drawing upon themes and techniques in Oram's work, with additional creative impetus provided by objects in the Sound & Vision collection of the National Science & Media Museum. To encourage creative risk-taking and sonic experimentation, the creators had access to studios and technical support at the University of Huddersfield allowing them to try out new composition techniques and sample sounds for use in their pieces.

'Changing Gear has helped me by giving me the space and encouragement to try new techniques and become inspired by those who came before me.'



The creators were able to explore new-to-them techniques including using tape cassettes to manipulate synth samples in live performance; creating an audiovisual piece using immersive sound and the visual programming software TouchDesigner; and bringing together granular processing, sampled speech and deep drones with delay and reverb to explore the concept of an archival space. They also received mentoring during the process from past Oram Awards winners and YSWN Associates.

‘It's brilliant to be paired with a local mentor and also to feel part of a Yorkshire/ Northern community of female and minority gender creatives.’

The first performances of the completed pieces took place in March 2025 at the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford, with a second performance in May 2025 at Gut Level in Sheffield.

Above: Artists' Child performing at the National Science and Media Museum, March 2025
Opposite: Cherry Seraph performing at the same gig

Our activities

Audio traineeships

YSWN seeks to provide better opportunities specifically for women and people of minority genders within the music industry and actively works with music and sound industry employers to challenge and change the gender gap. Supported by funding from Youth Music's Incubator Fund, we partnered with five audio companies to offer paid training placements for women and minority gender people aged 18–25.

‘This traineeship was confidence-building, motivating, friendly, and fun! I learned a lot in a short amount of time, and gained audio and business skills that will serve me for the rest of my career.’



Above: Rare Tone Mastering studios
Below: YSWN trainee at Club Haus

This year young people have undertaken placements within a range of different specialist audio companies:

- At the post-production studios BeSound, our trainee worked on dialogue and sync editing, tracklaying and sound FX editing.
- At the analogue mastering and disc cutting studio Rare Tone Mastering, two trainees worked in audio processing and exporting for mastering, vinyl preparation, cutting and packaging and social media creation.
- At PitStop Productions, a gaming studio, our trainee learned audio and voiceover editing using REAPER and Audition, offered foley and field recording assistance and supervised sound design and dialogue edit exercises.
- At Club Haus recording studio, two trainees assisted in engineering recording sessions and learning production and mixing skills, podcast recording and editing, live streaming production, editing and posting.

Our activities

The placements ranged from a few weeks to six months, with each trainee receiving a bursary, as well as a grant to develop a personal project suiting their particular ambitions, plus mentoring support from a YSWN Associate. The traineeships provided invaluable industry experience, professional networking, and financial support. Trainees built confidence and technical skills whilst creating lasting opportunities for career development. By engaging in hands-on projects, they gained essential industry experience and practical insights. They worked alongside established professionals, allowing them to build strong connections and develop professional networks crucial for future employment. Many participants leveraged this opportunity to launch their freelance careers or establish their own businesses.

‘As well as improving my mastering skills, it has helped me have a better ear as a producer. I’ve learned so much about vinyl and I hope now that I have these skills I can market myself as a vinyl mastering engineer.’

Outreach workshops

YSWN Associate Jo Morfee launched the We Turn Tables DJ course in autumn 2024 with two taster workshops supported by Scurrah Wainwright Charity and led by DJs JoMo (Jo Morfee) and Léna C in Hebden Bridge and Todmorden. These proved extremely popular, and with continued mentoring and encouragement several of the participants have since performed DJ sets at local music nights. With support from Hebden Royd Council, there are further workshops in spring 2025. We also delivered two Hear This! creative recording workshops in Dewsbury: led by Jo Kennedy, participants learned how to capture the best quality recordings using a handheld device before heading out to explore and record local sounds.

Right: Hear This! workshop in Dewsbury, July 2024



Future Plans 2025/26

Year 2 of our Changing Gear talent development programme, working in partnership with the University of York and the National Railway Museum.

Building upon our recent Turn Up The Volume campaign and Volume Up programme to grow our links with and influence upon the audio industry, calling for greater equity and inclusion and supporting organisations to work towards this.

Plug It Up: supporting Bradford Sound Wom*n Network to produce their sonic arts festival as part of Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture this October.

Rewired artistic commissions celebrating 10 years of YSWN.

Finance

Income

Earned income

£1,287

Grants

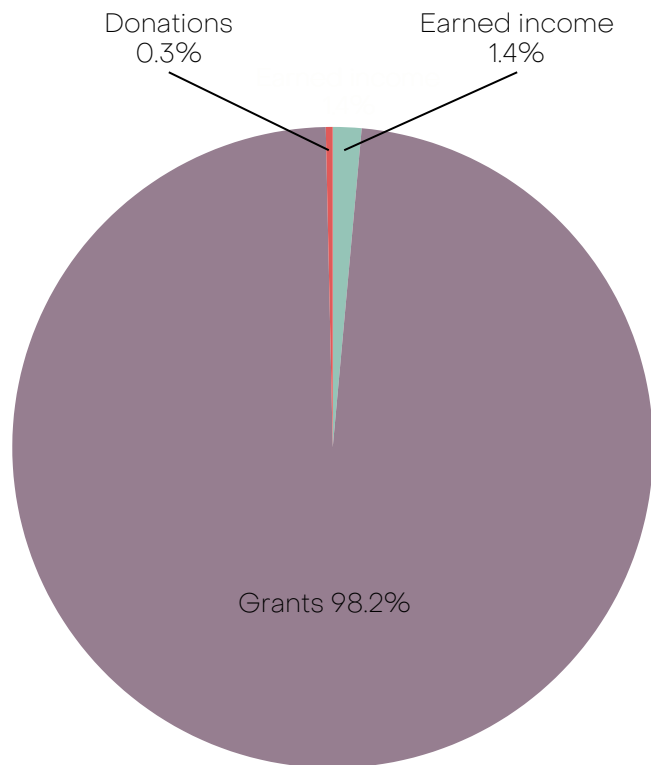
£87,652

Donations

£311

Total

£89,250



‘A brilliant opportunity to learn from someone who’s been in the industry for decades. I have so much appreciation for the work of everyone involved.’

Expenditure

Direct project delivery

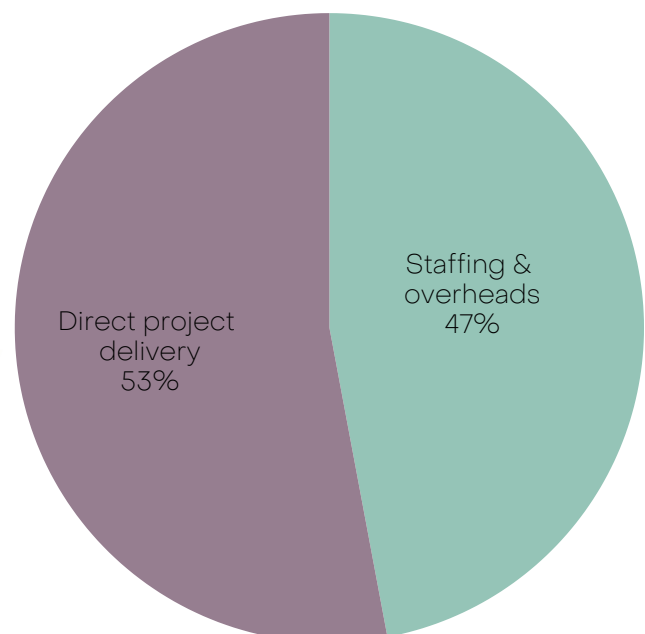
£46,594

Staffing & overheads

£41,398

Total

£87,992





Our thanks to:

Funders

Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grants
National Foundation for Youth Music
PRS Foundation
Rosa UK Voices from the Frontline programme
Scurrah Wainwright Charity
One Community Foundation
Thank you to our individual donors.

Partners

AMP Music & Flash Company Arts
BeSound Ltd
Club Haus Studios
dBs Institute
East Riding of Yorkshire Music Education Hub
National Science & Media Museum
Oram Awards
Pitstop Productions
Rare Tone Mastering
University of Huddersfield

YSWN working group 2024-25

Abi Bliss (Director)
Amy Beeston (Associate)
Manuella Blackburn (Director)
Eva Davies (Director)
Eddie Dobson (Director)
Olivia Gable (Associate)
Annie Jamieson (Director)
Jo Kennedy (Director)
Supriya Nagarajan (Director)

YSWN staff team 2024-25

Ngaio Anyia (Audio Equity Champion)
Abi Bliss (Coordinator & Project Producer)
Chelsey Everatt (WIRED Coordinator)
Heidi Johnson (Development Manager)
Gill Wainwright (Bookkeeper)