

Orchestras for All Impact Report 2018-2019



The Year in Numbers

83% NOFA members felt by the end of the year they could **stay calm and overcome anxiety in new or changing situations**

70% Modulo participants had **never played in an ensemble before**

75% Conductors for Change participants felt **confident leading a musical ensemble** after completing a leadership training day

502 young musicians supported

358 hours of music rehearsed

65 music leaders trained

33 contact days delivered

11 accessible arrangements created

23 new ensembles formed

53 amazing volunteers engaged

5000+ online audience members wowed



Welcome

At Orchestras for All, we believe **every** young person aged 11-18 should have access to opportunities to make music together at a national level. Creating new music together, playing alongside professional musicians and performing in iconic venues must be available to everyone, regardless of who you are, where you're from and what your experience of music has been. We do this through three programmes:

- A unique national ensemble made up of 100 extraordinary young people from across the UK, all facing complex barriers to making music together. This is the **National Orchestra for All**.
- A flexible schools and community programme designed with teachers and community music leaders in mind, kick-starting inclusive ensemble music-making across the country. This is **Modulo**.
- A programme of online training and face-to-face workshops, equipping music educators with the skills and confidence to run inclusive ensembles whatever their context. This is **Conductors for Change**.

It's not getting easier for young people to participate in high quality music-making experiences. Declining numbers of music teachers joining the sector each year, squeezed arts budgets in schools and continued pressure on educators to focus on non-arts subjects add to the many barriers already faced by young people with complex lives in accessing the arts. There's a great deal of work going on around the UK to support young musicians, but we must make sure that those who might have started an instrument late, not had regular access to lessons, lack the financial, practical or emotional support of their family, live in rurally isolated or culturally deprived areas, or have complex additional support needs can still benefit from high quality collaborative musical experiences.

We are pleased to share with you here the achievements of the young people we supported in our eighth season, exploring the theme of **WordPlay** and how music and language interact. Alongside an ambitious series of works for our National Orchestra for All and Modulo musicians, exploring how words can inspire and influence music, we have focused this year on listening to what our participants have to say about what music means to them. This year saw our **Ambassadors** take part in our inaugural Youth Panel, culminating in a presentation and discussion with our Board of Trustees in Summer 2019, an important step in ensuring young people's voices are at the heart of our organisation.

We'd love to hear from you: get in touch, tell us what you think of this report and let us know how you'd like to get involved in our work over the coming year.



Stuart Burns
Executive Director



Susanna Eastburn MBE
Chair of Trustees

What We Do

Orchestras for All has a big vision: music without boundaries.

In 2011, Marianna Hay, former Director of Music at Highbury Grove School, set out to address the inconsistency of music provision and barriers faced by young people to accessing musical opportunities by forming the first National Orchestra for All for 40 11-18 year olds. Since then, Orchestras for All has evolved into three distinct and innovative programmes with the core aim of bringing the profound musical and social benefits of ensemble music-making to 11-18 year-olds with complex lives.

- We **identify** young people who lack opportunities to access ensemble music-making and have shown a dedication to music in the face of challenging circumstances
- We **equip** music leaders with the skills, resources and networks to establish inclusive ensemble music-making opportunities and, in the long-term, cultivate a culture of music-making in their community
- We **collaborate** with young people, music leaders, professional musicians and music organisations, and cultural venues to create exciting, innovative and inspiring events and performances around the UK, that express the identities of the young people we work with

Our focus is on young people and communities usually excluded from high quality artistic experiences. In 2018-2019, 83% of the schools participating in Modulo were in the 50% most deprived areas of the country, and of those surveyed at the Regional Modulo Meets in March and April 2019, 32% were from Black, Asian, minority or mixed ethnic backgrounds (above the UK national average of 14%). In the 2018-2019 NOFA orchestra, 27% of members receive Free School Meals, 30% live in the third most deprived areas of the country, 14% speak English as an Additional Language, 20% have a learning difficulty, physical or mental health condition or a physical disability, 11% are in care and 5% are young carers.

Our Programmes



NOFA is a unique mixed skill level, non-auditioned youth orchestra comprising 100 young people from across the UK, who come together at residential courses over a nine-month season to learn, create, rehearse and perform ensemble music. Each year, teachers, music leaders, social workers and charity partners nominate young people who have shown commitment to music-making in the face of challenging circumstances. Participation is completely free of charge for NOFA members. **In 2018-2019** we commissioned an innovative new work for orchestra and spoken word artist, co-created by the orchestra and developed from motifs from the speech patterns of NOFA members. This was our most diverse orchestra to date, representing all four corners of the UK and facing the broadest range of challenges – and on top of this we welcomed NOFA's first pianists and guitarists!



Modulo supports under-resourced schools and community groups to run ensembles, regardless of skill level or instruments available, and provides opportunities to perform together as large-scale orchestras. Currently operating in the South East, Midlands and North West, Modulo reaches over 30 schools each year, with Music Hubs in Sheffield and Croydon running their own versions of Modulo. **In 2018-2019** we embedded professional partnerships with City of London Sinfonia, BBC Philharmonic and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire who delivered in-school masterclasses and supported our six Regional and National Modulo Meets.



CFC trains music teachers and community music leaders in inclusive ensemble leadership skills. Developed in partnership with experienced music educators, expert animateurs and leading conductors, we offer music leaders the tools, resources and confidence to lead mixed skill-level ensembles in their schools and communities. **In 2018-2019** we trained music teachers up and down the country through face-to-face workshops, including as part of Initial Teacher Training, Music Hub CPD and at the Southbank Centre's SoundState new music festival.

Our Values

The importance of access to high quality musical experiences is widely accepted. Research shows us that music-making transcends educational ability, socio-economic status and disability; gives young people a unique way to express themselves; improves confidence and self-esteem, self-efficacy and cultural awareness and can provide a safe space for young people with challenging home or school lives. Ensemble music-making extends these benefits further, giving young people access to broad and diverse social networks and developing teamwork and communication skills. Our work is underpinned by four values:



Inclusivity: We deliver our work in a flexible way so it is accessible to all, regardless of instrument skill level, additional needs or background. We value commitment to music above ability and provide high quality artistic experiences to young people at any point in their musical journey.



Wellbeing: We believe that ensemble music-making is well placed to improve personal and social skills, and as such, should be available to all. Above all we prioritise the safeguarding and welfare of the young people we work with. All adult staff and volunteers must demonstrate an understanding of our expectations, creating a safe and supportive atmosphere for all participants.



Collaboration: We aim to deliver our work to the highest artistic standards. We do this in collaboration with professional orchestra partners, arrangers and composers, workshop leaders, cultural venues, additional needs experts, social workers and a team of highly trained and experienced orchestral and pastoral tutors to support us in giving our participants a profound and unforgettable experience of making music together.



Ownership: We value and actively seek the perspectives of all our stakeholders in guiding the artistic output of Orchestras for All. We place the voices of the young people and music teachers with whom we work at the centre of our programmes through meaningful research and evaluation processes.



Dylan



Dylan is 12 and plays the piano and the trombone. At school he plays in a brass group as well as being part of a young developers group at the Shepway Brass Academy at weekends. Dylan's music teacher nominated him for the National Orchestra for All in 2018 after recognising his dedication to and love for music. Dylan has complex needs: sensory and language difficulties, early life trauma and autism mean that he can present with challenging behaviour and finds it hard to communicate verbally.

However, with a support worker present to help Dylan access the experience fully, NOFA has provided a place for Dylan to develop his musical skills as an important and equal part of a larger musical group. Suzanne, Dylan's foster mum, said: "NOFA found a wonderful and skilled support person to give him one-to-one support, and it has been fantastic to see how successfully this has worked."

Music serves as an amazing platform to engage with other people, and with NOFA Dylan is able to work with a group of people his own age from all around the UK, allowing him to develop independence and social skills while contributing to high quality ensemble music-making. Suzanne says she noticed a new confidence in him after his first NOFA experience, and feels that playing music in this environment gives him a sense of community and something special to strive towards. "He absolutely loves it and can't wait for the next session to begin. It has given him a highlight to look forward to."

Despite the challenges in Dylan's life, his achievements in music show that with the right attitude and support so much is possible. The community of NOFA is wide-reaching, inclusive and diverse, and everyone at NOFA is committed to the idea that music-making should be accessible for all. For Suzanne, "it moves us to see the way in which the adults - from organisers to tutors to pastoral carers to admin - are so positive and willing to make a difference in young people's lives through music."

“ The concerts are always moving for us as parents, seeing our boy as part of this group is so encouraging, but bigger than this, it's joyful to see so many young people enjoying music and creating something special together.

“ Modulo had a massive impact. Compared to the orchestra formed last year we had a greater retention and students felt a greater sense of belonging to a community.

We first met Ping back in September 2017, as a member of the new cohort of Teach First trainee music teachers entering the profession fresh out of university. We supported Ping and his fellow trainees throughout their training year through our **Conductors for Change** ensemble leadership training sessions, led by expert conductors Bob Pepper OBE and Emma Oliver-Trend and focusing on building the skills and confidence of those looking to lead inclusive ensemble music-making opportunities.

“We had a couple of workshop sessions and we discussed basic shaping of beating and we had ample opportunities to experiment and practise. In later sessions we discussed the persona of a conductor and how to conduct rehearsal sessions effectively, and how to structure and plan for the ensemble on a longer term basis. We also had a chance to conduct the National Orchestra for All at 2018 Summer Course in Leeds which brought many of these elements together.”

Ping saw the positive experiences his fellow trainees had as part of Modulo and decided to sign up for the 2018-2019 academic year. Running the programme was not entirely straightforward: “Managing time in a small department to balance the needs of the curriculum as well as extra-curricular is a challenge. Therefore it is a luxury to spend time, for example, to arrange parts. As an NQT I was still developing my craft and therefore it felt like I was still juggling many plates at once. We also have very little support from the local borough so most musical activities have to be supported in house which adds to the time pressure.”

Modulo had “a massive impact” on his school. “Compared to the orchestra formed last year we had a greater retention and students felt a greater sense of belonging to a community. This ensured higher attendance across the year. It also ensured a high quality ensemble experience that benefits both the beginners and new starters.” Running his own ensemble also allowed him to put what he’d learned through Conductors for Change into action. “These sessions allowed me to experiment in my sessions at school and enabled me to become a more confident ensemble leader.”

But what about the impact on his students? “I believe the impact on the students will be enduring as they will remember fondly the trips and visits. I also strongly believe it has shown the students the possibilities of music making in an orchestra and will encourage them to continue to participate in the future. Personally participation in these programmes has further consolidated the importance of extra-curricular music in school and as teachers of music the huge impact we have the possibility of making.”

Young People

Our Outputs in 2018-2019



502 young musicians supported

Young people aged 11-18 from across all four nations of the UK participated in National Orchestra for All, Modulo and Conductors for Change activities throughout the year, supported by our team of professional orchestral tutors and pastoral staff.



33 contact days

We engaged directly with young people at residential courses, Modulo Meet workshop days and Ensemble Leadership Training Days in the Midlands, North West, South East, South West and Yorkshire – including events held in inspiring and iconic venues including the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Royal Academy of Music.



9 Bronze Arts Awards

NOFA members aged 16-18 completed their Bronze Arts Awards by teaching each other their instruments, researching an artist or musician who has inspired them and reflecting on their NOFA experience.



over 350 contact hours

We directly delivered over 350 hours of full and sectional rehearsals with our team of professional orchestral tutors, non-musical team building activities with our trained pastoral staff and creative composition sessions with professional workshop leaders, as well as supporting music teachers and community music leaders to deliver ensemble music-making in their schools and communities through the Modulo Programme.



“

The thing I love so much about NOFA is it is for sharing the joy of music, for giving the gift of playing in an orchestra to young people who wouldn't normally have the opportunity. It is the most diverse inclusive orchestra I have ever seen.

- NOFA member

Our Impact on Young People

Our **short-term** outcomes focus on developing **musical skills** (after one residential course or one term of the Modulo Programme). These include improved musical ability, musical self-expression, creativity, ensemble skills and music leadership skills, as well as an increased sense of ownership over their own music-making. In the **medium- to long-term** (after one year), we track the development of **key life skills**, including increased confidence, self-esteem, personal self-expression and non-musical creativity, improved teamwork and communication skills and increased self-efficacy and motivation.

Improved musical ability 85% of NOFA members felt they had improved as a result of NOFA, with NOFA tutors observing a 17% improvement in members' technical ability over the year: *"I feel as though I am able to play musical passages in a much more musical way."* (NOFA member)

Improved ensemble skills *"Teamwork, listening, improving on your instrumental skills, watching conductor – this has really emphasised those key orchestral skills... this is an opportunity that disadvantaged children don't get"* (Modulo teacher)

Improved sense of musical creativity 76% of NOFA members felt their improvisation and composition skills improved: *"NOFA is much different from any other musical activities due to the wonderful atmosphere and original ways of creating music."* (NOFA member)

Improved musical leadership skills By the end of the year, 76% members observed by NOFA tutors had strong leadership skills, an increase of 43% increase from the start of the year: *"For the last few years I've been the leader of the viola section and this gave me really good leadership skills, like, knowing when to come in, how to bring the section in."* (NOFA member)

Increased confidence and self-esteem 81% of Modulo participants felt confident to play their instrument in front of people they didn't know after the two Modulo Meets, an increase of 31% from the start: *"It helps you with your people skills, like communication and confidence. You are meeting new people all the time and you want to speak to them."* (NOFA member)

Increased motivation By the end of the year, 83% NOFA members felt when working on a project, they would do their best to get the details right, an increase of 29% from the start of the year: *"[Modulo] has definitely made me think about what I would like to do in the future with music making."* (Modulo member)

“ Seeing my daughter, who finds the rigours and demands of many aspects of life so very difficult, thriving as part of such a wonderful orchestra is something that will always stay with me.

– NOFA parent

Music Leaders

Our Outputs in 2018-2019



65 music leaders supported

Music leaders working in school, community and Music Hub contexts took part in a range of activities this year, including our Ensemble Leadership Training Days and running Modulo ensembles.



19 networking and training events

We hosted, participated in or supplied workshops or resources at events that supported music teachers to network and develop their skills and practice, including at music education conferences around the country.



11 arrangements and compositions

We created a suite of new Modulo arrangements – flexible for any ensemble size with any instruments of any standard – and shared them via our online resource repository for music leaders to use. New differentiated arrangements and a brand new commission were created for the National Orchestra for All programme, including **An Orchestra of Overheard Conversations**, co-created with NOFA members and premièred at the NOFA season finale concert in Birmingham in April 2019.



“ My confidence has really grown to the point that now we’ve joined forces with the sister school in our Academy who have a massive orchestra. We came together and had 70 players, which was quite scary for me as a conductor. I conducted ours, with all 70 players! Because the resources are so differentiated it made this easy for us to do.

- Modulo teacher

Our Impact on Music Leaders

Our **short-term** outcomes focus on ensuring teachers and community music leaders **know how to deliver high quality music-making opportunities** and are equipped with the skills to do so. In the **medium- to long-term** (after one year) we measure changes in music leaders' **confidence in ability to deliver ensemble music-making opportunities**.

Improved skills Participants of both **Conductors for Change** and the **Modulo Programme** reported improvements in their ensemble leadership skills. Some **Modulo** leaders engaged in both programmes, enabling them to put their training into practice. 88% of **Conductors for Change** participants surveyed said they could conduct clearly in a variety of time signatures after completing an Ensemble Leadership Training Day, an increase of 38% from before the course. 81% of **CFC** participants surveyed said they were able to help ensemble members improve musical aspects of their performance after completing the Training Day, an increase of 22% from before the course.

“Modulo gives you the chance to practise the skills you’ve been learning, in the classroom. And it’s not high stakes so if things go wrong, it’s ok.” (Modulo teacher)

Improved confidence Participants of both **Conductors for Change** and the **Modulo Programme** reported improvements in their confidence to set up, lead and develop an **inclusive ensemble**. 75% of **CFC** participants surveyed were confident at leading and conducting a musical ensemble after completing a Training Day, an increase of 48% from before the course.

“My confidence has improved as an orchestral conductor because I’m doing it regularly and having Modulo to work towards means that our little orchestra has something to work towards too.” (Modulo teacher)

“ Having such a broad repertoire has been great for me, because it’s pushed me in directions that maybe I wouldn’t have taken before.

- Modulo teacher



Building our profile in the sector

We published **one** Impact Report, over **600** social media posts and **seven** blogs – including two written by Ambassador Matthew Jones. Matthew was accepted this year as the UK representative of the World Ensemble ambassador programme, writing blogs about his experience of Orchestras for All that were shared with music educators around the world. We also premiered our brand new film, **The Orchestras for All Story**, showcasing the impact our work has had on young musicians and music leaders around the UK.

We ran workshops at teacher network meetings in Huddersfield, Sefton, Leeds, Southwark and Manchester, and were represented at conferences including the Music Mark North West Conference, South West Peninsula Music Education Conference and the Music and Drama Education Expo in London. We're active members of the **Music Mark National Youth Music Organisation** network, attending quarterly roundtable discussions and the national conference for the first time. We also joined the **Fair Education Alliance** and the **Association of British Orchestras**, and look forward to attending our first ABO conference in January 2020.



Working in partnership

This year saw the team build on previous partnerships across all three programmes, as well as develop new allies across the music, arts and social change sectors. New NOFA nominating partners included **Turtle Key Arts**, who supported with identifying young musicians with Autism Spectrum Conditions and in our recruitment of new specialist SEN Support Staff. We collaborated with the team at **Making Music** to run our first Conductors for Change ensemble leadership training day for music leaders working with both adults and young people – an event we will be repeating in November 2019. We grew our Music Hub network, and established new artistic relationships with the **City of London Sinfonia** and **BBC Philharmonic**.

"We approached Orchestras for All because their Conductors for Change initiative already covered the majority of the conducting skills we wanted to focus on, and there was a crossover between their existing audience and ours. Combining our networks and developing our work together could only make for a stronger and more inclusive conducting community sharing a wealth of support, resources and experience across all ages and genres – our ultimate aim." – Sharon Moloney, Making Music



Ensuring the future of the organisation

We continue to diversify our income streams, securing new funding from a range of trusts and foundations including the Foyle Foundation, as well as investigating new sources of income. We took part for the first time in **The Big Give Christmas Challenge** in December 2018, raising over £10,000 and giving us an opportunity not only to test out public crowdfunding – but also to engage two fantastic new supporters, comedians Richard Wilson and Arabella Weir!

“ The BBC Philharmonic was delighted to work with an organisation that enables schools to develop ensemble music-making for their young students. Having a very small team and resources, the partnership enabled the BBC Philharmonic to inspire even more children than it would have been able to do so without the partnership.

– Jennifer Redmond, BBC Philharmonic

Measuring Impact

National Orchestra for All

We have embedded quantitative evaluation tools to further understand the impact of the programme, and gathered data from tutors on their observation of members' progress. We have continued to work with the Centre for Youth Impact, participating in a pilot of the Youth Programme Quality Intervention, measuring the impact of our approach to emotional wellbeing. This has informed aspects of our staff training and structure of rehearsals. **In 2019-2020** we will redesign the evaluation plan to ensure more detailed quantitative capture of members' musical skills and confidence.

Modulo

During this year, our long-standing research partner Project Oracle merged with the Centre for Youth Impact, resulting in the research placement programme coming to an end. To provide additional support this year, we engaged Music and Cognition, a research organisation set up by two researchers in developmental psychology and music, Dr Kathryn Mason and Alice Bowmer. Based on the evaluation strategy designed in partnership with Project Oracle, Music and Cognition delivered the impact measurement tools, analysed the data from surveys and focus groups and provided a comprehensive report including recommendations for improvements. We will continue working with Music and Cognition to further refine the evaluation process, ensuring that we can continue to collect, analyse and demonstrate the project's impact. **In 2019-2020** we will redesign aspects of the plan to streamline more detailed quantitative and qualitative capture of the creative and ensemble skills progression of participants.

Conductors for Change

We have further embedded the Ensemble Leadership Training Day evaluation plan, using questionnaires to measure start- and end-point experience of development of leadership skills for both trainees and the orchestra they work with. **In 2019-2020** we will implement an evaluation plan for our online course, launched in July 2019, measuring the impact of the course on music leaders' ensemble leadership skills.



Working with Orchestras for All has been a great experience for us as researchers. It's a pleasure to work with such a passionate and conscientious team who are always looking at how they can improve the experiences of the teachers and young people they support. We were thoroughly impressed by the quality of the music made on the Modulo Meet days, and by how keen the OFA team were to develop the evaluation of their programmes.

– Dr Katie Mason and Alice Bowmer, Music and Cognition

The Year Ahead

My Roots, Our Routes

The 2019-2020 season *My Roots, Our Routes* will explore the **music that underpins human migrations and journeys** – our young people's personal journeys and the famous journeys of others. We will also explore music that itself has *travelled*, rehearsing and learning pieces that are rooted in tradition and place but have subsequently evolved at the hands of their composers. Throughout the season we will also be exploring our young musicians' own musical roots, developing a programme of leadership throughout our activities whereby our young people research and teach one another the music that represents their individual interpretation of the phrase *From Here*. Our inaugural Young Composer-in-Residence Lucy Hale will work with the 100 young musicians of NOFA to create a brand new piece of music inspired by the Silk Road, to be premiered at the NOFA season finale concert on 9 April 2020 at LSO St Luke's in London.

Conductors for Change goes digital

In July 2019 we launched the first phase of our brand new Conductors for Change **online training**. Created by a team of highly experienced music directors and educators, including Sian Edwards, Head of Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, this flexible training programme is rooted in inclusive practice. Each of the 10 modules has been designed to cover a specific element of inclusive ensemble leadership. Through a series of videos and practical exercises, learners will be introduced to the Orchestras for All approach to ensemble music-making and will have the opportunity to reflect on their own practice. The modules cover conducting technique, inclusive and creative rehearsal approaches, including group composition, and arranging music for mixed skill level ensembles.

Strategic thinking

As we approach our Ten Year Anniversary season, we are taking the time to evaluate our work carefully and design a brand new five-year strategy to launch in July 2020. So far in 2019, we have carried out thorough engagement and consultation with our key stakeholders, including Music Hubs, funders, teachers and – of course – young people. We held two workshops with our board of trustees and a full team away day to interrogate rigorously a new Theory of Change for the organisation, as well as creating a brand new strategic framework to shape our thinking over the coming years. The next phase, during Autumn 2019, will focus on bringing this thinking together into an ambitious new strategic plan – helping us to reach more young musicians and music leaders, share our approach more effectively and work more closely with partners around the UK. The new strategic plan will be shared in early 2020.





Get Involved

Spread the word!

The quickest and easiest way to support us on our mission to bring ensemble music-making to young people with complex lives is to tell your friends and colleagues all about what we do – and why not post about us on social media? Find all our social media accounts via our website.

Nominate!

Is there a dedicated young musician in your school or community that faces barriers to accessing ensemble music-making? A beginner player who needs some extra support? An advanced player with no ensemble access? Nominate a young musician for the 2020-2021 **National Orchestra for All** between January and March 2020 for membership in the orchestra from August 2020.

Set up an ensemble!

Whether you're a music teacher struggling to find the time and resources to get a group going, or a peripatetic instrument teacher working in a school where there's little or no music provision, you can kick start ensemble music-making with **Modulo**. We support small ensembles of any shape, size or context with flexible arrangements, teaching resources and workshop days to bring all of the small ensembles to perform as large-scale orchestras!

Develop your skills!

Our **Conductors for Change** programme provides everything you need to set up, lead and develop an inclusive ensemble. Take part in our face-to-face Ensemble Leadership Training Days or our brand new online training course to develop your skills and confidence in leading an ensemble.

Donate!

None of our work would be possible without the amazing support of our wonderful donors. No matter how big or small, any donation can help us on our mission to bring ensemble music-making to young people with complex lives around the country. Find out more about the impact your support could have by visiting our website at www.orchestrasforall.org/donate



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