

Our Sounds Our Spaces



May Book 2026
Official Handbook &
NZ Music Industry Guide



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Contents

Tēnā koutou katoa, nau mai ki te Puka o Mei, te puka whakatairanga i te Marama Puoro o Aotearoa.

Kia ora and welcome to the May Book 2026, the official handbook of NZ Music Month Te Marama Puoro o Aotearoa. This book contains a collection of great resources and information about the music industry here in Aotearoa.

The theme for NZ Music Month 2026 is Our Sounds, Our Spaces. This May we celebrate our music and all the places it's made and enjoyed across Aotearoa - at our incredible local live music venues, community halls, schools, libraries, marae, public parks and squares, and all ages spaces. The colour for NZ Music Month this year is also APRA gold - acknowledging the 100th anniversary of the songwriters' association and their writers who compose the soundtracks to our lives.

The articles in this year's May Book reflect this theme. In here you'll find great information on the spaces and communities where music happens across the motu, roles that exist in the music industry, a DIY guide to releasing your music, and much more.

In this book you'll also find plenty of useful information about our industry partner organisations like APRA AMCOS NZ, Independent Music NZ, The Music Managers Forum, NZ On Air, and Recorded Music NZ. You'll also be able to read about some of the things we do at the New Zealand Music Commission like our Industry Internships Programme, Musicians Mentoring in Schools, and Outward Sound.

As always, you can tap into the archive of articles from previous May Books, as well as other resources, over on the resource section of our website at www.nzmusic.org.nz/resources.

Heoi anō tāku mō nāianeī - have a great Marama Puoro o Aotearoa!

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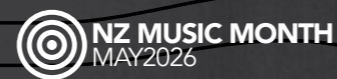
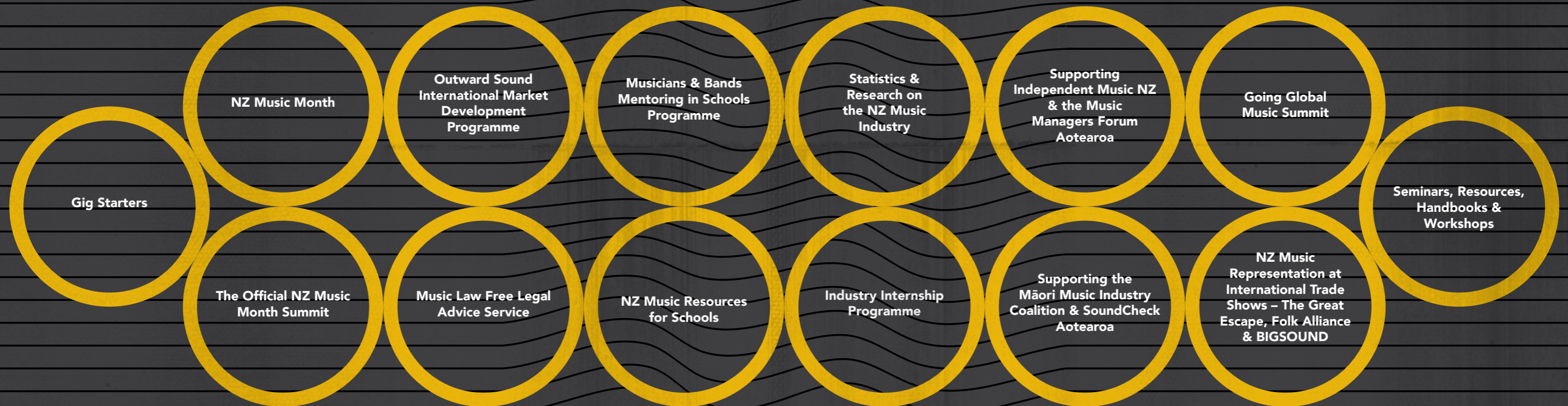
Thanks to all of our advertisers for their support of this year's May Book. Contributors: Alan Holt, Cath Andersen, Dave Simpson, Jessica Bailey, Nicholas Lindstrom, Rachel Ashby, Danya Yang, Harris Keenan and Willa Cameron.

ISSN 2230 - 3227
Published annually in May as part of NZ Music Month.
All enquiries to the publisher.
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The NZ Music Commission is one of the arts agencies supported through Manatū Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Focused on contemporary popular music, the organisation's role is supporting a thriving music sector – culturally, economically and globally.

To achieve this, the Music Commission carries out a range of projects and partnerships to get music from Aotearoa out into the world and to support local artists and music businesses.

Key Projects





Princess Chelsea & The Dream Warriors
PHOTO: Chris Zwaagdyk



Written By Wolves
PHOTO: Samantha Davies



Where's Jai
PHOTO: Jade Johnson

In the Neighbourhood

Using council and community resources to kickstart your music career

As an independent artist, you take on a wide range of creative and practical tasks; from recording and content creation to merch production and promotion. Across the motu, there are council and community spaces designed to support that mahi. Local libraries, makerspaces, and creative hubs offer accessible tools that can help you develop your skills, create new work, and bring your projects to life.

Recording Spaces and gear libraries

Council libraries are amazing spaces with access to resources that can help with everything from recording music, through to printing posters and making merch.

Modern library spaces are increasingly being kitted out with recording studio

equipment and software for the public to use. For example, at Te Matapihi Ki Te Ao Nui, the newly re-opened Central Library in Wellington, you can book their Sound Studio to record music or podcasts. The new space comes complete with instruments to borrow, a computer workstation with audio recording and editing software, and all the hardware like audio interface, plus the mics and cables needed to lay down your track. Some council libraries around the country also have access to AV equipment that you can loan out and take away from the library- such as cameras, PAs, or audio field recorders.

Look into creative hubs around your town for other networks and resources that might be available to you. Many independent

music venues and art galleries will have workshops and resources that you can access. For example, at the music and art space the Audio Foundation in Auckland, you'll find the Musical Electronics Library (MEL): a free membership lending library of homemade electronic musical devices like pedals and synths. The MEL frequently hosts workshops and can provide free tutoring, parts, tools and workshop space for folks looking to make their own electronic musical gear.

Making Merch

When it comes to band merch, the makerspaces at council libraries are a great resource. These are stations set up in the library with creative tools and equipment that library card holders can use. For instance, at the Christchurch City

Libraries' Auahatanga Creative Spaces, you can access direct-to-garment printers and heat presses: perfect tools for getting your band's design onto t-shirts, tote-bags or any other fabric related merch that you can dream up. Many library makerspaces are also equipped with vinyl printers and cutters, which can be used to make stickers. Some also have badge makers, overlockers, sewing and embroidery machines. The tools in makerspaces are free to access, although you generally have to pay a small cost to cover the raw materials you use (like vinyl or thread). This is usually much cheaper than commercial alternatives, and perfect for small-batch projects.

In some places around the country there are non-council makerspaces that you

can sign up to as a member and use their resources. Places like Tinkd Makerspace in Tauranga and FabLab in Masterton have low subscription fees and lots of tools like Vinyl Cutters, Laser Cutters, and 3D printers available for use.

Libraries as homebase

Council libraries can be a valuable base for creating the materials you need to promote your music. Most offer free internet access, computers, and printers, along with subscriptions to design and editing software such as Adobe Creative Suite. With a library card, you can design gig posters, social media assets, press materials, and even print them on site at a low cost.

Many libraries and community centres also host public noticeboards, local event calendars, and community newsletters where you can list upcoming shows or releases. These channels are often well-used by local audiences and can be an effective way to build visibility in your neighbourhood.

Whether you're updating your website, preparing release assets, or managing admin tasks, libraries provide a quiet, well-resourced space to work.

Of course, the most important resources that makerspaces and libraries offer are knowledgeable people. Chat to a librarian if you have any questions, they might have ideas that can help you with your creative vision.

Getting Your Music Out There - DIY Style

A Guide for Independent Artists in Aotearoa



Castaway
PHOTO: Ludivine Pellissier



Basant Madhur
PHOTO: Hans Hockey



Mel Parsons
PHOTO: Stephanie Cartwright



Pull Down The Sun
PHOTO: Justin Barnett



Half-Angel
PHOTO: Rosa Nevison

As an independent artist it can be daunting to know where to start when it comes to promoting your music. In this article you'll find some practical tips about DIY tools, release strategies and networks that you can use to help get your music out into the world.

Building a basic toolkit

When you are trying to spread the word about a music release there are some basic tools you will need to have on hand. A great place to begin is with your Electronic Press Kit (EPK). Think of your EPK as a digital one-stop-shop containing everything the media and industry need to know about you and what you are promoting.

An EPK should include:

- An up-to-date press release and artist bio
- High-resolution press photos (landscape and portrait options)
- Streaming and download links to your music
- Album art or promotional imagery
- Ticketing information and posters for any related gigs.

Your press release should communicate a bit about you and the project you are

promoting. A good tip is to keep it concise; 3-4 thoughtful paragraphs is enough. Likewise, your artist bio should succinctly explain a bit about who you are, plus any notable achievements or awards you'd like to show off. Make sure you provide an email for media enquiries and links to all socials and streaming pages for your music.

DIY Promotion

Once you have a basic toolkit of info and imagery about your music release, it's time to start spreading the word. If you have the budget to hire a publicist or work with a manager, this can take some of the PR (public relations) workload off your plate. However, if you're working on your own there are still many DIY ways to effectively let people know about your music.

An obvious platform for sharing music news is social media. It's a great way to directly connect with an audience, and it's easy for other people to amplify your posts by resharing your content. Ask your friends and peers to help spread the word as personal recommendations hold real power: people love to know what their friends are enjoying! Sponsored posts can be useful too, even if your budget is small. If you properly target your audience using

the platforms and manager tools and get the timing right, a sponsored post can have real cut-through online. Social media is often the first place people will check when they want to find out more about your music, so always make sure your pages are up to date with correct links and info.

Out in the real world, old-school postering is still very effective for catching people's attention, especially when it comes to gigs. Go and pay a visit to your local record stores and music venues, as they are often very happy to put up your posters. These spaces are hubs for community, and are great places to hang out and make connections. It pays to remember that going out to shows and supporting other bands is an excellent way to broaden your networks. Be the audience member you want to see in the world! If you show up for other people they are likely to show up for you too.

When you are promoting a show don't forget to check to list it on local gig guides. Places like Undertheradar.co.nz, Muzic.nz, Eventfinda, student radio stations, and local council websites have event listings you can submit your show to. There are also some great zines like Gremlins in Ōtautahi, The Plan in Ōtepoti or the Image

in Pōneke that share upcoming show info to an enthusiastic community of music fans.

Contacting the Media

When it comes to getting in touch with the media it's good to take a look at who is covering local music releases with similar leanings to yours. Do your homework and listen to different radio shows, read magazines and newspapers, and check out online and print publications. Research who the editor or programme director is and send them an email with your request for an interview or playlist consideration.

Student, community and iwi radio stations are all really good places to approach with your new releases as they champion local and independent music, and are interested in amplifying stories from Aotearoa. For example the Student Radio Network (95bFM, Radio One, RDU, Radio Active, Radio Control) is a great first port of call as they have a wide range of music focussed shows with regular interview slots and live to air performance opportunities. Iwi radio stations can be found at irirangi.net and you can search online for the Community Access Media Alliance for community radio stations.

Getting the timing right

When it comes to releasing music, you want to work backwards from your release day to give yourself a good lead up to promote your mahi. Working with a general timeline of 8-12 weeks will give you a chance to do proper media pitching and build the audience for your music. A very basic timeline to consider is below:

- 8-12 weeks out: This is the time to finalise your release strategy: think about who you want to pitch your music to and what media outlets you want to contact. Get your EPK ready. If you want to have a gig to celebrate your release, now is the time to book a venue.
- 6-8 weeks out: Start pitching your music to print and online publications as these often require a longer lead time for stories. This is also when you'll want to pitch your music to streaming platforms for consideration on their editorial playlists. You can do this through the 'For Artists' tools page on the streaming platform in question. You might also want to research independent playlist and content curators who focus on NZ music.

- 4-6 weeks out: Contact radio for interview and playlist consideration. Commercial radio stations usually require a longer lead time than Student and Community radio. This is also the time to start ramping up promotion on your social media.

- 2-4 weeks out: Secure live performances on radio around release week and bump radio stations for playlist consideration. A live-to-air performance or interview in the week leading up to your release can have a great impact.

- Release week: This is when it should all start coming together: social posts, playlist adds, radio play, and press coverage should align to create some momentum. When it comes to social media, make sure all your public facing content is up to date with links to your release. Don't be afraid to post a lot - if you feel like you're doing too much, you're probably just doing enough!

For more in-depth information on things like how to write a good press release, create a budget, book a show, or contact radio stations - check out the full resource section on the NZ Music Commission's website nzmusic.org.nz

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2026



A CENTURY OF SONG



INSPIRATION

The spark of an idea becomes an original piece of music.



WRITING THE SONG

The moment a piece of music is written or recorded, it is automatically protected by copyright law in Aotearoa.



JOINING APRA AMCOS

To become APRA members, songwriters join for free and register their original songs online.



BUSINESSES GET LICENSED

Businesses purchase OneMusic or APRA AMCOS licences so that their staff and customers can reap the benefits of listening to music.



PAYDAY

Royalties are paid back to songwriters, giving them the financial support to be inspired all over again.



CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

APRA AMCOS keeps track of types of music use to ensure songwriters are paid fairly.



PRESS PLAY

Once music is purchased or played in public, songwriters earn royalties.

Songs can be performed live, downloaded, streamed or broadcast on radio or television.

FOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS, APRA HAS LOOKED AFTER THE SONGWRITERS OF AOTEAROA.

If you've written original music, you're a songwriter - and that song copyright belongs to you automatically. Become an APRA member and register your songs for free. APRA advocates on your behalf and helps you get paid whenever your songs are used, even when you play them live yourself.

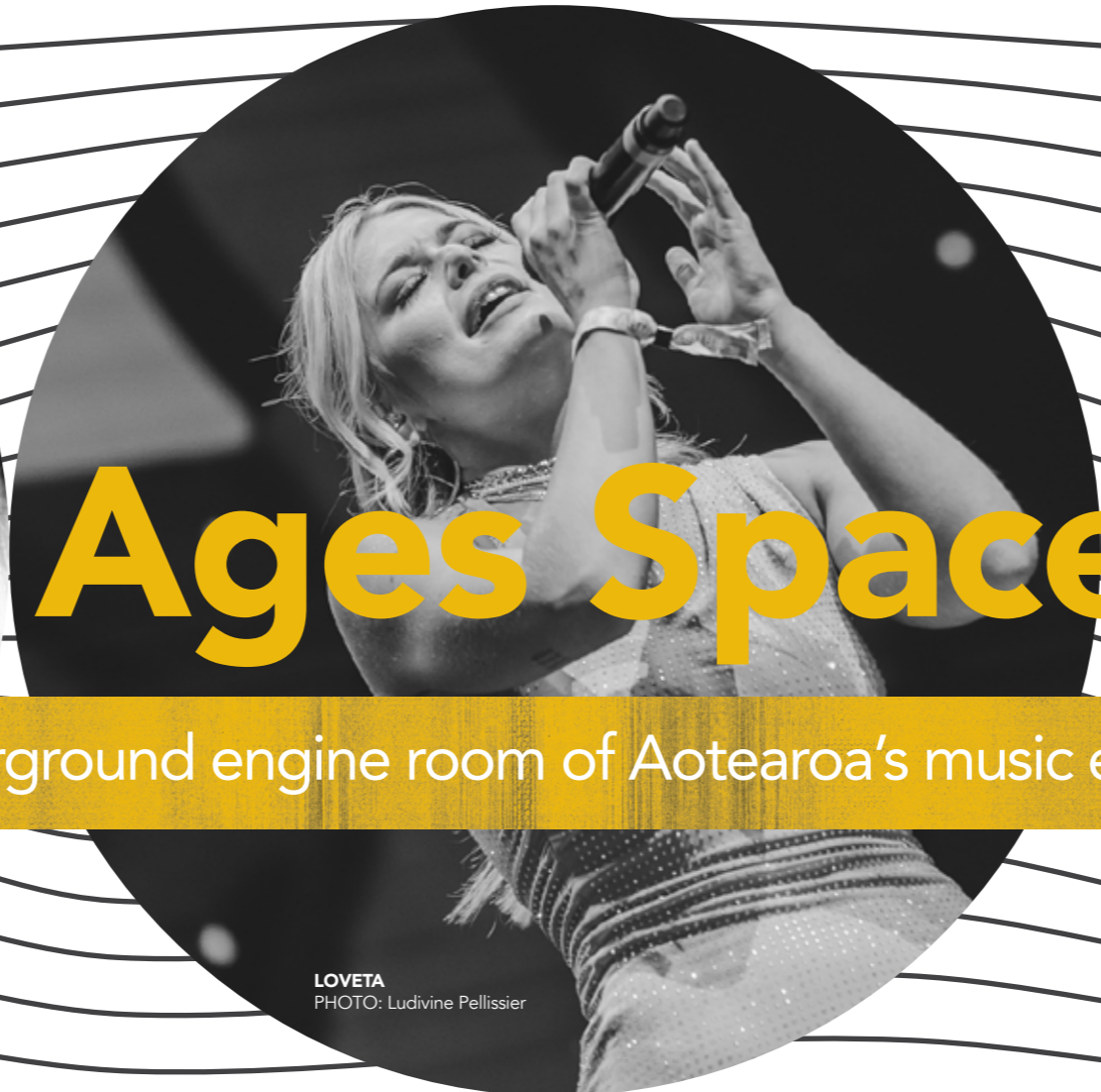
Sign up at www.apraamcos.co.nz or contact us at on 0800 692 772 or nz@apraamcos.co.nz. Here's to another hundred.

Opposite page: APRA's first licence; early APRA Aotearoa staff; Ruru Karaitiana; The Quin Tikis; The Māori Hi-Five; Ngaruawahia Music Festival poster; John Hanlon and Pat Bell; Split Enz; Jordan Luck; Bic Runga; Joel Little and Lorde; Rob Ruha and Paige; KOMMI and Marlon Williams.

For photo attributions and more on APRA's Century of Song, please visit www.apra.com.au/100-years



Coast Arcade
PHOTO: Chloe Tredgett



LOVETA
PHOTO: Ludivine Pellissier



The D4
PHOTO: Ginelle Cocks

All Ages Spaces

The underground engine room of Aotearoa's music ecosystem

All ages spaces have always been the backbone of our music community in Aotearoa. Long before artists step into studios, sign with managers, or tour internationally, they are shaped by the places where they first gather, experiment, and perform. These are the rooms where confidence is built, where scenes form, and where young people learn that music is something they can participate in, not just consume.

Aotearoa's most distinctive sounds emerge from the ground up. House shows, community halls, youth centres, church basements, and makeshift stages have produced some of our most innovative artists and most loyal audiences. These spaces allow for risk-taking,

experimentation, and identity-building in ways that commercial venues often can't. They're informal, adaptable, and responsive to the communities they serve.

All ages spaces also help reduce barriers to music access like cost, knowledge gaps and age restrictions due to alcohol licensing. Often all ages spaces have lower hireage fees and are accustomed to working with people who are still learning about how to put on a show. By prioritising young people's engagement with music, all ages spaces are a vital place for youth talent and audience empowerment. When a young person sees a gig in a hall, a youth centre, or someone's lounge, it sends a clear message: this is for

you, and you're allowed to be part of it. That sense of belonging is often the spark that leads to lifelong engagement; as an artist, an audience member, or a future industry practitioner.

These spaces are also where roles are fluid. Someone might play in one band, run the door for another, design posters for a third, and help pack down at the end of the night. In doing that, they're learning skills in organising, collaboration, communication, and care for others long before any job title appears. This is grassroots workforce development in its purest form.

For the wider music industry, all ages spaces are vital talent

pipelines and testing grounds. Breakthrough artists are often first spotted in these environments, not because they're polished, but because they're authentic. Industry professionals can see genuine audience response, creative risk-taking, and early artistic identity forming in real time.

Aotearoa's music future depends on these spaces. They are where young people first feel welcome, where communities gather, and where the next generation of artists, audiences, and industry workers take their first steps. Strengthening all ages spaces is investing in the long-term health, diversity, and sustainability of our entire music ecosystem.

If you control copyright in sound recordings you can register with Recorded Music NZ via recordedmusic.co.nz. Registering with us is free and allows us to include your sound recordings in our blanket licences, which means you can earn royalties and get paid.

In 2025 we launched the myRecordedMusic portal, which is the gateway to our new data and distribution system and the place where all of our rights holders must log in to ensure their recordings are registered and their information is up to date.

Before you get started, to register a recording with us you will always need to provide the following data about that recording:

- + **ISRC**
- + **Recording title**
- + **Artist name**
- + **(P) Date**
- + **(P) Name**
- + **Country of recording**
- + **Country of commissioning**

 [MY.RECORDEDMUSIC.CO.NZ](https://my.recordedmusic.co.nz)



RECORDED MUSIC NZ REPRESENTS RECORDING ARTISTS & RIGHTS HOLDERS IN AOTEAROA THROUGH LICENSING, ADVOCACY & PROMOTION

The myRecordedMusic portal provides:



Visibility of your account & contact information



Ability to search over 30 million recordings we hold in our Repertoire Database shared with PPL



Ability to register & manage your repertoire data including territorial rights (if you are a Rights Holder)



Ability to submit artist registrations against recordings held in our database (if you are an Artist)

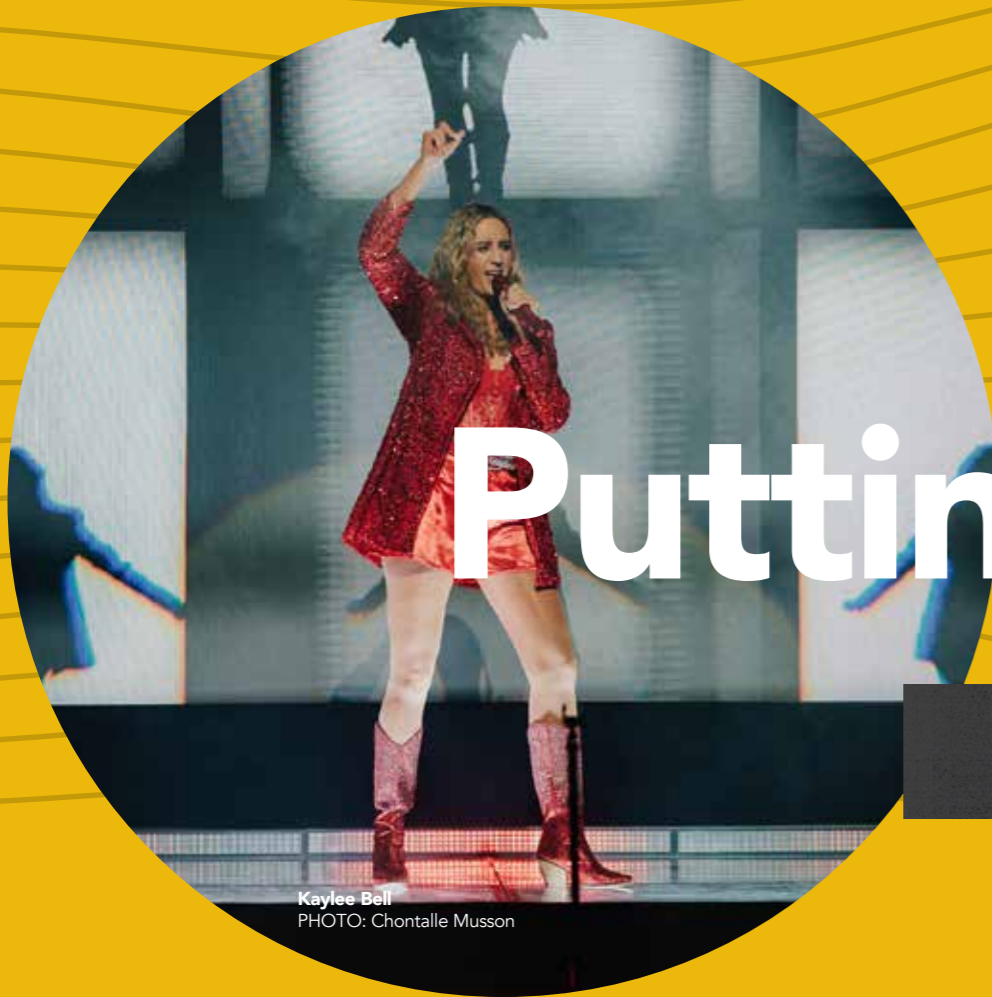


Visibility of your payments & statements



Ability to raise queries & changes





Kaylee Bell
PHOTO: Chontalle Musson



Dean Rodrigues
PHOTO: Taylor Vincent



Mitch James
PHOTO: Lucas Perelin

Putting on a Show

Practical tips for organising a gig

Performing live is one of the most rewarding parts of being a musician. There are many ways to put on a great show and in this article we'll go through some basics that can help you get started. You can find more tips for organising a show over on the 'Gig Starters' resource section of the NZ Music Commission's website.

Playing Local Venues

Local and independent music venues are the first port of call for putting on a show. The people that run these spaces will be very knowledgeable about the process of making gigs happen and can provide you with information and advice. It always pays to ask questions rather than make assumptions - especially when it comes to subjects like money, personnel and gear.

Your lead time matters when planning a gig. The earlier you can get in touch with a venue about booking a show, the

better for securing your ideal date. This is particularly pertinent if you are timing your show around a specific event like an album release.

For sound and technical gear, music venues are well equipped. Venues will often have an in-house sound engineer that you may be able to work with and some backline your band can use. Backline refers to equipment supplied by the venue/promoter. It may just be a bass amp and a drum kit (without cymbals or kick pedal), although sometimes guitar amps are available too. In advance of your show, you'll need to send the venue your tech rider. This outlines basic info about your sound requirements including what instruments and gear you will be bringing with you, as well as what you will need from the venue. You'll also need to send them a stage plot: a simple diagram showing the way your band sets up on stage.

When it comes to promoting your show, venues will likely have social media, mailing lists, or dedicated poster space where you can get the word out about your gig. Occasionally venues will work with a specific ticketing agency that you'll need to use for your show, while others will let you organise your own ticketing. When you are booking your gig, you should enquire about whose responsibility it is to organise a door person, and how selling merch works at their venue.

Using Shared Community Spaces

Council and community halls can also be great places to host gigs. These spaces often come with additional considerations compared to a dedicated music venue. Often you may have to organise your own backline, sound engineer, door person or security. You'll need to consider the venue's capacity, and any noise restrictions, licensing laws or other regulations your event will need to comply with.

One way to cut down costs when you're working in a space like this is to collaborate with the other bands on the bill. Share gear and duties, like taking turns running the door and merch desk while the other is performing. Sometimes it's worth spending some money to ensure you have a good night. Hiring security can be an easy way to take some pressure off you managing the crowd and help ensure your gig is a safe event.

Regardless of where your gig is happening, it's always important to think about where to store equipment and instruments before and after playing. Allocate a room or space where gear can be kept safe from damage or theft.

Bringing the Show Home

Putting on a show can be as simple as inviting friends and family over to your house to see you play. Even if you're taking

this approach, you'll want to consider what equipment you need to make your performance sound great. Depending on the style of music you are playing, and the location and size of your crowd, you'll probably need to source a PA (public-address system - i.e. a couple of speakers and a mixer that allows multiple instruments to be run through them) to properly amplify your sound. You can hire a PA from many places including from some local venues, libraries or private companies.

If you are putting on a show at home, consider who may be affected by the noise you're making. That might mean giving your neighbours a heads up about your show and providing them with a number to text/call should any problems arise.

It's good practice to get used to using a run-sheet when putting on shows. This can be a basic timeline of events that lets each person know when and where they have

to be to ensure that the gig runs smoothly. It's also useful to assign someone to make sure everyone follows the run-sheet to stay on time.

Key Things to Plan For

No matter what kind of gig you're organising, it's important to have clear conversations about money early in the process. Consider your budget, venue hire costs, and whether backline or a sound engineer is included or charged separately. Think about ticket pricing and how performers will be paid. Make sure all financial arrangements are confirmed in writing, including any guaranteed fees and deductions, so everyone's on the same page.

For more guidance on budgeting, band agreements, planning tools and other useful tips - visit the resources section on the NZ Music Commission website.



Amplifying the local beat: Sounds of Tāmaki Makaurau 1-31 May

This May, Auckland finds its rhythm like never before. Turning up the volume for NZ Music Month, Auckland Council is launching the inaugural Sounds of Tāmaki Makaurau - a vibrant programme dedicated to championing local musicians. With a primary focus on rangatahi and emerging artists, this initiative is designed to bring quality musical entertainment to every corner of the city.

The timing couldn't be more perfect. This year's NZ Music Month theme, "Our Sounds, Our Spaces," is the very heartbeat of the programme. Sounds of Tāmaki Makaurau focuses on promoting emerging talent and local community storytelling (Our Sounds) within the heart of our neighborhoods by utilising local community venues and arts facilities (Our Spaces).

The Central City Library serves as one example of this synergy. Throughout May, the library is transformed into a musical hub, showcasing an incredible breadth of talent and offering Aucklanders a front-row seat to the region's rising stars, alongside a brand-new exhibition showcasing the musical history of Tāmaki Makaurau.

A month of musical discovery

With more than 40 exciting events on offer, there is a wealth of free entertainment to explore:

Emerging artist showcases: Experience the star power of our youth at community venues like Te Oro and Studio One Toi Tū, featuring alumni from Stand Up Stand Out (SUSO) - a vital council initiative fostering songwriting and performance excellence in schools.

Ka Mua Ka Muri: Inspired by NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts, this captivating web series features performances and interviews with Auckland musicians and songwriters. Catch headliners like **Phoebe Rings, Mokomokai, Spell, SPDRTWNBYY** and SUSO alumnus **Cameron Beattie** live at Central City Library.

This Place Here: Led by **Swap Gomez** at Kōmanawa Theatre, this ensemble celebrates Auckland's multicultural identity, fusing migrant and indigenous voices into a unique soundscape.

Encore!: Revisit music history at the Central City Library with an exhibition honoring Auckland's most iconic live music venues and legendary concert moments.

Why this strikes a chord

As a recognised UNESCO City of Music, the scene in this region is as powerful as it is diverse. Sounds of Tāmaki Makaurau is a brilliant new chapter for Auckland, inviting everyone to discover a new favourite band or support a local legend.

Whether you are a music industry professional or a casual listener, May is the time to tap into the vibrant stories and sounds that Tāmaki Makaurau has to offer.

Visit: ourauckland.nz/sounds for more information.



FINDING OUR SPACES WITH MMF

AN ARTIST MANAGEMENT GUIDE TO BUILDING COMMUNITY

Hear key insights from **Cuillin Hearty** (Artist Manager - *There's a Tuesday* & *Sofia Machray*, Operations Manager - *Banished Music*) on how different spaces have shaped her journey, and the journeys of the artists she manages.

As much as I've been an avid music lover since my teen years in the UK, catching trains down to Manchester on school nights to see shows, it wasn't until my mid-20s, living in Queenstown, that I really stumbled into a career in the music industry.

It started at The World Bar and Yonder when I took a punt on a job that sounded cool. I threw myself into as many roles and events as I could; from running bar shifts to helping out with shows, setting up stages, working artist liaison, even just being around whenever something was happening. It was a bit of a crash course in seeing the industry from every angle.

That experience is probably why live music will always feel like the backbone of the industry to me. There's something really special about being in a room full of people having a great time, connecting through music and making memories together.



For the artists I manage, live spaces are where everything really comes to life. When I first started working with them, that was something I thought about a lot: where their music would live best, and what kinds of rooms would help them connect with audiences.

Independently touring around Aotearoa is one of the most formative experiences a band can have. When you're driving between towns together, loading gear in and out of venues, and figuring things out as you go, those experiences shape a group pretty quickly. You learn what works, what doesn't, and you learn it together.

Some shows go amazingly well, but there are always the ones that don't. Both are important.

Touring teaches bands resilience, and it also helps them figure out where their communities actually are. Not every city connects in the same way, and sometimes the places you least expect end up being the ones with the most enthusiastic audiences. As a manager, those early tours tell you a lot, not just about the music, but about how a band works together and where their audience is starting to form.

Over time, I've also realised how much venues and promoters shape audiences. There are promoters, like **Banished Music**, who have built such a strong reputation that audiences genuinely trust them. People will show up to a show simply because they know that if that promoter booked it, it's probably going to be good. Working with them has really helped grow my understanding of different spaces across the motu, different artists and where you might place them, and why. For artists, finding the right spaces for their music, the rooms where their community naturally gathers, can make all the difference.



Of course, not all music communities form in traditional venues.

Some of the most exciting spaces I've seen exist slightly outside the usual industry structures - village halls, pop-up shows in gardens, community events, and all-ages spaces where young people can experience live music for the first time.

All-ages opportunities are especially important. If we want future audiences to exist, we have to create spaces where younger people can actually participate in music culture, and for some artists, younger fans can be the most passionate and supportive.

DIY spaces remind you that music doesn't have to follow a strict formula. Some of the most meaningful moments happen when people simply create the environments they want to exist in.

If live spaces are where artists connect with audiences, studio spaces are often where they connect with each other. Spending time working at **Big Fan** showed me how important shared creative spaces can be. When artists are working around each other, writing, recording, collaborating, or even just hanging out between sessions, a really natural sense of community starts to form.

One of the best examples of this is **Fan Camp at Big Fan**. Watching artists come together to write songs in a single day is honestly pretty special. You'll see people meet for the first time in the morning, start throwing ideas around, and by the end of the day, there's a fully formed song that didn't exist a few hours earlier. Even more importantly, you see friendships forming in real time. I still see artists who met during those camps collaborating a year later. Those connections often end up being just as valuable as the songs themselves.

Although this is a creative industry, one of the things we still have to do is network, and one of the biggest things I've learned as a manager is that sometimes you just have to put yourself in the room, even if it feels a little uncomfortable. You never really know who you're going to meet, or what conversations might lead to something meaningful. Some of the most valuable relationships in this industry start in completely unexpected ways.

That's one of the reasons programmes like Elevate through **MMF Aotearoa** are so valuable.

Being part of **Elevate** gave me the chance to connect with other managers who were navigating similar challenges and experiences. It's easy to feel like you're figuring everything out on your own when you're managing artists or a self-managed artist, so having spaces where people can share knowledge, swap ideas, and support each other makes a huge difference. The more we build those kinds of professional communities, the stronger the wider music ecosystem becomes. And honestly, there's no time for gatekeeping in this industry. The best communities are the ones where people are open, generous, and genuinely excited to see each other succeed.



At the end of the day, the music industry is really just a collection of spaces - rooms where people gather because they care about music. Some of those rooms are venues. Some are studios. Some are professional communities. Some exist entirely online.

For artists and managers alike, finding the spaces where you feel inspired, supported, and connected can shape everything that follows. And sometimes the spaces that shape your career appear in places you never expected, all because you took a punt.

MUSIC MANAGERS FORUM • AOTEAROA •

To learn more about MMF Aotearoa go to mmf.co.nz

Congratulations to the Taite Music Prize 2026 Finalists



Jazmine Mary
Geneva AM



Mā
Dick Move



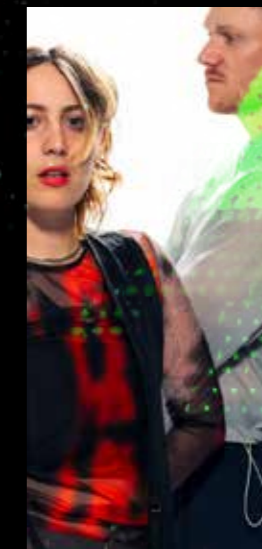
Tom Scott
Ringlets



Marlon Williams
Womb



Phoebe Rings
Reb Fountain



FROM THE PIT



FromThePit returns for its eighth year, continuing its mission to document the vibrant energy of Aotearoa's music scene.

More than just a collection of images, these photographs serve as an essential archive of our artists, our iconic venues (old and new), and the shared cultural history of New Zealand music.

We encourage all artists to collaborate with photographers to capture the "magic" of your music—not just for today's promotion, but for the legacy of your career.

A great photographer provides high-end visual storytelling that elevates your brand and preserves your energy forever.

With over 50 talented photographers featured in this year's exhibition, there is no shortage of local talent ready to collaborate.

For this year's exhibition, our archives and photographers contact details visit www.fromthepit.co.nz

Clockwise from top left: JessB by Irena Ekens, Club Ruby by Robin Wilkinson, Where's Jai by Azrie Azizi, CHAI! performance by Chris Zwaagdyk, V gina Dry by Juanita Rose Bielecki-Knox, Coast Arcade by Brad Miller.

The Mahi Behind The Music

The Glossary

Accountant

Accountants in the music industry manage the specialised needs of artists and music organisations and know how to handle unique income streams such as royalties, touring expenses and digital income.

A&R Director and Reps

An A&R (Artists and Repertoire) Director is a senior executive at a record label responsible for discovering new talent, signing artists, and overseeing the entire creative development of their music. They bridge the gap between artistic vision and commercial goals, guiding production and shaping the artist's brand. An A&R Rep is also known as a talent scout and assists with the administrative and logistical aspects of development.

Arranger

Arrangers help finish, rework, and adapt pre-existing compositions by altering elements such as instrumentation, orchestration, harmony, tempo, and genre. Arrangers work in a number of professional industries, including live music, musical theater, the record industry, and film and TV.

Artist Manager

An artist manager guides the professional careers of musicians or entertainers, handling business affairs, strategic planning, and career development. They are advocates, negotiating contracts with labels and promoters, shaping the artist's brand, and managing day-to-day operations to allow artists to focus on creative work.

Audio Engineer

Audio engineers are technical professionals who capture, edit, mix, and reproduce sound for music, film, television, and live events, focusing on both technical accuracy and artistic, creative enhancement. They work with microphones, mixing consoles, signal processors and software, with long, irregular hours in studios or at live venues.

Beat Maker

A beatmaker is a music creator who produces the instrumental backing track—rhythm, drum patterns, loops, and melodies—for songs, particularly in hip-hop, rap, and electronic music. Using digital audio workstations (DAWs) like FL Studio or Ableton, they focus on crafting the foundational musical vibe or "beat".

Composer

A composer is a person who creates original music by writing musical notation or arranging sounds, melodies, harmonies, and rhythms into a structured piece of music, especially as a professional occupation.

Data Analyst/Specialist

A Music Data Analyst/Specialist decodes streaming, sales, and audience behavior data to drive decisions for record labels, streaming platforms, and artists. They use SQL, Python, and data visualization tools to identify trends, optimise marketing strategies, and improve playlist placements.

Designer - merch, artwork, posters, website, screens

A designer specialising in merch, artwork, posters, websites, and screens is a multimedia graphic designer or creative designer who straddles physical and digital

media. They are versatile visual storytellers responsible for creating cohesive brand identities across print, apparel, and digital platforms. This role blends artistic skills with technical proficiency, creating engaging visuals that tell a story or deliver a specific message.

Distribution Manager

A music Distribution Manager (or Digital Distribution Manager) is a specialist responsible for getting an artist's or label's music onto streaming platforms (Apple Music, Amazon Music, Spotify etc.) and ensuring it is correctly managed, marketed, and monetised. They unite creators and Digital Service Providers (DSPs), handling metadata, technical logistics, and royalty collection.

DJ

DJs are curators who search for and select music to craft engaging sets for relevant live audiences and mixes for online platforms or releases.

Entertainment Lawyer

Entertainment lawyers provide specialised legal services for the music, film, television, and media industries, handling matters like contract negotiation, intellectual property rights, and licensing.

Event Manager

Event management involves planning, organising, and executing live music events; managing logistics, budgets, venue sourcing, vendor negotiation, and risk assessment to ensure a successful live music experience.

Festival Director

A Festival Director leads the planning, curation, and execution of arts, music, or cultural festivals. They manage budgets, staff, marketing, and vendor relations, often working to secure funding. This senior leadership role (typically 10+ years of experience) requires strong organisational skills, creativity, and resilience to ensure smooth, successful event delivery.

Festival Producer

A festival producer manages the end-to-end planning, logistics, and execution of events, coordinating everything from artist booking and technical production to budgeting, permitting, and on-site management. They ensure a safe, high-quality experience by handling artist riders, vendor management, staffing, and venue infrastructure.

FOH Engineer

A FOH (Front of House) Engineer is the audio technician responsible for mixing live sound for the audience during concerts, theater, or events. Positioned in the crowd, they operate the main mixing console to balance instruments, vocals, and effects in real-time, ensuring the audience hears a high-quality, consistent sound.

Funding Advisor

Funding advisors for the NZ music industry are primarily accessed through key funding bodies like NZ On Air, Te Māngai Pāho (TMP) and Creative New Zealand (CNZ), which all provide dedicated staff to assist with applications. Key roles include NZ On Air music funding advisors (i.e. for single/video grants), TMP are funding advisors for Māori music-related activities and CNZ Practice Advisers for creative development.

Instrument Technician

A music instrument technician specialises in servicing, maintaining, and repairing musical instruments, including brass, woodwind, stringed instruments, and electronic gear. They diagnose issues, perform repairs, and ensure optimal performance through skilled craftsmanship.

Licensing Administrator

A music licensing administrator manages the legal and administrative rights of musical works, ensuring artists are compensated by registering songs, tracking usage, and collecting royalties from music rights organisations, and digital platforms. They specialise in licensing compositions for use in media, covering mechanical, synchronisation, and performance rights, typically without retaining ownership.

Lighting Technician

A lighting technician designs, rigs, programs, and operates lighting systems for concerts, festivals, and live music venues to enhance performances. They work with moving lights, LED fixtures, and lighting consoles to create atmosphere, often collaborating with designers and artists.

Marketing Manager

A music marketing manager designs and implements strategies to promote artists, increase streaming, and drive ticket sales. They manage digital advertising, plan and execute campaigns, and act as a liaison between artists, labels, and fans to maximise visibility while minimising costs.

Mastering Engineer

A music mastering engineer looks after the final creative and technical step in audio production, preparing mixed tracks for release by ensuring sonic consistency, optimal loudness, and high-fidelity playback across all systems. They use tools like EQ, compression, and limiting to enhance, balance, and format albums for distribution.

Mātanga Reo (language support for waiata reo Māori)

Mātanga Reo are specialised language experts (consultants) in Aotearoa who work with musicians to ensure the correct use of te reo Māori, its context, and its pronunciation in waiata (songs). Their involvement is often a mandatory component of New Zealand music funding aimed at fostering a bilingual music industry and ensuring high-quality, authentic reo Māori content.

Mix Engineer

A mix engineer takes all the separate recorded parts (drums, bass, vocals, guitars, etc.) including vocals, instruments, and effects, and blends them together so everything sounds balanced, clear, and professional. They are crucial for the final track to have its desired effect.

Musician

A musician, as a career, is any professional who has the ability to compose, create or perform music, and chooses to do so as their profession.

The Glossary continues on page 26.

See over for "THE MAHI BEHIND THE MUSIC" poster designed by Harris Keenan.

The Glossary

Music Journalist

Music journalism can take many forms; concert and release reviews, reporting on music news, writing artist profiles, conducting interviews and curating lists and guides. Music journalists can work both freelance and in-house, generally reporting for magazines, television, radio, online journals and print publications.

Music Supervisor

A music supervisor is a qualified professional who oversees all music-related aspects of film, television, advertising, video games, and other visual media. They connect the creative and legal aspects of music, selecting or commissioning songs to fit a project's vision while negotiating licenses and managing budgets.

Music Teacher

A music teacher is an educator who instructs students in playing instruments, singing, reading music, and understanding musical theory, history, and composition. They foster creativity, technical skill, and confidence through lessons, ensemble direction, and performance preparation in schools, private studios, or community settings.

Music Therapist

Music therapists are credentialed healthcare professionals who use music-based interventions—such as playing instruments, singing, or listening to music—to achieve non-musical, clinical goals like improved communication, cognitive function, emotional expression, and physical rehabilitation. They work with individuals of all ages in settings like hospitals, schools, and care homes, tailoring sessions to enhance quality of life and support healing.

Music Tutor

A music tutor is a private instructor providing tailored, one-on-one vocal or instrument lessons to students. They teach skills ranging from beginner techniques to advanced repertoire, usually working in settings like private studios, student homes, or online.

Music Video Director

A music video director is the creative leader responsible for translating a song into a visual story, overseeing all artistic and technical aspects from concept to final edit. They collaborate with artists to define the visual style ensuring the final video aligns with the song's emotional tone and the artist's brand. Music video directors work alongside the videographer, or can sometimes take on both roles.

NZ Music Commission

The New Zealand Music Commission Te Reo Reka o Aotearoa is a government funded organisation that supports the growth of the New Zealand music industry – culturally, economically and globally through endeavours such as NZ Music Month, the Musicians Mentoring in Schools programme, Industry Internships and the international programme Outward Sound.

Pit Photographer

A pit photographer captures high-energy live music images from the restricted space between the stage and the audience. They typically operate under strict guidelines, such as the "first 3 songs no flash" rule, so it's all about learning how to get the best shot in the time given. Photos can then be shared for publications, social media and press releases.

Programme Director

This is the person in charge of on-air content at a radio station including playlisting (choosing the music), organising the DJ schedule and coordinating interviews and promotions. A Programme Director manages the overall on-air sound of a radio station.

Producer

A music producer is a creative and technical director for recording projects, spanning between an artist's vision and the final polished product. They oversee song arrangement, sound selection, and vocal performances while managing the recording process, similar to a "chef" or "ship captain" in the studio.

Promoter

A music promoter organises, markets, and produces live musical events, ranging from local club shows to major tours. They bear the financial risk, hiring artists, booking venues, and handling promotion to sell tickets. Their main role is to curate experiences and connect artists with audiences.

Publicist

Publicists manage public relations and create positive media attention through campaigns for their clients, which can be either artists, events, music companies or organisations. They provide advice and strategy for any media issues and build relationships with media outlets.

Publisher

A music publisher manages and monetises the songwriting copyright (lyrics and melody), distinct from the record label that owns the sound recording. They protect intellectual property, license music for film/TV (sync), and collect mechanical and performance royalties, taking a percentage of income in exchange for promotion and administrative services.

Radio Host

A radio host (or presenter/DJ) is a broadcast professional who hosts, produces, and presents content on radio, satellite, or internet platforms. They entertain and inform audiences by interviewing guests, curating music for their show and discussing current events. Key skills include excellent communication, audience awareness, and technical proficiency.

Record Label

Record labels can come in many shapes and sizes - they can be a self-releasing artist who is paying for and promoting their own recordings, a collective where people pool resources to pay for recordings and promote music releases, or a larger company that finds and develops new talent, funding the recording, promotion, marketing and distribution of music.

Record Store Staff

Sometimes called record store clerks, they are the frontline shop workers selling physical music like vinyl and cds – as well as cassettes, merchandise, music books and more. They are often passionate music enthusiasts who are knowledgeable about a wide range of genres. Their role involves tasks such as managing inventory, ordering new stock, and assisting customers with recommendations.

Rights Management Organisations

Music rights management involves administering and monetising the intellectual property of songwriters, composers, and recording artists through copyright registration, licensing, and royalty collection. They

ensure creators and rights holders are compensated when music is played or reproduced via publishing and master rights, with local organisations like APRA AMCOS and Recorded Music NZ.

Session Musician

A session musician is a versatile, highly proficient instrumentalist or vocalist hired on a project-by-project basis to record in studios or perform live, rather than being a permanent band member. They are fast learning, expert at sight-reading, and can adapt to various genres, often playing for artists, jingles, or soundtracks

Social Media Manager

A Social Media Manager works with the Artist Manager and Publicist on an artist's social media presence, building buzz around new releases, shows and other announcements by creating engaging and relevant content on social media.

Songwriter

A songwriter is a creative professional who composes the music, lyrics, or both for songs. They develop melodies, harmonies, and storylines, sometimes collaborating with other artists, producers, or lyricists.

Stage Tech

Stage tech refers to the technical personnel who set up and dismantle the backline for concerts and festivals. They will often be responsible for tuning instruments, assisting the artist on stage with microphones and leads, and are troubleshooters for technical issues during a performance.

Stage Manager

A stage manager oversees all backstage operations, technical cues, and logistics for concerts and festivals, acting as the central communicator between performers, artists, and technical crews. They ensure show continuity, manage stage layouts, and coordinate with technical crew.

Ticketing

Key responsibilities of most ticketing roles in the industry involve selling tickets, managing bookings, checking, and validating tickets at live concerts and festivals.

Tour Manager

A tour manager organises the logistics and administration for artists and bands, overseeing travel, accommodation, venue liaison and daily schedules to ensure smooth performances. They require strong problem-solving skills and the ability to manage intense, long-hour schedules.

Venue Manager

A Venue Manager oversees all operational aspects of a music venue, focusing on staff management, guest experience, and safety. They coordinate with artists, security, and staff to deliver seamless shows and maintain high operational standards, often in fast-paced environments.

Videographer

A videographer captures and produces video content including planning, directing, filming and editing. Videographers in the music industry usually work with artists to create music videos, film live shows and social media content.

Independent Music New Zealand



Who are you, and what are you to me?

What is IMNZ?

We are the New Zealand voice for independent record labels, self-releasing artists and distributors. IMNZ represents over 300 members. These artists, labels and distributors are producing the best music on the planet – from commercially successful artists to niche music genres.

How do I know if I can join IMNZ?

Any independent New Zealand-owned label, or a self-released band/musician, can join IMNZ. Just one recorded single released to the public can qualify you as a member.

What does IMNZ do?

We're pretty busy working to help independent New Zealand artists and labels in every way we can, including...

ADVOCATE Acting as Indie Music Advocates

IMNZ is involved in advocating the specific interests of its members in relationship to other organisations within the local music industry. We offer member support in national copyright, legislative and related issues; legal and business affairs guidance, materials and advice; information and contacts for running a label; and a range of other support to members on a daily basis.

EDUCATE

Going Global Music Summit

IMNZ produces a range of educational seminars for its members throughout the year, covering topics as diverse as

record contracts, accounting, music licensing and the digital landscape. Each September, the Going Global Music Summit provides an opportunity to meet with professional music business experts from around the world and gives artists the chance to showcase in front of our international speakers - visit www.goingglobal.co.nz to find out more.

Going Local Nationwide Series

Ever wanted to know more about the music industry – how it works, who to talk to, what you need, why things happen and where you should look for help? Going Local is a way for you to meet some established people already working in the music industry, who can offer advice and knowledge that will help to answer some of those questions above.

COLLABORATE International Connections

IMNZ are a proud member of The Worldwide Independent Music Industry Network (WIN), the umbrella organisation for independent label associations around the world. We attend international conferences and meetings to find out what's happening outside of NZ, then share that information locally with our members.

CELEBRATE The Taite Music Prize

The Taite Music Prize recognises outstanding creativity for one New Zealand album each year, regardless of genre, sales or record label. The winner of the 2025 Taite Music Prize was Mokotron for his album 'WAEREA'.

The Weekly Independent Charts and Newsletter

IMNZ produces the Independent Album, Singles and Airplay Charts, highlighting top sellers each week in an informative newsletter, including recent news from our member artists and labels.

THAT SOUNDS GREAT.

HOW CAN I JOIN?

Complete the membership application form online: www.indies.co.nz



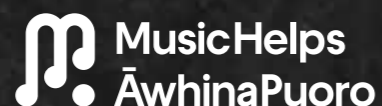
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NEW ZEALAND MUSIC T-SHIRT DAY FRIDAY 29 MAY

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Touring: send us an email
admin@musichelps.org.nz and
we'll arrange assistance for you

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NZ ON AIR MUSIC FUNDING

Irirangi Te Motu
NZ On Air



NZ On Air Music is here to ensure great New Zealand music is valued and enjoyed by local audiences wherever they may be listening. One of the ways we do this is by funding the creation of single songs, multi-song projects, video content, promotion and publicity, to help connect local songs with the audiences of Aotearoa New Zealand. This funding includes an Artist Creation Fee to make sure artists receive a fee for their work.

For more information on applying for funding, handy resources for artists or to sign up to our regular NZ On Air newsletters, you can head to [NZONAIR.GOV.TZ](https://www.nzonair.govt.nz)

NewMusic SINGLE

Funding of up to \$11,000 towards the recording of a single song, creation of video content, and promotion and publicity to increase the awareness of the song.

NewMusic PROJECT

Funding of up to \$55,000 for multi-song projects for artists who have the full support of an NZ-based experienced music company and a project manager.

NewMusic PROJECT TOURING

A fund by NZ On Air with support from NZ Music Commission, with funding of up to \$55,000 to assist with touring expenses for those who have received a New Music Project grant.

NewMusic PASIFIKA

Funding of up to \$11,000 for artists of Pacific background, towards the recording of a song, creation of video content, and promotion and publicity to increase the awareness of the song.

NewMusic PAN-ASIAN

Funding of up to \$11,000 for artists of Pan-Asian background, towards the recording of a song, creation of video content, and promotion and publicity to increase the awareness of the song.

Waiata Takitahi

A co-fund between NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho, with funding of up to \$15,000 for artists who are interested in recording and releasing a bilingual single with a minimum of 25% te reo Māori in the song lyrics.

NewMusic KIDS

Funding of up to \$11,000 is available for artists with a children's content focus, to go towards the recording of a song, creation of video content, and promotion and publicity to increase the awareness of the song.

NewMusic PROJECT KIDS

Funding of up to \$55,000 for multi-song children's music projects for artists who are self-managed with proof, or have the full support of an NZ-based experienced music company and project manager.

NewTracks

A monthly compilation of New Zealand music! NZ On Air's digitally distributed compilation that gets more local music featured on radio, streaming, broadcast and online media throughout Aotearoa.

BORDERLINE

New Music Project

Borderline had two top 10 NZ radio singles this year, with 'New Romance' and 'Tainted' also both named BBC Introducing's Track of the Week.



FAZERDAZE

New Music Single

Fazerdaze won Album of the Year at the 2025 Aotearoa Music Awards, with five songs charting on the Hot 20 Aotearoa Singles, plus earned global recognition through Spotify's RADAR and was named Rolling Stone's #1 NZ Album of 2024.



JUDI CRANSTON

New Music Kids

Judi Cranston marked a major milestone with her 158th children's song 'Can You Wave Goodbye', funded through New Music Kids, and won Best Children's Song (Preschool) at the 2024 Aotearoa Children's Music Awards.



JORDYN WITH A WHV

Waiata Takitahi

Jordyn won Best Pacific Music Album at the 2025 Pacific Music Awards, plus Best Female Artist at the Māori Music Awards and was winner of the 2024 APRA Maioha Award.



LOOPY TUNES PRESCHOOL MUSIC

New Music Project Kids

Loopy Tunes won Best Children's Music Artist at the 2025 Aotearoa Children's Music Awards and grew its YouTube presence to nearly seven million views.



KAYLEE BELL

New Music Project Touring

With our support, Kaylee Bell toured iconic theatres across Aotearoa, and cemented herself as a leading Australasian artist, with 21 weeks in the Official Top 20 Aotearoa Singles and Best Country Artist at the 2024 Aotearoa Music Awards.



YOGI

New Music Pan-Asian

Yogi's latest release gained over one million YouTube views in just two weeks and featured in the NZ Herald, highlighting the growing influence of Aotearoa's Punjabi community.



MVSHAAN

New Music Pasifika

Myshaan maintained 121+ weeks in the Official Top 20 Aotearoa Singles chart across three tracks and was nominated for Best Pacific Male Artist at the 2025 Pacific Music Awards.



HINA
PHOTO: Ebony Lamb

Working Well

Aotearoa artists Romi Wrights and HINA share their advice for looking after yourself while you're working on your music in the studio, at the gig, and on the road.

Romi Wrights
PHOTO: Danni Bishara

In The Studio

Being in the recording studio is hard work. It can be physically exhausting putting in long hours working on a track, and emotions can run high. When it comes to managing the potential stress and excitement of a recording experience, Romi Wrights believes that communication is key. "It's important to check in with yourself and let the other people in your band know how you're feeling. It's important to feel safe communicating with the people you are working with, so any issues don't become a bigger problem."

If you notice emotions beginning to rise, HINA suggests taking a beat. "Emotions come out, especially when I'm doing vocal takes, because the lyrics are so personal. It's important to notice when I'm feeling intense and to not judge myself for that. Instead, I allow myself to take a break."

HINA also suggests that doing some physical activity before a recording session helps alleviate stress. "For me, if my body is in a good space, then it's easier for my mind and spirit to also be well. I try to do yoga in the morning before we start, but I also wear comfortable clothing to the session." Alongside that, HINA suggests prepping healthy snacks before a recording day so that they are on hand for when people get hungry. "When we recorded the album, I got everyone Subway platters as well as fruit. I think it went down well."

Above all else, Romi believes that an attitude of gratitude can help keep the creativity flowing. "I find self-affirmation helpful. The mind sometimes plays tricks on you, and it's important to remind yourself how awesome it is to be in the studio making music."

At The Gig

To balance the adrenaline and nerves that come with a live performance, Romi takes a minute to breathe. "At my last big show, I was on the side of the stage, feeling really

nervous, and someone from the festival helped me take a few deep breaths to centre myself and bring me back into the moment. For me, music is about feelings, and it's hard to convey those feelings when you are wrapped up with thoughts in your head." Romi also suggests having a 'safe person' in your band who you can rely on if the feelings get too intense on stage. "What helps me is more than myself; it's my band. If you have that person in your band that you can trust, who knows what you're like, it can be helpful to look at them for comfort on stage."

HINA has found that not drinking alcohol at shows has helped her performance. "Drinking is so built into our culture with playing and gigging, so it feels kind of revolutionary to not do that. I tested out not drinking at shows, and I actually had a better time and a better day after the show."

Although both artists recommend limiting alcohol intake, they stress the importance of hydration, especially for vocal performance. For Romi, that means hydrating in the days leading up to a performance. "I make it a point to drink more water the week leading up to the gigs. I also drink honey and tea."

On the Road

Touring introduces a different rhythm to daily life, and staying well often means adapting to whatever the road throws your way. For HINA, balancing wellness on the road means being practical about what she'll have access to and adjusting her habits accordingly. "It's important to be realistic. I try to eat as well as I can, but sometimes that might just mean a sandwich from the BP instead of a pie."

On the road, Romi tries to get as much sleep as she can so she can perform her best. "We might arrive somewhere on a non-show day, and the question is 'what are we doing - should we go out?' I used

to always say yes, but I think I've got to that stage where I say, 'actually, guys, I need to rest'. It's hard when you get FOMO, but when you think about the actual reason you are there- your show- then it makes the decision a little easier."

For HINA, getting good sleep on tour requires setting yourself up for success. "I knew I had to come back to play an important showcase the day after a tour, so I prioritised my sleep during the tour. There was a running joke that I was sleeping better than anyone had ever slept in the history of touring. I had a lavender scented eye mask, earplugs, and noise-cancelling headphones."

Taking care during downtime

After the incredible high of a tour, it can be difficult to readjust to the change of pace. HINA believes it's necessary to acknowledge the negative emotions that can come up after a tour. "Accept how you are feeling; it's okay to be bummed out. It's important to find joy in the little things. I was really excited to come home and sleep in my own bed."

For Romi, the time in between exciting career moments can be a chance to take stock. "As artists, we're always hitting these milestones, and then it's straight on to what's next. It's important to have those moments in between shows to sit back and be grateful, enjoy it and reflect on things".

At any point if the feelings or emotions ever do feel too big to handle by yourself, Romi encourages making use of the community resources available to musicians. "In the past, when I was dealing with some grief, I was able to get counselling through MusicHelps. I would just say to people out there that there are resources available. They are there for a reason, and I will always encourage everyone to use them." You can find more information about MusicHelps at their website [MusicHelps.org.nz](https://www.musichelps.org.nz)



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Build a safer and more inclusive culture for the Aotearoa music community with us.

SOUNDCHECK AOTEAROA



Industry Internships Programme



Matika Sykes

Industry Internships Programme

Since 2018, the New Zealand Music Commission's Industry Internship Programme has partnered emerging music industry professionals with industry organisations across the length of Aotearoa. Through paid roles in music management, festivals, recording studios, licensing agencies, live performance venues and more, interns have received valuable mentorship, real-world experience, industry connections and upskilling opportunities. We caught up with two alumni from the 2026 Programme, Matika Sykes and Charlie Corkery, to hear about their experiences.

MATIKA SYKES

Accreditation Assistant with 212 Music Group, an expert event production and management company based in Christchurch.

New Zealand Music Commission: Kia ora Matika, tell us a bit about your internship with 212 Music Group!

Matika Sykes: As Accreditation Assistant, my job was to work on advancing for the vendors, staff members and performers at events including Electric Avenue music festival in Christchurch. In my opinion, accreditation is one of the most important roles at an event. You are often the first group people meet with when they arrive to work at the festival, so it's important that you give good customer service while also making sure people get the correct access to areas around the site. My role was essentially inviting, welcoming and ensuring people got to the places they needed to be on event day.

NZMC: That's awesome. What was your favorite experience in the role?

MS: Working at Electric Avenue was an absolute highlight. It's one of the biggest music festivals in the Southern Hemisphere now, so to be an intern for such an incredible event was just an absolute dream. I got to meet so many incredible people in the industry through the internship, and everyone was really generous with sharing their knowledge. It was great to work alongside such intelligent people.

NZMC: What opportunities or pathways do you think the internship experience has opened up for you?

MS: It's given me the confidence and knowledge to give this kind of work a go. I have a real appreciation for accreditation work now, it's definitely what I'd like to do long term. Also it's really opened my eyes to other parts of the industry and work that exists.

Industry Internships Programme



Charlie Corkery (right)

CHARLIE CORKERY

Festival Production Assistant at Splore, a long-running music festival based in Auckland which held its final event this summer.

NZMC: Hey Charlie, can you describe your internship role please?

Charlie Corkery: I was the Production Assistant at Splore, which basically meant helping across the communications and organisation of the festival.

My role touched on all parts of the festival really. I feel like I got a chance to work on all aspects of what goes into making Splore happen.

NZMC: What are some key things you learnt during your internship?

CC: I learnt so much about the importance of having a unit so used to collaborating alongside each other, and how that makes a really flexible and dynamic well-oiled machine. A lot of the events I work across currently are in the position Splore was in 20 years ago, so seeing it at the other end of the journey was really important as a young person in this industry.

NZMC: That's great. What do you think you'll take away from this internship experience?

CC: I feel as though I've got a more in-depth understanding of what goes into getting an event over the line. A lot of my mahi at the moment is within event accessibility for our wider disabled communities to participate in, and contribute to the music industry. Working across the board of Splore's operations has given me so much context to how different departments function, and what they require to contribute to great experiences for our community!

NZMC: That's great! Would you recommend the Industry Internships Programme to others looking to get into the industry?

CC: Yes, I completely would. It's shown me that this industry is a place where people can work and grow careers in. The events industry is a place filled with some incredibly talented individuals, working on some incredibly complex problems. I'm really grateful for what I've learnt this summer, and the whole Splore whānau - I can't recommend it enough!

Applications for the 2027 Industry Internship Programme will be launching later this year. Sign up to the New Zealand Music Commission's newsletter and keep an eye on our website and social media to stay up to date with news, application dates and events. If you have any questions you can email internships@nzmusic.org.nz



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Musicians Mentoring In Schools Programme

Uplifting the next generation of musicians in Aotearoa

Foley
PHOTO: Hannah Wareing

DARTZ
PHOTO: Max Corlett

Riiki Reid
PHOTO: Chontalle Musson

The New Zealand Music Commission's Music Mentors in Schools programme continues to deliver meaningful, curriculum-aligned musical learning across Aotearoa, supporting both student achievement and teacher development through artist-led engagement.

Between January and December 2025, the Musicians Mentoring in Schools Programme supported 76 schools. Totalling 643 hours of mentoring across Aotearoa.

A highlight event was the first-ever Matariki Wānanga. The three-day intensive songwriting and performance workshop brought together 82 students from 16 schools. Held at The Loft at Q Theatre, this event featured high-level mentoring by Troy Kingi, Aro, and Laughton Kora. Students participated in collaborative, culturally grounded learning experiences that built confidence, connection, and original songwriting skills. We are excited that the Matariki Wānanga will be returning in June 2026, with applications for schools now open.

It is evident from student feedback that the programme is delivering positive outcomes for student achievement, with one student saying that "Songwriting comes to me more naturally now... My confidence as a musician has developed." And another highlighting the positive effect the programme has had on their understanding of the music industry. " [Our mentor] gave us great advice about where to go moving forward & how to go about getting/making gigs for ourselves."

The New Zealand Music Commission would like to thank our mentors for their continued commitment to fostering the next generation of Kiwi musicians.

making your event accessible

Accessibility is the process of making sure that something can be understood and used independently and with dignity. However, for many tāngata whaikaha, whānau hauā, turi Māori, Pacific disabled people, Deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent folk, live music has not been accessible.

There are many things you can do to increase your accessibility and create a mana enhancing, equitable space and culture that welcomes and affirms everyone's right to enjoy music. Increasing your accessibility often involves making adjustments to your space, shifting attitudes and developing relationships with Deaf and disabled communities. It can be approached as a creative process and woven through all aspects of your venue or organisation so that accessibility becomes "just part of how you do things." Below are some tips to help you get started. They are drawn from Massey's forthcoming accessible venues guide, funded through Creative New Zealand with research support from Arts Access Aotearoa and the IMVA:

be honest and transparent about what you can accommodate

Don't over-promise but rather make clear what you can and can't do to help folks with access needs make informed decisions. Some patrons or performers may be disappointed, but this is better than folks arriving at your event/venue to find their access needs can't be met.

be generous with time

This could include an "early access" period in advance of the advertised "doors open" time to ensure whānau with access needs can safely enter the space and familiarise themselves with their surroundings, or accommodating longer soundchecks for performers.

use reflective tape on surfaces

In dark performance/gig environments, using reflective tape on surface edges such as the edge of the stage, the edge of the stairs and where floor surfaces change, helps everyone to navigate potential hazards.

provide different types of seating for both performers and patrons

You can make your space more accessible by including a variety of seating including stools, benches, seats with and without armrests, padded chairs, hard chairs and wheelchair spaces.

Notes from the Education Desk - Jessica Bailey



Albert Street
PHOTO: Ezra Ruka



Cassie Henderson
PHOTO: Livi Lloyd

Notes from the Education Desk

Finding Pathways, Building Confidence, and Backing Young Creatives

Every year I'm reminded that music education isn't just about teaching skills. It's about opening doors. When I visit schools or talk with teachers, I see the same spark again and again: young people who are hungry to create, to connect, and to understand how music might fit into their lives. My role at the New Zealand Music Commission gives me a front row seat to that journey, and it's a privilege I never take for granted.

What stands out most this year is how strongly students are asking for pathways. Not just inspiration, but real and practical steps.

- How do I start a band?
- How do I book a show?
- How do I get my music heard?
- What does a career in music even look like?

Gig Starters has become one of the most powerful answers to those questions. It is where confidence meets capability, where young people learn not only how to perform, but how to organise, promote, collaborate, and take ownership of their creative projects. Watching students realise that they can run their own gig, build their own audience, and shape their own scene is one of the most rewarding parts of this job. It is empowerment in real time.

What I see again and again is that when students put on their own shows, they are not only stepping into the industry. They are becoming lifelong supporters of local music. They are learning

how to participate in their communities, how to show up for others, and how to build the kind of grassroots culture that keeps New Zealand's creative identity strong.

Why Pathways Matter

When a student sees a clear next step, everything changes. Suddenly music isn't just something they do in class. It becomes something they can imagine themselves doing in the world. That shift is huge. It builds confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging. It also strengthens school communities, because when young people feel supported in their passions, they show up differently. They lead. They collaborate. They thrive. This year we have seen students who were once hesitant to speak in class take the stage with pride. We have seen groups who met through mentoring sessions go on to organise their first shows. We have seen teachers tell us that music has become the anchor keeping some students engaged in school. These stories are not small. They are the heart of why we do this work.

Looking Ahead

As we build out more resources, including dedicated guides on mentoring, booking shows, accessibility, and celebrating music in schools, I am excited about how these pieces will work together. My hope is that every student, no matter where they live or what their background is, can see a place for themselves in music. Whether they dream of performing, producing, teaching, organising, or simply finding community through creativity, there should be a pathway that feels open and achievable.



Arts Access Aotearoa provides a no-cost service with support and information to increase accessibility. Visit their website for more information and resources. Join the Arts For All Network and for Deaf and disabled musicians, join Taha Hotu.

<https://www.artsaccess.org.nz>
+64 04 802 4349



Welcome To The Family

Joshua Worthington-Church

A
♩ = 34
Repeat as many times as you like

B \flat F A \flat E \flat B \flat F C

B
mf
♩ = 140
Aah Aah Aah Aah

5
2. C

f
Aah
ly

9 C B \flat F C C
So wel - come to the fa - mi - ly

14 C G B \flat F F
We are the ones who'll help you see
We'll be your friends e - ter - na - lly

19 Em F F#dim Gm Dm
mf
No fear for you what's the worst that we can do so

23 E \flat B \flat B \flat F F C
Wel - come to the fa - mi -

C
25 C B \flat F F A \flat A \flat E \flat
f
-ly wel - come to the fa - mi -

29 E \flat B \flat F F C C B \flat
-ly wel - come to the fa - mi -

2

33 B \flat F A \flat A \flat E \flat E \flat B \flat
-ly wel - come to the fa - mi -

37 B \flat F C C B \flat B \flat F
-ly wel - come to the fa - mi -

41 F A \flat E \flat E \flat B \flat B \flat F
-ly wel - come to the fa - mi -

45 F C B \flat B \flat F F A \flat
-ly wel - come to the fa - mi -

49 A \flat E \flat B \flat B \flat F F C C
-ly wel - come to the fa - mi - ly

Half time feel and slightly slower

D
55 B \flat F C G E \flat B \flat
f
ly Nana nana nananana wearejust one big fa - mi -

60 B \flat F C G E \flat B \flat
ff
-ly Nana nana nananana wearejust one big fa - mi -

65 B \flat F C G
-ly Na na na na na na na we are just one big

69 rit. E \flat F C
fff
fa - mi - ly

OUTWARD SOUND

taking new zealand music to the world

WHAT IS OUTWARD SOUND?

Outward Sound has been set up to provide assistance for market development initiatives and to encourage the entry of New Zealand music and musicians into global markets. New Zealand music industry practitioners (artists, managers etc) and firms (record companies, associated businesses) can apply for assistance through the international music market development grants programme.

Outward Sound is implemented and managed by the New Zealand Music Commission. The programme is inclusive of music from all genres, styles and niches and applicants may target relevant markets around the world. Applicants at different stages of international market development can access the programme.

Detailed information including sample application forms, an overview of the scheme, a support document to assist in applying to Outward Sound, and the dates of funding rounds for 2026 are now available at www.nzmusic.org.nz by clicking on the International tab.

For general Outward Sound enquiries email international@nzmusic.org.nz

A SELECTION OF RECENT SUCCESSFUL OUTWARD SOUND APPLICANTS



Clockwise from left: Phoebe Rings, Stan Walker, Paige, DARTZ, Aaradhna, Ringlets, Dick Move, Corrella

OUTWARD SOUND

taking new zealand music to the world

OUTWARD SOUND APPLICATION DEADLINES 2026

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC MARKET DEVELOPMENT/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION DEADLINES

ROUND TWO 2026 - Deadline: March 2nd, 2026
Funding Decisions: April 14th, 2026

ROUND THREE 2026 - Deadline: May 11th, 2026
Funding Decisions: July 14th, 2026

ROUND FOUR 2026 - Deadline: July 27th, 2026
Funding Decisions: September 15th, 2026

ROUND FIVE 2026 - Deadline: October 12th, 2026
Funding Decisions: December 8th, 2026

ROUND ONE 2027 - Deadline: December 14th, 2026
Funding Decisions: February 9th, 2027

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATE APPLICATION DEADLINES

BIGSOUND | SEPTEMBER 1-4 2026 | BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA
Deadline: June 26th 2026
Funding Decisions: July 7th 2026

Applications must be received by 5:00pm on the closing dates (no exceptions) with the relevant application form and supporting documents.

Outward Sound
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Auckland 1142
Ph: +64 9 3760115

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www.nzmusic.org.nz

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