

**EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL**

ANNUAL REVIEW 2025

MUSIC THEATRE OPERA DANCE MUSIC THEATRE OPERA DANCE

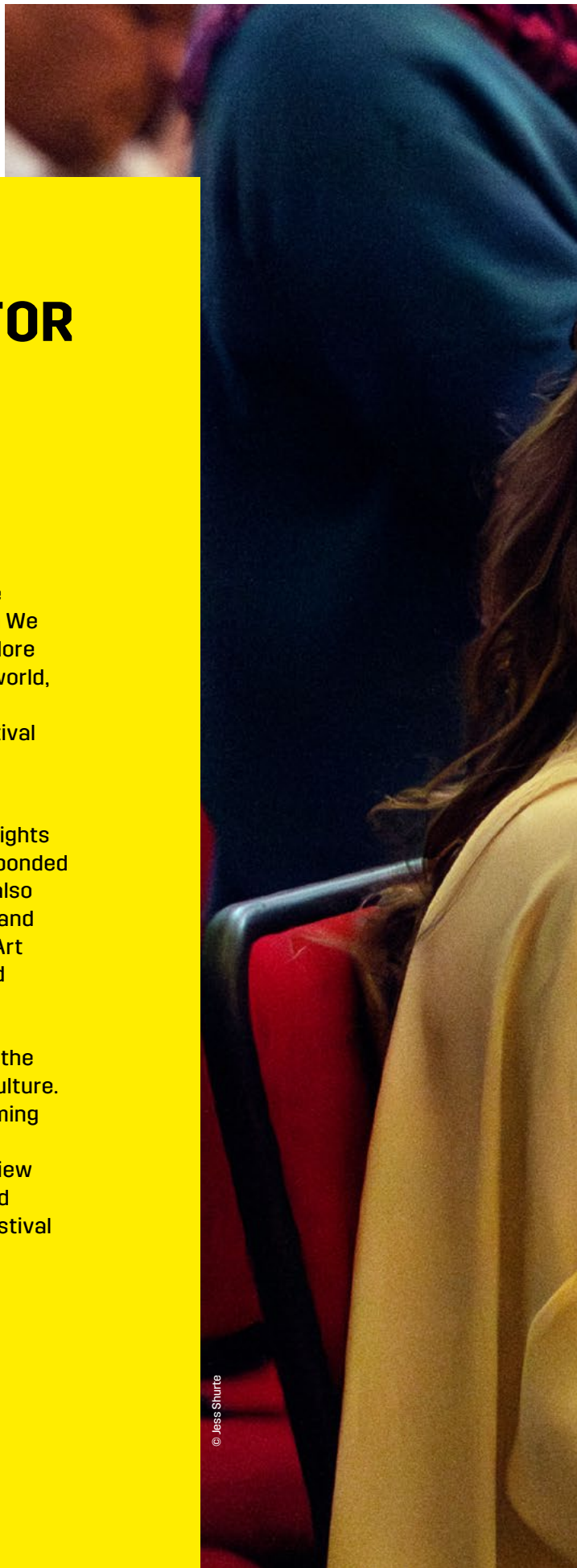
WELCOME

FROM FESTIVAL DIRECTOR NICOLA BENEDETTI AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE FRANCESCA HEGYI

As we reflect on 2025, we are reminded of what makes the Edinburgh International Festival truly distinctive. The Truth We Seek, our 2025 theme, offered a lens through which to explore humanity's search for meaning in an increasingly divisive world, prompting dialogue across cultural, academic and political thought. The principle of reconciliation has guided the Festival since our founding in 1947, in the belief that the arts can transcend division and inspire understanding.

Inside this Annual Review, you will discover curatorial highlights from our 2025 programme and explore how audiences responded to a handpicked showcase of world-class artists. You will also read about the evolution of our flagship youth, community and access initiatives, from the landmark 25th anniversary of Art of Listening, to powerful performances in NHS settings and the creation of the Youth Collective, which is driven by our commitment to young people's right to be heard. We share insights into our industry and international work, including the Focus on Poland series celebrating Polish repertoire and culture. Sustainability is another key focus, with the Festival becoming the first UK arts organisation to achieve British Standards Institution's Net Zero Pathway verification. Finally, the Review examines financial resilience, from ticketing successes and increased public funding to ongoing efforts to make the Festival accessible and affordable for all.

The International Festival is a shared endeavour: none of this would be possible without the dedication of our artists, staff, volunteers, partners and supporters. We thank everyone who contributes their time, creativity and belief in the Festival's ongoing commitment to discovery, internationalism and connection.





WE ARE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

OUR ORIGIN STORY

The original festival. We're the one that started it all, the igniting spark which established Edinburgh as the world's Festival City. Founded in 1947, the International Festival was the inspired idea of Rudolf Bing, a cultural pioneer and Jewish refugee of the Nazi regime. He joined with civic and artistic leaders to create an event that would transcend political boundaries through a global celebration of performing arts in Scotland's beloved capital city. Over the following 78 years the International Festival has flourished, deepening our commitment to artistic excellence and cultural curiosity. Meanwhile, sister festivals have grown up around us, each of them contributing to the atmosphere of unparalleled excitement that transforms the city every summer.

OUR FESTIVAL

We welcome the world to Edinburgh to experience our hand-picked programme of the finest performers and practitioners in opera, theatre, dance and music. Through their artistry we create space for reflection and reconciliation, debate and celebration, bringing people of different cultures and viewpoints together.

OUR IMPACT

Shining far beyond what you see on stage, we aim to be a beacon for the enormous creativity, curiosity and potential held within individuals, communities and our nation. We offer year-round pathways for people of all ages and backgrounds to discover and participate in live performance, and to help shape the future of our Festival. By nurturing the next generation of artists – from inspiring primary schoolchildren to mentoring rising stars – we want this legacy to be felt for years to come.





OUR MISSION

We exist to promote the exchange of ideas and deepen understanding between cultures through a global celebration of exceptional performing arts.

OUR VISION

To provide the deepest experience of the highest quality art for the broadest possible audience.

OUR VALUES

Discovery, Internationalism, Connection.

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

Present an artistic programme of the highest excellence, that connects people and cultures from around the world.

Reimagine a distinctive audience experience with broad appeal that results in a deeper culture of listening and understanding.

Demonstrate our global leadership and contribute to the civic and cultural life of Scotland and the UK.

Put the Festival on a sustainable financial footing.

Offer a welcoming and inclusive culture where people feel supported and enriched by working for and with the Festival.

THE 2025 FESTIVAL

Through the lens of this year's theme, *The Truth We Seek*, the programme explored humanity's ongoing search for truth through art that confronts fact, faith and fiction. Across the summer, world-class artists shared contemporary reflections alongside time-honoured tales, inviting audiences to question, respond and connect.

This year's Festival brought together more than 2,000 artists and participants from 42 countries, with audiences from 91 nations gathering in Edinburgh. This included a rich mix of premieres, commissions and co-productions, with all five Scottish national performing companies represented. The programme featured celebrated artists from across genres including Omar Rajeh, given the title of Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture, to Danish Arts Foundation Award-winning choreographer Kim Brandstrup, Grammy Award-winning countertenor Iestyn Davies, and Emily D'Angelo, the first singer to ever win the Leonard Bernstein Award.

Premieres, Commissions and Co-productions

- 8** World Premieres
- 2** European Premieres
- 4** UK Premieres
- 3** Scottish Premieres
- 3** Commissions/Co-productions





Vital, often times confronting, conversations unfolded this year, spanning cultural, academic and political thought. We continued the success of the Keynote Talk series from 2024, facilitating thought-provoking dialogue that grappled with *The Truth We Seek*, ranging from racial justice and democracy to the boundaries of academic freedom. In the theatre programme, *As You Like It: A Radical Retelling* and *Cutting the Tightrope* sparked dialogue about the responsibility of the arts in society. Across the theatre and dance programme there were 9 post show talks for audiences to hear directly from the artists.

Through this year's annual review, you'll see how the 2025 Festival programme brings the highest level of artistic excellence to life in myriad ways



MUSIC

John Tavener's monumental *The Veil of the Temple* – performed only once before in the UK – amplified the power of the Edinburgh Festival Chorus in its 60th anniversary year. The 160-volunteer chorus joined in vocal communion with the Monteverdi Choir and the National Youth Choir of Scotland to perform the eight-hour choral work. This once-in-a-lifetime event was enriched by an audience experience that emphasised the deeply personal ways to engage with this durational feat.

OPERA

The Festival's revival of *Orpheus and Eurydice* filled the Playhouse for three sold-out nights. An Australian and Scottish collaboration, this European production premiere broke fresh ground, drawing new audiences to the drama and spectacle of opera through its fusion with circus.

THEATRE

The world premiere of *Make It Happen*, co-produced by the International Festival, National Theatre of Scotland and Dundee Rep Theatre, brought Brian Cox back to the Scottish stage for the first time in a decade. Penned by the Olivier Award-winning writer James Graham, *Make It Happen* achieved huge critical and popular success, with over 22,000 people attending, 41% of which were brand new to the International Festival. Alongside this biting satire, we programmed two panel discussions that dug deep into the topics of financial trust, transparency and security.

DANCE

Figures in Extinction demonstrated the scale and ambition of dance at the Festival. Created by visionary choreographer Crystal Pite and Complicité Artistic Director Simon McBurney for Nederlands Dans Theater, it tackled the urgency of climate change and humanity's addiction to technology at the expense of emotional connection.

'I'VE SEEN THIS YEAR HOW ART CAN BUILD BRIDGES,
CHANGE MINDS AND FIND CONNECTION IN A WORLD
THAT SO DESPERATELY NEEDS IT.'

NICOLA BENEDETTI

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

The International Festival continues to place audiences at the heart of everything we do. This year, we offered practical and editorial information about events in a more inclusive way than ever before.

'THE FREESHEETS YOU CAN PICK UP AT THE VENUES ARE A VERY EGALITARIAN INNOVATION... NOW I HAVE THE KEY INFORMATION TO HAND AND A LINK FOR THOSE DEEPER DIVES'

AUDIENCE MEMBER

Our shift towards free resources has transformed how audiences access knowledge. By focusing on freesheets, online essays, surtitles and our audio series The Warm Up, we now share behind-the-scenes highlights and expert insight about the performances with the full audience, removing financial barriers to access. For large-scale staged opera, souvenir programmes remain – offering a keepsake – while the essential information is still available to all, ensuring no one misses out.

'I REALLY ENJOYED THE WARM UP MINI PODCASTS – THEY WERE A GREAT WAY TO MENTALLY PREPARE FOR THE SHOW AND HAVE A BIT OF CONTEXT'

AUDIENCE MEMBER





Over 111,000
attendances from **91**
countries



96% of survey respondents
rated the whole experience
good or very good

90% OF AUDIENCE AGREED THEY HAD THE INFORMATION NEEDED TO HAVE THE BEST EXPERIENCE



46 Freesheets – offering
free essential information
and insights



39 Episodes of The Warm
Up – introducing audiences
to performances, with over
29,000 listens



15 Web essays – offering a
deeper dive into productions



9 post-show talks
2 keynote talks



37 Surtitle concerts –
guiding audiences through
the repertoire

Press response has been affirming, with the Festival generating high critical acclaim and the highest volume of media coverage to date – nearly 8,300 pieces of coverage reaching readers in 82 countries. This marked increase was supported by an early announcement of the Festival's theme and select programming in November 2024. Our audience focus was also reflected online, with a 35% increase in social media engagement from 2024.

**'NOBODY SHOULD BE IN ANY DOUBT
THAT THE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL (EIF) IS THE JEWEL IN
SCOTLAND'S CULTURAL CROWN.'**

THE HERALD

822 new audience members signed up for our free Access Pass, bringing total membership to a new high of over 2,000. Through the Access Pass, audience members can inform us of their access requirements, which improves their booking process and means we can provide the most relevant information.

Our commitment to accessibility ensured that D/deaf disabled and neurodiverse audiences were included across the programme, with 34 accessible performances.

As well as our usual provisions of audio described, captioned and relaxed performances, we also presented our first dementia friendly concert with Scottish Chamber Orchestra and our second-ever British Sign Language interpreted concert.

**'WELL DONE TO EIF FOR ATTENTION
TO RESPONDING TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND
PROMOTING INCLUSION.'**

AUDIENCE MEMBER



8,299 pieces of media coverage, an **28%** increase on 2024



6m impressions across our social media with a **35%** increase in engagements



822 new Access Pass members – bringing the total to **2,081** members

YOUTH CONNECTIONS

25 YEARS OF ART OF LISTENING

2025 marked a milestone anniversary for our flagship education programme, Art of Listening, as we celebrated 25 years of bringing live music and opera to primary schoolchildren across the city. In this time, Art of Listening has introduced a generation of Edinburgh schoolchildren to the transformative power of classical music, reaching more than 23,000 pupils across every ward in Edinburgh.

The programme has transformed from modest beginnings into one of Edinburgh's most extensive cultural education offerings. Participation has grown from just 100 pupils in 2000 to a record-breaking 3,134 pupils in 2025.

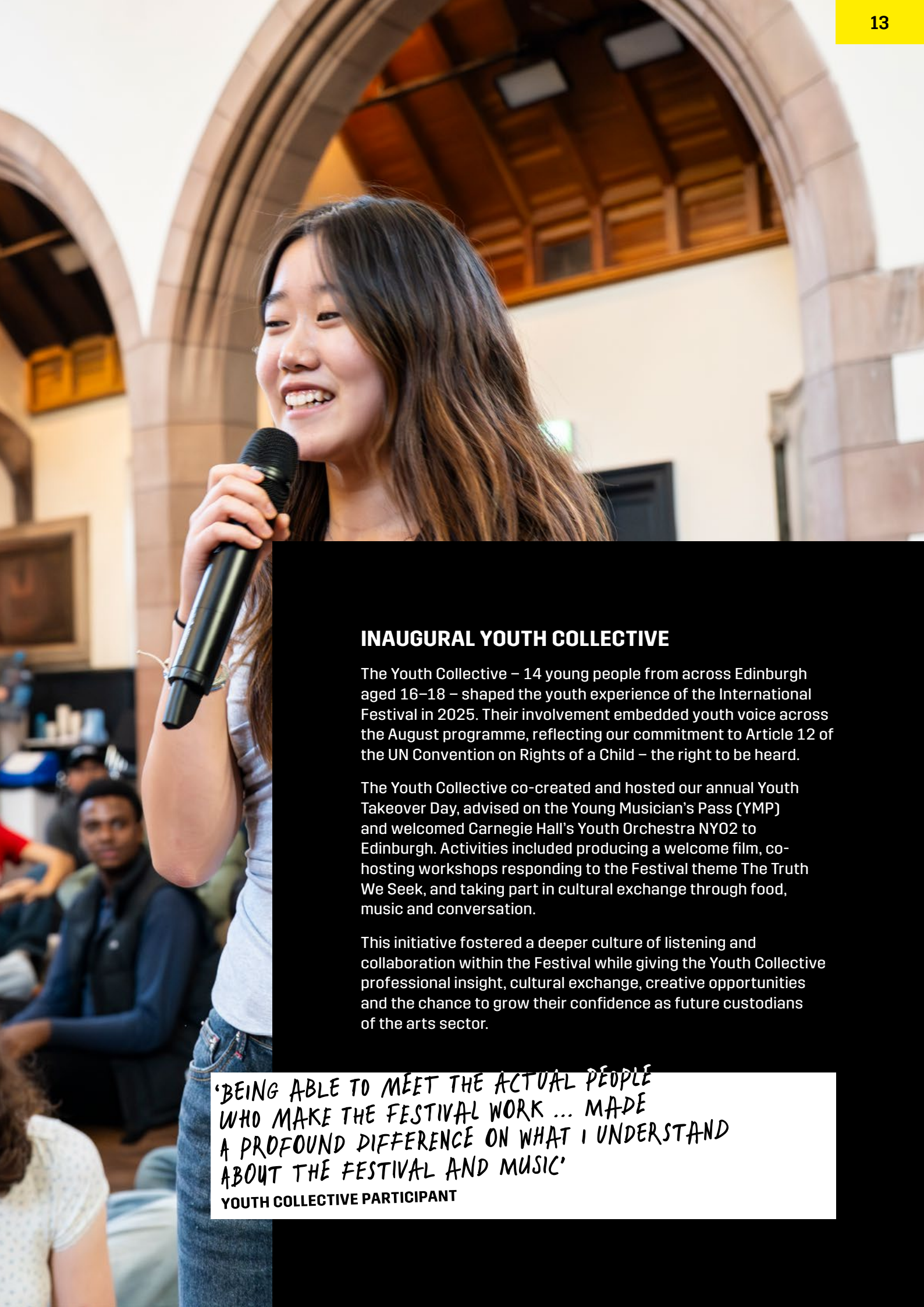
Art of Listening for Families made its public debut in 2025 as part of our Festival programme. These interactive workshops are designed for children aged 7–11 and their accompanying adults, offering an opportunity to discover the joy of active listening together. The participant response was overwhelmingly positive, achieving an outstanding satisfaction rating of 4.8 out of 5 stars.

'IT IS INFORMATIVE, INTERACTIVE AND ENGAGING. THE FACT THAT IT'S ALSO FREE MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE WHEN ALL SCHOOLS ARE FEELING THE PINCH OF BUDGET CUTS.'

TEACHER, ART OF LISTENING 2024/25

13,000 Youth Connections Engagements across the year including:

- 2,151** engagements with secondary school pupils through our Discover Series
- 3,134** primary school pupils participated in the Art of Listening over **126** sessions
- 243** tickets issued for our Art of Listening for Families Workshop
- 14** Youth Collective Members
- 592** young people received **2,653** tickets through the Young Musician's Pass



INAUGURAL YOUTH COLLECTIVE

The Youth Collective – 14 young people from across Edinburgh aged 16–18 – shaped the youth experience of the International Festival in 2025. Their involvement embedded youth voice across the August programme, reflecting our commitment to Article 12 of the UN Convention on Rights of a Child – the right to be heard.

The Youth Collective co-created and hosted our annual Youth Takeover Day, advised on the Young Musician's Pass (YMP) and welcomed Carnegie Hall's Youth Orchestra NYO2 to Edinburgh. Activities included producing a welcome film, co-hosting workshops responding to the Festival theme The Truth We Seek, and taking part in cultural exchange through food, music and conversation.

This initiative fostered a deeper culture of listening and collaboration within the Festival while giving the Youth Collective professional insight, cultural exchange, creative opportunities and the chance to grow their confidence as future custodians of the arts sector.

'BEING ABLE TO MEET THE ACTUAL PEOPLE WHO MAKE THE FESTIVAL WORK ... MADE A PROFOUND DIFFERENCE ON WHAT I UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE FESTIVAL AND MUSIC'

YOUTH COLLECTIVE PARTICIPANT

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS HUB

Our Community Connections collaboration with Space @ The Broomhouse Hub was established in 2024. Through this partnership we aim to co-create activities, embedding community voice and interest. In 2025, we developed a creative music programme tailored to address social isolation. Taking inspiration from the London Symphony Orchestra's (LSO) Festival repertoire, we created a series of workshops where participants wrote lyrics, composed music, created visual scores and explored percussion. In August, LSO musicians joined the workshops, with the collaboration culminating in a sharing event for friends, families, and staff to experience music from the LSO alongside the community's creative work.

*'THAT WAS WONDERFUL -
YOU'VE MADE MY DAY'*
COMMUNITY MEMBER AT LSO WORKSHOP



LSO Workshop at our Community Connections Hub © Jess Shurre

WELLBEING ONTO WORK

As part of our Skills & Training focus with Space @ The Broomhouse Hub, we collaborated with their Wellbeing Onto Work (WOW) Programme, to deliver an 8-week course for 16–24-year-olds currently out of education or employment. WOW aims to create an inclusive space for neurodiverse young people and those experiencing barriers to entering the world of work. The course focused on customer service roles within the International Festival, with young people meeting staff, taking part in creative workshops and backstage tours, and ultimately gaining paid work experience in front-of-house roles.

'I NOTICED THE GROUP'S CONFIDENCE, DEDICATION, AND INTEREST GROW OVER TIME.'

WILL HALL, YOUTH PARTICIPATION WORKER

12,000 Community Connections Engagements across the year including:

- 31** sessions delivered across **5** NHS Lothian Hospitals for **1,724** patients, staff, families and volunteers
- 759** tickets issued to NHS workers through the Tickets for Good partnership
- 675** local engagements at our Community Connections Hub
- 17** Wellbeing Onto Work participants with **75%** of participants felt more confident and ready to try new things after the course
- 141** people attended Culture Clubs, with participants rating the overall experience of community meal plus performance, **4.6** out of **5** stars

MUSIC WITH MEANING

NHS FESTIVAL SESSIONS

Delivered in association with NHS Lothian Charity: Tonic Arts, NHS Festival Sessions bring world-class International Festival artists into hospital settings, creating joyful moments of musical connection for patients, families, staff and volunteers.

Throughout 2025, International Festival artists performed in 31 NHS Festival Sessions at five hospitals. Artists from Poland's NFM Leopoldinum Orchestra joined one as part of their Festival residency, which strengthens connections between visiting ensembles and Edinburgh's communities. Our Rising Stars also performed, gaining valuable experience in community engagement. The series further celebrated musical diversity, featuring Scottish folk from Kinnaris Q, traditional Celtic sounds from Aoife Ní Bhriain and Catrin Finch, and a lively West African drumming and dance workshop with The Sidiki Dembele Ensemble.

*'WE HAVE HAD A REALLY STRESSFUL MORNING,
JUST FEEL SO MUCH BETTER NOW AND MUCH
MORE RELAXED TO GO BACK TO WORK.'*

STAFF MEMBER, ST JOHN'S HOSPITAL

*'WELL WORTH COMING DOWN TO THE CAFE FROM
THE WARD ... I'VE GOT A WARM GLOW INSIDE.'*

PATIENT, WESTERN GENERAL HOSPITAL



Come and Sing Ellijah © Tommy Ge-Ken Wan



THE JOY OF SINGING

Since the inception of the Edinburgh Festival Chorus 60 years ago, thousands of singers from across Scotland have performed with exceptional artists, formed friendships and experienced the health benefits of singing together.

Inspired by our Chorus, we invited audience members to join in with two free participation events, ranging from contemporary tunes to an epic choral work. Launching the Festival season, we hosted *The Big Singalong* in Princes Street Gardens. The concert united 279 members of Scottish community choirs with national treasure Dougie MacLean and audience participation from the 1,500-strong crowd.

Leading up to our Closing Concert, we also invited our audiences to *Come and Sing Elijah*. Reaping the benefits of communal singing, 749 people assembled to learn and sing Felix Mendelssohn's work, before performing it with the Edinburgh Festival Chorus and Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

'THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THIS
OPPORTUNITY TO...BE PART OF YOUR
WONDERFUL COMMUNITY'

COME AND SING ELIJAH PARTICIPANT

INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS

RISING STARS

Rising Stars identifies and nurtures the next generation of music artists, providing a vital platform to showcase emerging talent on some of the world's most prestigious stages. Since 2023, the programme has supported 44 emerging artists through mentorship, network-building and performance opportunities across the disciplines of strings, woodwind, brass, piano and voice.

We presented 24 emerging artists in our 2025 Rising Stars programme, including five original Rising Stars of Strings who returned for their third and final year. The original cohort first performed at The Hub in 2023 and progressed to the Usher Hall in 2025, joining violin luminaries Nicola Benedetti and Alexander Sitkovetsky along with NFM Leopoldinum Orchestra in a poignant tribute to Yehudi Menuhin.

7,668 attendees caught a glimpse of the future of classical music with six performances featuring Rising Stars in 2025. Alongside the public performances, the Rising Stars actively contributed to three community engagement initiatives, developing essential communication skills while extending the International Festival's reach into diverse community settings.

'RISING STARS IS A PIVOTAL STEP IN MY DEVELOPMENT: IT OFFERED INVALUABLE EXPOSURE AND PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE ON MAJOR STAGES WITH MY MUSIC HEROES.'

WANSHU QIU, RISING STARS OF STRINGS (2023-25)



EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

In our commitment to sharing insight and thought leadership, our staff took part in a wide range of international conferences. We shared our expertise on arts marketing, ticketing, governance and programming with other leading industry professionals. Celebrating 25 years of Art of Listening, Caroline Donald, Head of Discovery & Participation, spoke about the music education project at Nottingham's Music Mark conference while Chief Executive Francesca Hegyi addressed the Governance Now 2025 panel in her opening keynote State of the Nation – Perspectives from the Sector.

INTERNATIONALISM

The Festival is a major moment in both the international performing arts and international relations calendars. The internationalism on our global stages in August enables us to contribute to cultural diplomacy off-stage. In 2025, we welcomed a number of international delegations including ministers, ambassadors, city leaders and other international festivals.

The Festival also provides a backdrop for discussion to take place at the local and national level. This year we hosted roundtable meetings on behalf of Creative Scotland and the UK Government, convening representatives from across Scotland to take part in important conversations regarding the future of our sector, against the backdrop of the Festival's international programme.

'IN A WORLD WHERE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS ARE BEING TESTED, IT IS CRITICAL TO SHOW THAT SCOTLAND IS A WELCOMING PLACE THAT ENCOURAGES THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS.'
FRANCESCA HEGYI

Members of the International Festival team contribute their time and expertise to other organisations and participate in other events throughout the year to support the wider cultural ecosystem. Chief Executive Francesca Hegyi was appointed to the UK Government's Soft Power Council which focuses on developing strategies to strengthen the UK's international influence. A strategy will be published in 2026 and the International Festival is well placed to be recognised as a key moment in the year.



EUROPEAN FESTIVALS ASSOCIATION

The International Festival is a member of the European Festivals Association (EFA) and this year we hosted its annual Arts Summit in The Hub in April. The four-day event was organised and delivered in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council and Festivals Edinburgh and brought together 215 cultural leaders from 44 countries to learn more about Edinburgh and its reputation as The Festival City. The Arts Summit is the culmination of EFA's year-round efforts to foster cross-border dialogue among festivals.

'THE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY HOST..... THE EVENT WAS MEANINGFUL, ELEGANT AND FUN. IT WAS REALLY NICE THAT YOU COULD LITERALLY SEE THE SATISFACTION AND JOY ON THE SHINING FACES OF THE PARTICIPANTS'

ARTS SUMMIT DELEGATE

FOCUS ON POLAND

In celebration of the UK/Poland Season 2025, our Focus on Poland strand highlighted the extraordinary richness of Polish artistry, showcased by 65 artists across seven concerts and two community events. With Polish performers and repertoire appearing across all our major music venues, from the intimacy of The Hub to the grandeur of the Usher Hall, a significant proportion of our audience has been introduced to the huge cultural contribution of the nation. Focus on Poland was supported by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage Republic of Poland, alongside Adam Mickiewicz Institute and Polish Cultural Institute London.

SUSTAINABILITY



BSI NET ZERO PATHWAY

This year, the International Festival became the first charity and the first arts organisation in the UK to achieve British Standards Institution's (BSI) Net Zero Pathway verification. Operational progress includes:

- 56% reduction in electricity and 26% in gas emissions at The Hub since 2018
- 40% reduction in general waste through sustainable concessions at The Hub since 2023
- 58% reduction in printed paper since 2023, with a switch to freesheets and leaner print runs

We have increased the transparency of our work across our communication channels. This has included providing updates on our website and in our printed materials and speaking at events to share our knowledge with the sector.

We also minimised travel within our programme by using innovative approaches such as local set building and utilisation of Scottish orchestras alongside international talent.

SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE

In February 2025, we hosted Sustainability in Practice, an industry-leading event at The Hub. Pioneered by the Sustainability Working Group, the event supported the wider arts sector to minimise its environmental impact. An expert panel of speakers representing Askonas Holt, National Theatre of Scotland and the Scottish Classical Sustainability Group discussed sustainable touring and sector-wide resources to empower action.

'IT WAS GREAT TO SEE SUCH AN IMPORTANT ARTS ORGANISATION TAKING ON THE TOPIC WITH SO MUCH KNOWLEDGE, ENTHUSIASM, A HISTORY OF DOING GREAT WORK, AND PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTNERS TO CONTRIBUTE.'
BEN TWIST, DIRECTOR, CULTURE FOR CLIMATE SCOTLAND



ON STAGE

Nederlands Dans Theater and Complicité's latest work tackled the climate crisis head on. Their dancers poignantly embodied extinct animals and dramatised the complex discourse around the global climate emergency. In *Works and Days*, Belgian company FC Bergman took a more abstract approach. Through explosive stagecraft, they questioned our contemporary disconnection from the land and the food we eat. Taking an historical angle, South Africa's Handspring Puppet Company's *Faustus in Africa!* explored the devastating impacts of colonialism on people and land.

'A BEAUTIFUL, SENSITIVE, EMOTIONAL AND DEEPLY TROUBLING LOOK AT THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE'

THE SCOTSMAN ON FIGURES IN EXTINCTION

RESIDENCY MODEL

Our residency model continued to play a vital role in 2025, bringing world-leading orchestras to Edinburgh for extended stays that combine performance with meaningful community engagement. This approach deepens the audience's relationship with each orchestra while also reducing the environmental impact of international touring.

- London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) – Making their first International Festival appearance under the leadership of new Chief Conductor Sir Antonio Pappano, the LSO's residency featured three major concerts, including opera in concert, Puccini's *Suor Angelica*. The LSO also took part in community workshops in Broomhouse aimed at tackling social isolation.
- Carnegie Hall's NYO2 – In their European debut, this trailblazing youth orchestra performed two concerts, including taking on our popular *Family Concert*, an interactive introduction to classical music for children and their grown-ups.
- NFM Leopoldinum Orchestra – The resident orchestra of the National Forum of Music, Wrocław, appeared as the flagship ensemble of our Focus on Poland season with two concerts. They also performed in an NHS setting as part of our community connections programme.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

In January 2025, we welcomed the result of our application to Creative Scotland's multiyear funding programme which saw an uplift to our grant for the first time in almost two decades. This provides a crucial foundation upon which we can base future planning.

With the funding decision from Creative Scotland delayed from October 2024 to January 2025, well into our financial year, we were faced with a higher level of financial uncertainty at the point the programme for 2025 had to be confirmed. The Festival proceeded prudently, with a compact artistic programme while retaining core initiatives such as affordability, accessibility, youth and community activities which are central to our mission. Balance across expenditure was successfully maintained in 2025, with nearly two-thirds of total expenditure remaining focused on our programme.

88% of all available tickets were sold, filling our venues to the highest percentage capacity in over a decade. Optimising ticket income has also allowed us to improve our affordability and accessibility measures, with this year continuing our pledge to offer 50,000 tickets for £30 or less. This included over 7,000 free and discounted tickets issued for for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent audience members and their essential companions.

Creative industry tax reliefs comprised a smaller proportion of income this year, which was offset by a combined increase in fundraising, sponsorship and public funding, which together represented 65% of total income.

We are deeply grateful to Creative Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, and private supporters, partners, donors and members whose donations and sponsorships are crucial in enabling the Festival to continue to deliver its vision.

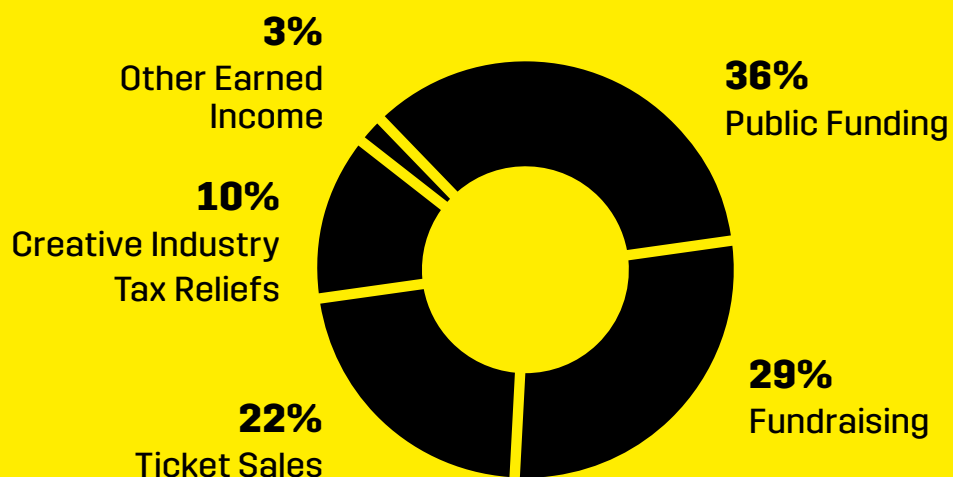
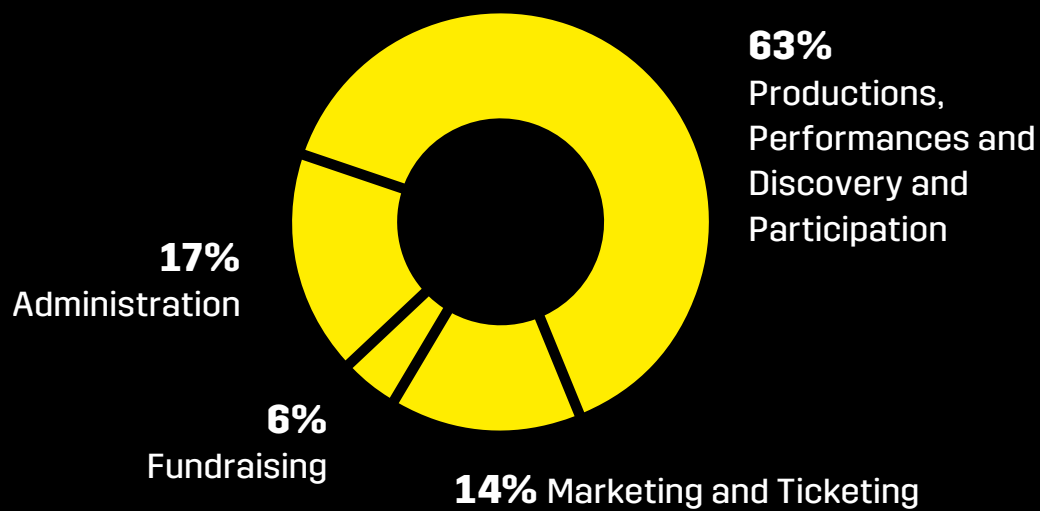
59% of total expenditure (excluding payroll) reinvested in Scotland

189 Scottish suppliers utilised

196 Scottish freelancers employed

Scottish Ballet's Mary Queen of Scots © Andy Ross



INCOME**EXPENDITURE**

OUR STAFF

Both our temporary and permanent staff are crucial to delivering a Festival of this scale alongside our year-round work. All departments play a vital role in ensuring the smooth running of our organisation and the planning and delivery of the annual Festival. We'd like to thank all the incredible individuals listed below for their work in the following areas: Artistic Management; Audience Experience; Brand and Campaigns; Communications and Digital; Discovery and Participation; Edinburgh Festival Chorus; Finance; Fundraising; Operations; People and Culture; Production; Programming; Strategy; Ticketing and Front of House.

YEAR-ROUND STAFF:

Rachel Ashenden | Nicola Benedetti | Katie Bevan | Sarah Broadwell | Andrew Brownlie
 Jean Burke | Kate Carter | Rosie Castle | Lucy Clarke | Paul Claydon | Sarah Cockburn
 Leila Cruickshank | Kirsty Dickson | Katherine Dilworth | Caroline Donald | Lucy Drever
 Dean Dyer | Isabella Feros | Amy Firth | Kate Garbutt | Grace Gilbert | Oliver Girdham
 James Grossmith | Leon Gray | Joyce Green | Rene Hamilton | Emma Hay
 Francesca Hegyi | Julia Hickey | Caitlin Higgins | Kirsty Hughes | Alison Hunter
 Hal Hutchison | Holly Johnson | Sebastian King | Rob Knight | Margot Law-Mckay
 Roy Luxford | Claire Macdonald | Nola MacLeod | Amy Macrae | Callum Madge
 Susan McIntosh | Hugo Mintz | Emma Morwood | Samantha Mudie | Alyson Orme
 Abbey Oulton | Katie Paterson | Katherine Planas | Marcin Potepski | Sunniva Ramsay
 Terry Roberts | Alice Russell | Piotr Schmidtke | Ian Shannon | Paul Sharp
 Katherine Shaw | Jessica Smith | Ally Steel | Kirsten Stewart | Beth Tappenden
 Katy Taylor | Micaela Thomas | Gemma Wallbanks | Nicolas Zekulin

FESTIVAL CONTRACTED STAFF

Ewa Adamiec | Ola Akisanya | Jemima Amamize | Danni Bastian | Ernesto Berardino
 Conor Burgess | Catriona Blair | Ross Blair | Jessie Brough | Harriet Bunnnett
 Joanna Burns | Mhairi Burton-Coyle | Jennifer Caira | Emma Campbell | John Campbell
 Sherin Chandy | Neal Clark | Chris Colvin | Carolina Costamante | Hannah Cui
 Sanstab Das | Marie Driver | Andrew Dyer | Alex Edwards | Courtland Evje
 Dan Findlay-Carroll | Golda Fischer | Craig Flint | Fiona Fraser | Bertie Gallop
 AJ Hammerton | Michael Hannah | Eve Harkness | Michael Heasman | Isidor ten Hooven
 Carrie Hutcheon | Catherine Idle | Kyle Jessiman | Andrew Kirkby | Josh Knowles
 Jimmy Ku | Jamie Lee | Caitlin Lobo | Melanie MacGregor | Fraser Marr | Keir Martin
 Nicole Matte | Rob McDonald | Charlotte McLaughlin | Sandy McLeod | Bronte McMillan
 Russell McMohan | Skye McNeil | Jon Meggat | Darcey Milne | Daniel Munro
 Abby Pickavance | Thomas Pritchard | Andy Pughsley | Dan Quayle | Iain Ramponi
 Phoebe Ramsay-Stagg | Emma Reid | Chris Sanders | Rumana Sayed | Lucy Serjeant
 Amir Sherhan | Nicola Stevenson | Rosie Stroud | Anna Tait Westwell | Alessandra Thom
 Luke Tomnay | Ian Wilson | Phoebe Wiseman | Sulie Wood | Sarah Woolhouse
 Drew Young | Nora Zaid

We would also like to thank the many temporary staff who join us as drivers, technical, front of house and media team for the Festival each year.

This year we undertook a holistic review of our recruitment process, in order to attract, recruit and retain a wide range of the best people. This includes using positive action to address underrepresentation in ethnicity and disability. The changes we have undertaken align to our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, and Fair Work objectives. Our HR team have reviewed all of our processes and resources from talent attraction to induction and onboarding and are training all staff in the new approach.

**Under the Patronage
of His Royal Highness
the Duke of Edinburgh
KG KT GCVO**

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Lyn McDonald

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Martin Nolan

Councillor Hal Oster

Spiro Phanos

Michelle Reglinski

John Taylor

Chris Yiu

**CHAIR OF THE EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL SOCIETY**

Councillor Robert Aldridge,
the Rt Hon Lord Provost
of Edinburgh

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS

Sir Ewan Brown

Carol Colburn Grigor CBE

HONORARY SECRETARY

Paul Lawrence

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The Hub, Castlehill,

Edinburgh EH1 2NE

Registration No 24766

Registered Charity No SC004694

Administration 0131 473 2099

Tickets 0131 473 2000

eif.co.uk

As of 31 August 2025

**'EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL HAS
A POSITIVE WORKING CULTURE AND STAFF
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