



M f G

MUSIC *for*
GALWAY

From Galway to the World

STRATEGY

2023 - 2026

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark blue sleeveless dress, is seated and playing a cello. She is looking down at the instrument with a focused expression. The background is a solid, vibrant red. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the woman and the cello against the dark background.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

MfG would like to thank the many individuals who took time to participate in one to one interviews, group sessions, and to fill out the questionnaires. This would not have been possible without you.

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Foreword / Introduction

**"MUSIC FOR GALWAY IS AN INDEPENDENT
AND RESILIENT CHARITABLE ORGANISATION
UNDERPINNED BY PHILANTHROPY... "**

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN SETS OUT MUSIC FOR GALWAY'S AGENDA FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS. IT IS THE RESULT OF AN EXTENSIVE STAKEHOLDER REVIEW AND A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED OVER FOUR MONTHS INVOLVING BOTH THE EXECUTIVE AND THE BOARD.

Music for Galway is an independent and resilient charitable organisation underpinned by philanthropy, now in its 42nd year. Nothing demonstrated this better than its performance through the pandemic. Almost all of the programme planned for the Galway Capital of Culture in 2020 was delivered. Presenting concerts online rather than in person was not our choice, but it developed new skills and partnerships. The programme was hugely appreciated by our audiences.

The 2020 programme represented a significant scaling up of our activities offering a great number of opportunities to Irish and international artists, and it was always our intent that this would act as a springboard for future growth. Our CELLISSIMO festival is the most obvious example, but we see other opportunities. The Songs of Travel programme, now confirmed as a funded project under Creative Europe, is an exciting new venture, with Music for Galway acting as the lead partner of a major international collaboration.

The feedback from our stakeholders has been very encouraging. They have commented on the quality and scale of our programming, but are concerned that we may be "hiding our light under a bushel". Therefore, a major theme for the strategic plan is communication - telling people what we do, particularly those who may never have attended a concert or are not even aware of who we are. Ultimately, we want Music for Galway to be seen by the community we serve as an intrinsic and important part of Galway's identity as a city of arts and culture.

Investing in new ventures will not compromise the quality of our existing programmes. In fact, our intent is to work harder on the presentation of those programmes, so that the unquestioned quality of the performances is matched by the overall experience for audiences coming to concerts.

We must give attention to Sustainability. Our intent is to be creative and thoughtful in our approach. The Songs of Travel programme has sustainability at its core with exclusively sustainable travel a requirement. This programme will help us develop new ways of working, which will allow us to deliver programmes with significantly reduced environmental impact.

As we scale, it's important that we build an organisation that is equipped to deal with it. That means building partnerships, but also investing in our own people so that they feel resourced to rise to the new challenges. We are privileged to have such a strong executive, supported by a committed and engaged board. We will ensure that our people feel supported and get the opportunity to grow.

We are excited to present this plan to you, and we look forward to your feedback on it. Most of all we look forward to delivering all the elements of this plan to you over the next three years.

A woman with curly hair is holding a wireframe cube in front of her face, looking through it. She is smiling. In the background, a man in a suit is blurred. The word "Process" is written in a large, white, serif font in the upper left corner.

Process

**"...CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED,
OPPORTUNITIES TO BE PURSUED AND
AREAS OF FOCUS FOR THE NEXT
THREE YEARS."**

A Steering Team, comprising members of both the management team and Board of Music for Galway, was guided through the strategy development process by an external consultant, Mary Carroll from Growth Potential.

The Vision, Mission and Values of Music for Galway were defined.

Multiple stakeholders were consulted, to inform the direction and priorities for the next three years. The consultation included a facilitated session with the Board; a survey of audience members; and facilitated sessions and one-to-one interviews with key external stakeholders. We are very grateful to all stakeholders for their time and input.

The Steering Team then analysed the context within which Music for Galway operates and the organisation itself, and identified possible challenges to be addressed, opportunities to be pursued and areas of focus for the next three years.

Having reviewed all stakeholder consultation outputs, challenges and opportunities, as well as analysing the context within which Music for Galway operates and the organisation itself, the Steering Team agreed on six areas of focus for the period of the strategy. A Strategic Objective was agreed for each of these areas.

Metrics and actions to demonstrate how these Strategic Objectives will be measured and delivered were agreed. These specific, measurable Strategic Objectives and top-level actions are key, so that progress can be measured with certainty and people are clear as to how progress is to be made.

A final review by both the Steering Team and Board completed the strategy development process.



Vision, Mission & Values

**"WE ARE INDEPENDENT, INNOVATIVE AND
COURAGEOUS IN OUR CHOICE OF THEMES,
PROGRAMMES, PROJECTS, PERFORMERS AND
VENUES."**

VISION

**GALWAY IS TRULY A PLACE OF THE ARTS,
WITH CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC
AS A DISTINCTIVE STRENGTH**


MISSION

- To present **world-class performers** of classical music to **inspire** the people and **communities** of Galway and beyond and to enable more engagement with classical music
 - To **support creativity** through development and performance opportunities for artists, commissioning new works and collaborating across art forms
 - To lay a foundation for the future through programmes that give **young people** the opportunity to connect with classical music
-

VALUES

- **EXCELLENCE:** We present a programme of activities which meets the highest standards of artistic excellence, and we endeavour to match these standards in every aspect of our operations, through resourcefulness, resilience and innovation
- **RESPECT:** We respect all the people that we encounter, the spaces we work in and the environment in which we all live
- **BOLDNESS:** We are independent, innovative and courageous in our choice of themes, programmes, projects, performers and venues. We are strong in advocating for the arts and vital arts infrastructure in Galway
- **COMMUNITY:** Our programme of music enriches the broad community in which we live. To deliver that programme, we are inclusive, drawing on a music community that is global and diverse. Accessibility for and engagement with the entire community is at the forefront of our minds

3 Year Goal



"WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY GROWING OUR AUDIENCE, IN PARTICULAR BY ATTRACTING PEOPLE TO CONCERTS FOR THE FIRST TIME."

3 YEAR GOAL

INCREASE OUR IMPACT AND THAT OF OUR ARTISTS, BY ENSURING WE BRING OUR PROGRAMMES TO A GREATER SHARE OF THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE

We will achieve this by growing our audience, in particular by attracting people to concerts for the first time. We will seek to grow both our seasonal and CELLISSIMO audiences, with the following targets:

- Seasonal audience **up 30%**
- CELLISSIMO audience **5500**
- Demonstrable **increase** attending Music for Galway event for first time¹

A photograph of a man and a young girl performing on stage. The man, on the right, is wearing a dark t-shirt and has his hair tied back. He is smiling and playing a violin. The young girl, on the left, is wearing a dark blue sweater with a red collar and is also playing a violin. They are standing on a stage with a dark background. A microphone is visible on the left side of the frame.

Strategic Objectives, Metrics & Actions

"...ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE WITH MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SUCH AS MUSIC TEACHERS, BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, NEW GALWEGIAN AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC."

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, METRICS & ACTIONS

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, THE ACHIEVEMENT OF WHICH WILL DELIVER ON THE MISSION OF MUSIC FOR GALWAY (MFG) FOR THE PERIOD 2023-2026.

THE METRICS ARE DESIGNED TO BE CLEAR AND MEASURABLE INDICATORS OF SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES. THE ACTIONS OUTLINE AT A HIGH LEVEL HOW THESE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES WILL BE MET.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, METRICS & ACTIONS

1

SO1	EXPERIENCE We will produce and manage each event, end-to-end, to the standard fitting with the brand, creating memorable experiences for our audiences
BY	YE 2026
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Survey of Audiences experiences • Audience Satisfaction check • Year 3 stakeholder review indicates improved experiences
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the very high standard of programming and choice of artists, whilst living our values of boldness and risk-taking • Analyse full audience experience, from booking to exiting venue • Analyse each venue and ensure branding and production values are at a high level • Devise and implement means of quick, easy check of audience satisfaction at events • Identify and implement opportunities to make the experiences more memorable • Devise and implement stakeholder review

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SO2	COMMUNICATIONS We will increase awareness of MfG and its activities, locally and nationally
BY	YE 2026
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR campaign metrics such as number of references in all media • Marketing campaign KPIs such as digital reach
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness survey - benchmarking, metrics around website and digital communications / reach by Q1 2023 • Design and implement three-year budgeted marketing plan, to include PR activity metrics and analytics. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Build greater MfG brand awareness through greater mainstream media presence – Develop brand utilisation guidelines – Increased visibility of MfG and the team in the wider arts community – Develop and articulate MfG’s Unique Selling Proposition • Review marketing plan annually

3

SO3	SENSE OF COMMUNITY We will be identified as part of the fabric of Galway
BY	YE 2026
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MfG has become more identified as part of the fabric of Galway, as validated by our stakeholders by YE2026
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously engage in dialogue with members of the community such as music teachers, businesses, schools, educational institutions, new Galwegians and the general public to identify what Galway means to them, what they value, their challenges and what they would like from MfG • Devise and implement outreach events and programmes in response to dialogue • Work with music schools and amateur ensembles for inclusion in specific programmes

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SO4	COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS We will collaborate and partner with other organisations to inspire each other, to pool resources, for peer learning and to widen our audience reach, locally, nationally and internationally
BY	YE 2026
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual financial report re sharing of resources • All partnerships documented and reviewed by Board annually
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations • Define and implement partnership agreements with all partners • Review agreements periodically with partners • All partnerships documented and reviewed by Board annually

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SO5	ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT We will have the capacity, both human and financial, in place to deliver on the scale of our ambition
BY	YE 2026
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People in place to deliver annual plan • Sufficient income generated to deliver our strategy • Continuing Professional Development (CPD) investment: minimum €5,000 per annum • Annual evaluation and salary benchmarking • Annual Board self-evaluation (1/2 day)
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual evaluation of workload, people requirement and CPD requirement, including upskilling in Environmental Sustainability • Annual evaluation and salary benchmarking • Grow and nurture income sources • Annual evaluation of make vs buy of certain workload requirements • Implement CPD Plans • Workshop Sustainable Development Goals with Board and Executive • Annual Board self-evaluation (1/2 day)

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SO6	SUSTAINABILITY Our Songs of Travel project will lead us to work in a sustainable way and to influence our audiences to behave in a sustainable manner
BY	YE 2026
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MfG carbon footprint & reduction in emissions – target based on benchmarking • Increase number of concerts / audience members per artist journey • Songs of Travel achieves its metrics re behavioural change and carbon footprint / environmental sustainability policies of partner festivals • Annual review of MfG sustainability policy
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark MfG against other organisations for sustainability • Deliver the Songs of Travel programme • Establish and implement a baseline sustainability policy for MfG • Support low carbon travel options for artists • Consider how technology and innovation might support our sustainability agenda

A violinist in a dark, patterned suit is performing in a church. He is standing in front of an ornate altar with a large archway. The altar is decorated with two tall, thin candlesticks and two vases of sunflowers. The background features intricate geometric patterns and crosses. The lighting is warm and focused on the performer.

Strategy Implementation & Review

**"...THE STRATEGY MUST DRIVE ALL ACTIVITY
WITHIN MUSIC FOR GALWAY AND WHAT WE
ARE DOING ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS."**

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

To be effective, the strategy must drive all activity within Music for Galway and what we are doing on a day-to-day basis must be linked back up to the strategy and, ultimately, our Values, Vision and Mission.

To achieve this, the strategy will be further developed into an operational plan and into the goals and performance metrics for all employees.

An ability to respond to changing dynamics and circumstances is critical, so agility must be inherent to the strategy. A review of the external and internal environment will be built into the implementation and review processes and, where necessary, appropriate modifications or recalibration may be made. It will be imperative that any such changes, their rationale, and any resulting amendments to operational plans and individual goals, be agreed and communicated clearly and consistently.

STRATEGY REVIEW

Music for Galway's strategy implementation is overseen by the Board and is supported by a process of regular updates at Board meetings from the CEO and the management team on all strategic, financial and operational matters.

We will track and report on our progress in implementing this Strategy through the following:

- Regular updates to the Board of Music for Galway on operational plan milestones, targets and KPIs
- Annual review of strategy and all metrics by the Board and Management Team
- Annual Reports of Music for Galway
- Annual Financial Statements
- Updating stakeholders at AGM, meetings and through internal communication channels and regular reports

