

# Making classical music open to everyone

A study of routes into  
work and education



Easy read booklet

# About us and our research



We are ICM Unlimited and DHA. We are 2 companies who have joined together to carry out **research**. **Research** means finding out what is happening and why.



Arts Council England asked us to research **diversity** in classical music. **Diversity** means lots of different types of people are included.

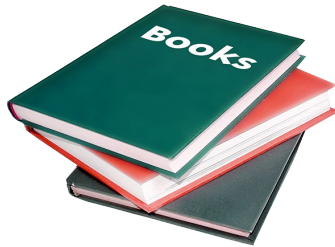


We wanted to find out

- what types of people work in classical music.
- how people get jobs in the classical music industry either as musicians or workers.
- what we could change to make sure more people from lots of different backgrounds can get jobs.



# How we did our research



We read lots of information about the types of people in the classical musical industry. This is called **a literature review**.



We looked at lots of data like numbers and facts. This is called **data audit and analysis**.



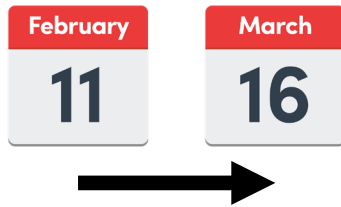
We put together a list of questions and asked people to write down their answers. This is called a **survey**.



We wanted to find out

- why people started playing an instrument.
- how they learnt to play better. This is called **training**.
- how they went on to find a job in classical music.

# Who filled in our survey



We sent the survey to people working in classical music between 11<sup>th</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

967 people aged 16 and over completed the survey. They were



- musicians who play classical musical instruments.
- people learning a classical musical instrument.
- people who don't play an instrument but who work in classical music in the UK.



We did not include people like composers, singers and pianists.



We did not include people who play instruments that are not part of a classical orchestra. These are instruments like saxophones and guitars.

# What we found out



This booklet brings together all the things we found out in the

- literature review.
- data audit and analysis.
- survey.

We grouped what we found out into 3 sections.



**1.** What types of people learn an instrument and work in classical music. We also wanted to find out if some types of people worked in classical music less than others.



**2.** What people say about learning an instrument and working in classical music. We call this their **experiences**.



**3.** What organisations do to make sure different types of people are involved in classical music.



# 1. What types of people learn and work in classical music



There are lots of ways people are different from each other. We call these **characteristics**.



**Characteristics** means things like

- gender - like male, female or non-binary.
- ethnic group - like Black, White or Asian.
- age.
- how much money they have.



We found that not everyone takes part in classical music in the same way. Different types of people have different experiences.



We found differences in

- the way people took part in activities.
- the kinds of instruments they played.
- the types of jobs they did.

# Differences between men and women



We found the following differences between men and women.

- More women than men learn instruments.
- More men are working in orchestras but less men are working as staff or managers.
- Women are less successful in competitions for training places.
- There are more women in music education and less women in top jobs or activities like theatre work.
- Women play some instruments more than men. For example, the harp, string and wind instruments.
- Women find it harder to move from learning an instrument to getting a job.

# Differences because of someone's ethnic group



People who learn to play instruments come from lots of different ethnic groups.



Lots of people from different ethnic groups take part in the National Children's Orchestra (**NCO**).

But fewer people who come from ethnic groups



- take part in music training at higher levels or at schools where people learn how to play for an audience. These are called **Conservatoires**.
- work as musicians, and staff.
- take part in the National Youth Orchestra (**NYO**).



Some instruments like violins and wind instruments are played more by people from non-white ethnic groups.



# Differences because of a disability or long-term health condition



There are fewer people with disabilities and long-term health conditions in the classical music industry.



Some people need extra help with learning. **This is called Special Educational Needs (SEN).** People with SEN are less likely to take part in music and music training.



We could not find a lot information about disability. 75% of Orchestra's did not know if their musicians were disabled. More musicians are starting to say if they have a disability.



More non-musicians who work in classical music say they have a disability or long-term condition.

# Differences because of how much money people have



We found young people are more likely to work in classical music if

- their parents earn lots of money.
- they live in places where lots of people go to university.
- they went to a school which charges money for teaching. This is known as a **private school**.



These groups of young people are more likely to

- belong to the NCO and NYO.
- work as a musician or non-musician.
- study A-Level music.
- get better access to training like conservatoires.
- choose to play some types of instruments more than others.



## 2. Experiences of the classical music sector



We looked at the experiences of lots of different people involved in classical music. These were

- musicians.
- people who worked in classical music but who didn't play an instrument.



We also looked at how people started training to be a musician.



We asked them questions about

- their family.
- how they felt about themselves.
- what beliefs they thought were true about working in classical music.
- how they did their work.



# Family background



Things like gender, ethnicity and money help to shape someone's experience of being in a family.



People's families can change how a young person

- chooses to learn an instrument.
- trains to play music at a higher level.
- works in the music industry.



People are more likely to play music if their family is

- middle class or upper class and has an interest in music.
- educated at university.
- can pay for private music lessons.



Women and people who came from non-white ethnic groups were less likely to play music.

# Training and working in classical music



Working in classical music can sometimes be hard because

- there are not enough jobs.
- the pay is low.
- working hours can be at difficult times of the day.
- musicians need to meet the right people to help them with their career.
- women are treated differently to men.
- there is bullying.



Musicians may think some jobs are better than others. For example, working in a top orchestra is seen as better than teaching.



People from an ethnic non-European background may find it harder to learn or get work. This is because some people think classical music is only for Europeans.



# More about training and working in the classical music sector



Some people from working class backgrounds think being a musician is a risky job. This is because some music jobs pay low wages.



People from middle class backgrounds

- are less worried about about music being a risky job.
- find it easier to meet the right people to help them get a job.



Some musicians think success or failure is down to luck rather than how the industry works.

Compared to men, women

- are seen as less creative.
- are judged differently in competitions.
- earn less money.
- have to look after children as well as work.



# What people think about different types of classical music jobs



People think some jobs in music are better and more valued than others. We found out that

- people who perform on their own are at the top. They are called **soloists**.
- people who play music in a group are in the middle.
- teachers are at the bottom.



People who were more likely to go for jobs that are highly valued are

- men.
- people who come from families with a lot of money.
- people whose parents are interested in classical music or who work in classical music.



What people think about the value of different jobs like teaching changes over time.

# Things that stop people working in classical music



Lots of people agreed they had faced **barriers** to working in classical music. **Barriers** means things that stop them having good job opportunities.

People who face lots of barriers are

- women.
- people under 50 years old.
- people who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer (**LGBTQ+**).
- people with a disability.
- people from non-white ethnic groups.



Around 50% of LGBTQ+, disabled and ethnically diverse people felt that barriers meant they didn't have the same opportunities.



A lot of LGBTQ+ said they could speak to people about their sexuality. But some people said they couldn't tell anyone.

# More things that stop people working in classical music



People said they faced sexual harassment and bullying but they were afraid to report it. People worried they would lose their job.



There are lots of barriers for people with disabilities.



- 1 in 10 people say they haven't told anyone about their disability.
- 37% of people experience lack of understanding about their condition.
- Young people don't always know they can get adapted instruments or specialist equipment to help them.
- Only 50% of people with hearing loss ask for treatment.
- People worry about what will happen if they say they have a health condition.



# How people think about music



There are different ways that people think about classical music. Some people think that

- classical music is understood by everyone. This is known as a **'universal language.'** This can ignore diversity.
- classical music is 'good'.
- people who come from Europe are better at playing classical music.



Characteristics like ethnicity and disability can change how people

- listen to music.
- play an instrument.
- are educated.
- are treated at work.
- are thought about and treated by other people.





### 3. What organisations do to include everyone



We don't know of many projects which help classical music to be more diverse.

Young people face lots of barriers like cost of travel and lack of support at home to learn music.

Some companies are trying to make opportunities open to everyone by

- asking people to play their instrument without showing who they are. This is called a **screened audition**. This means they are selected on how they play and not on how they look.
- giving work opportunities to people who face lots of barriers.
- giving free places to people on paid courses.

We should ask the people who face lots of barriers to help make classical music better.

# What we have learned



- Not everyone can access classical music in the same way.
- People are affected by lots of things like lack of opportunities and the jobs and training available.



- It is easier for people from all backgrounds to learn classical music at school.



- Learning gets harder for people with some characteristics as they get older.
- Characteristics can make a person choose certain types of instruments. This means they might have less choices for training and work.



- If everyone in the industry works together, we could make things better.

# What we still need to find out



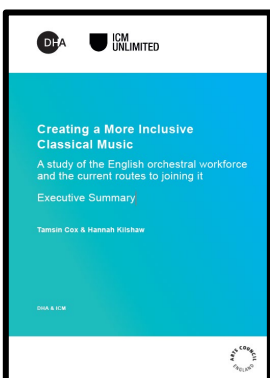
We don't know everything. We could do more research to help us better understand diversity in classical music.



We want to learn more about

- how people's characteristics make them stay in music or drop out.
- the experiences of people working in the sector over a long period of time.
- how a person's background helps them choose what instrument to play.
- how many people share the same experiences.
- how organisations can include more people from different backgrounds.
- what people are doing in other sectors to make sure everyone is included.





Thank you to A2i for the words  
[www.a2i.co.uk](http://www.a2i.co.uk) (reference 34129)

The full version of this document is called  
“Creating a More Inclusive Classical Music  
Executive Summary”