

INCLUSIVE PRACTICE



IN ACTION

DIVERSIFYING THE MUSIC EDUCATION WORKFORCE
A REPORT BY SOUND CONNECTIONS



Inclusive Practice in Action: A Journey

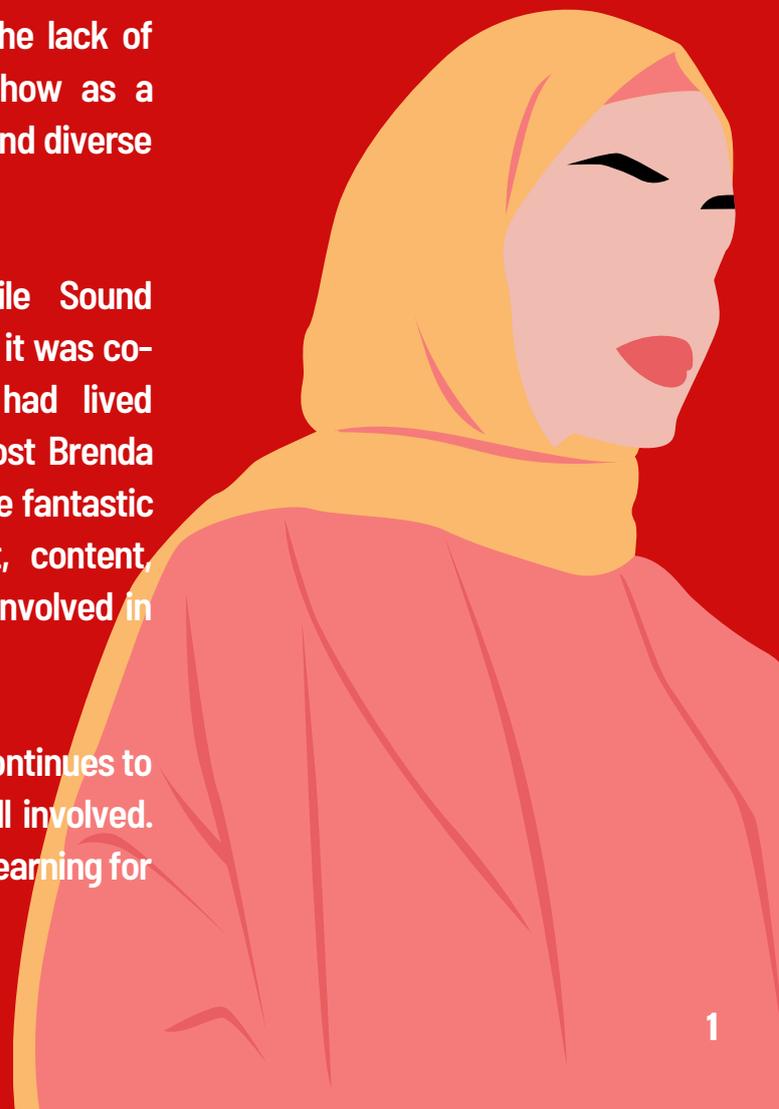
In March 2021 Sound Connections hosted 'Inclusive Practice in Action: Diversifying the Music Education Workforce' (IPIA). This virtual sit-in was intended to provide an opportunity to pause and reflect on the benefits of embracing diversity and inclusion for music education organisations, practitioners and children and young people.

Prompted by the killing of George Floyd in May 2020, and the exposure of institutional racism worldwide, IPIA took racial diversity as a starting point. The event was open about the discrimination faced by Black and brown people, people of colour, white minorities, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people and women working within music education.

Key themes were to consider the impact of the lack of representation within music education; and how as a sector we can move towards a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

It was critical from the outset that while Sound Connections provided a platform for this event, it was co-created with a group of individuals who had lived experience including an advisory group, our host Brenda Rattray, and a group of five young people. These fantastic individuals (listed below) shaped the format, content, made introductions to speakers, and were all involved in facilitating and producing the IPIA event.

This was not just a two-day event. It was, and continues to be, a learning and developmental journey for all involved. This report aims to summarise some of the key learning for Sound Connections and for the sector.



Five learning points for the sector

At Sound Connections we have reflected deeply on the learning from this event, and how it will influence all of our work going forward. Here are our main learning points for the music education/community sector.

1. Build emotional connections

The emotional connection that the event fostered was powerful, and unlocked a kind of motivation and impetus for change that we don't feel we have seen in a conference or event before. So often music education events tackle ideas, techniques and theories but don't allow so much space for emotion and for people to bring their whole selves, or tell their true story. Music is of course all about emotional connection, so extending that same emotional integrity to conferences and events makes should be natural.

2. Place wellbeing and care at the centre

Creating a platform for such emotion, honesty and vulnerability to be shared comes with a big responsibility. We learnt how for some people the stories and experiences shared at IPIA surfaced personal trauma and pain. Whilst wellbeing and care were at the heart of the event, and we're proud of the wellbeing practice we've developed, we want to do much more to ensure we hold that space and that care for anyone in our community within and beyond our events and programmes.

3. Inclusivity and accessibility needs proper investment

We know how deeply entrenched structural barriers are in the design of how we all work, how we communicate as music education professionals and how we set up events. Doing things differently takes massive investment in every sense: finance, time, willingness to take risks. We made some errors with budgeting for accessibility during this process (see below) which we have learnt from. Going forward at least 10-15% of event budgets will be allocated to accessibility measures, to ensure that everyone can be included.

4. Consider how to share power

Power sharing was an ever-present theme during Inclusive Practice in Action. This essentially is about self-awareness and privilege, and the change we can create if we use the privilege and power we hold for the benefit of others. We learnt a lot about the concerted action we can take in sharing our power, in giving away power and becoming invisible in order to foreground others. Deborah Williams presented a challenge to all those in a position of power in music education to give up 20% of their power – both in terms of authority and financial gain – to others. How many music educators would be prepared to take on this challenge?

5. Broaden our audience and influence

There were some notable gaps in the profile of who came to Inclusive Practice in Action, with a particular lack of presence from people who hold power in our sector who perhaps most needed to participate. Whilst this needs to change, and we need to work out different tactics for attracting the attention and investment of people with power, we recognised and celebrated the huge value of creating a space for people who were bought in, who don't need convincing. Creating a supportive and empowering community for everyone who did engage means that together we're developing our confidence and strength for sowing seeds and being changemakers out there in the organisations we work for.



Our IPIA Journey

July 2020

Met Brenda Rattray in an 'In Conversation' series she hosted: 'I am a Black/Brown Human Being'

September 2020

Meetings with Advisory Group to determine content, format, look and feel

November 2020

Engagement of Brenda Rattray as host and advisor

November 2020

Announcement of event including list of recommended resources for participants to pre-read

January - March 2021

Training and mentoring for team of young producers

February 2021

Pre-event 'Becoming an Ally' hosted by Brenda Rattray (36 delegates)

11th/12th March 2021

Inclusive Practice in Action: Diversifying the Music Education Workforce two-day event (251 delegates)

March 2021

Debrief events with Sound Connections team; Brenda Rattray; Advisory Group members; young producers

April-June 2021

Self-directed action learning sets (17 delegates) and peer mentoring partnerships (16 delegates)

April 2021

Sharing of IPIA outputs with delegates (films, illustrations, reading, resources)

April 2021

Reflection event facilitated by the Sound Connections team, Advisory Group members and young producers (44 delegates)

August 2021

Release of report and key learning



Format and content

With the support of the Advisory Group we carefully considered the process that delegates would go through before, during and after the two-day sit in.

This was:

FORMAT	CONTENT
<p>Acclimatise</p>	<p>Pre-event resource sharing and preparation sessions Welcome to IPIA film created by young producers</p>
<p>Listen</p>	<p>A space where challenging ideas and perspectives were presented as a catalyst for change. This included the following talks (in order of appearance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Journey from Diversity and Inclusion to Belonging: Asif Sadiq • Uncomfortable connections: How do we speak?: Dr Muna Abdi • From knowledge to knowing a view of racial consciousness in teaching: Dr Melanie Marie Haywood • Life of a She Devil: Deborah Williams • Do you see me? Do you hear me?: In Conversation with Miss Jacqui and Brenda Rattray • On whose terms? Building Safe Communities: Suhaiymah Manzoor-Khan • Duff Notes are Buff Notes: Geraldine Smith • Are you lost?: Jamel Carly-Campbell <p>In between the talks we showed a series of filmed interviews between our young producers and members of the music education, community music and youth sectors. These were (in order of appearance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarence Adoo with Siobhan Clough • Sharon Jagdev Powell with Eva Rose Hicks • Sophie Fox with Elijah Akinfenwa • Carys Evans with Rochelle Blair • Colin Brent with Elijah Akinfenwa
<p>Listen</p>	<p>Interactive spaces guided by our Advisory Group members, where discussions and conversations on the themes emerging from the talks could be discussed. These were facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imrana Mahmood • Jenetta Hurst • John Kelly • Nate Holder • Samantha Spence

<p>Share</p>	<p>Two padlet boards for delegates to share experiences, stories and resources:</p> <p><u>Stories and Experiences</u> <u>Resources and Practice</u></p> <p>We created an IPIA playlist of music choices provided by the speakers and facilitators which is available here.</p>
<p>Reflect and process</p>	<p>A virtual reflection space facilitated by Wired4Music staff and members for listening to music and unprompted discussions.</p>
<p>Connect</p>	<p>Opportunities to sign up to action learning sets, peer learning, and take part in Twitter discussions</p>
<p>Act</p>	<p>Reflection event to share actions or intended actions following IPIA</p>

IPIA made use of a range of technology platforms:

- Streamyard going to YouTube for the live talks, with the function for delegates to comment in the chat
- Zoom (with an extended capacity) for the discussion and reflection sessions
- Padlet for sharing of experiences and resources
- Twitter for communicating about the event externally and to delegates

Accessibility

Following consultation with the Advisory Group the following measures were in place to support delegates to fully participate in the event

- British Sign Language interpreters working alongside speakers during the live streams
- Live subtitling alongside speakers during the live streams (to a separate window in YouTube), and closed captioning in all of the Zoom discussion spaces
- All films were subtitled
- An illustrator ([Sandra Howgate](#)) captured the main talks and themes visually, which was shared with delegates at the end of each day

As the event progressed the Sound Connections team were alerted to the fact that we hadn't considered audio describing, therefore we briefed speakers and facilitators and ensured this was included during Day 2. Audio describing is now something we discuss with speakers/workshop leaders at online sessions going forward.

IMPACT

The intended aims of IPIA were:

1. To facilitate a series of action-focussed conversations that increase understanding of intersectionality issues within the music education context
2. To host a platform for voices who are often omitted from discussions to be seen and heard
3. Provide organisations and individuals with tools, guidance and signposting that they can apply in practice, leading to better music opportunities for children and young people
4. For young, new and potential music leaders who are currently under-represented in the music education workforce to participate, co-produce and network

We collected feedback about the event in a number of ways:

1. Polls and surveys during the event
2. We invited a number of delegates to share feedback and key observations while attending the event
3. Feedback survey circulated to delegates after the event
4. Debrief sessions with the Advisory Group, young producers, Sound Connections team

The IPIA event received a series of reviews from four Disabled musicians who attended from Drake Music. You can read these here. There also was a review in Music Teacher magazine here.



Overall Effectiveness of the event



The majority of delegates agreed that the event met their expectations, with some narrative around overall impact.

"A lot of the time you're either process-driven and no one cares about the outcome or your outcome-driven and no one cares about the process. The thing we did differently was that we paid equal value to the process. Seeing things come from the process in the outcome was great." (IPIA Advisory Group member)

"To hold a two-day, online conference that involved staring at a screen and KEEP PARTICIPANTS engaged and interested is no mean feat. I confess I was a little apprehensive about the amount of screen time and whether I'd be able to stick with it but I had absolutely no trouble. I thought the tone, pace and topics were so well judged." (IPIA delegate)

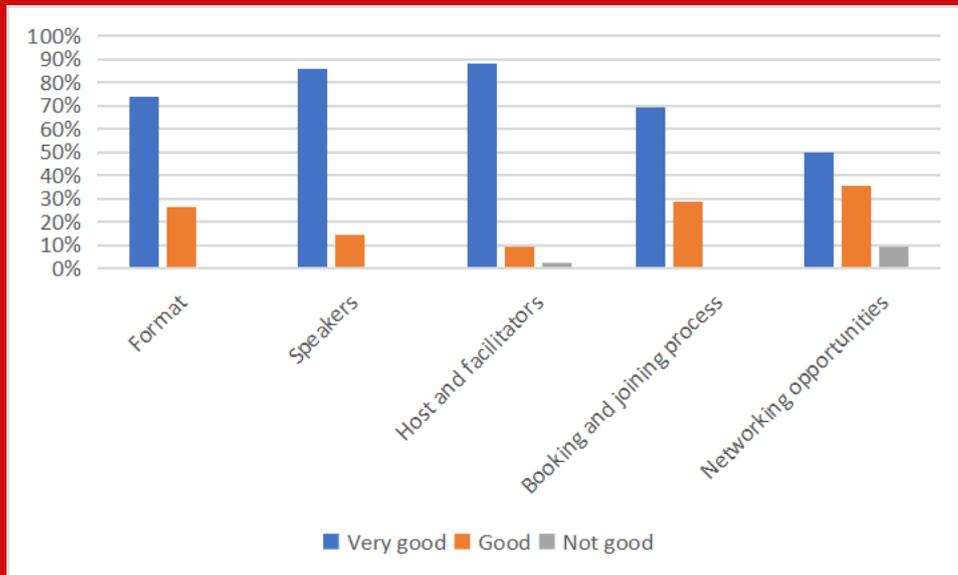
"A valued conference, with well-informed speakers sharing lived experience in such a frank and needed manner." (IPIA delegate)

"This was by far the best online conference or training I have attended, and possibly better than anything I have attended in person as well! The range of speakers was incredible and the fact that you had worked with an Advisory Group was evident in the format, content and line-up. I'm so pleased I attended!" (IPIA delegate)

"It was fantastic to see so many people that you wouldn't normally see at these events, not just underrepresented communities but people who wouldn't normally get the chance to present and attend these events and raise their profiles." (IPIA Advisory Group member)



Format



We asked delegates to rate the following organisational aspects of the event. There was some mixed opinion about the format – with some feeling that the online format was beneficial, and others preferring a live, face-to-face context.

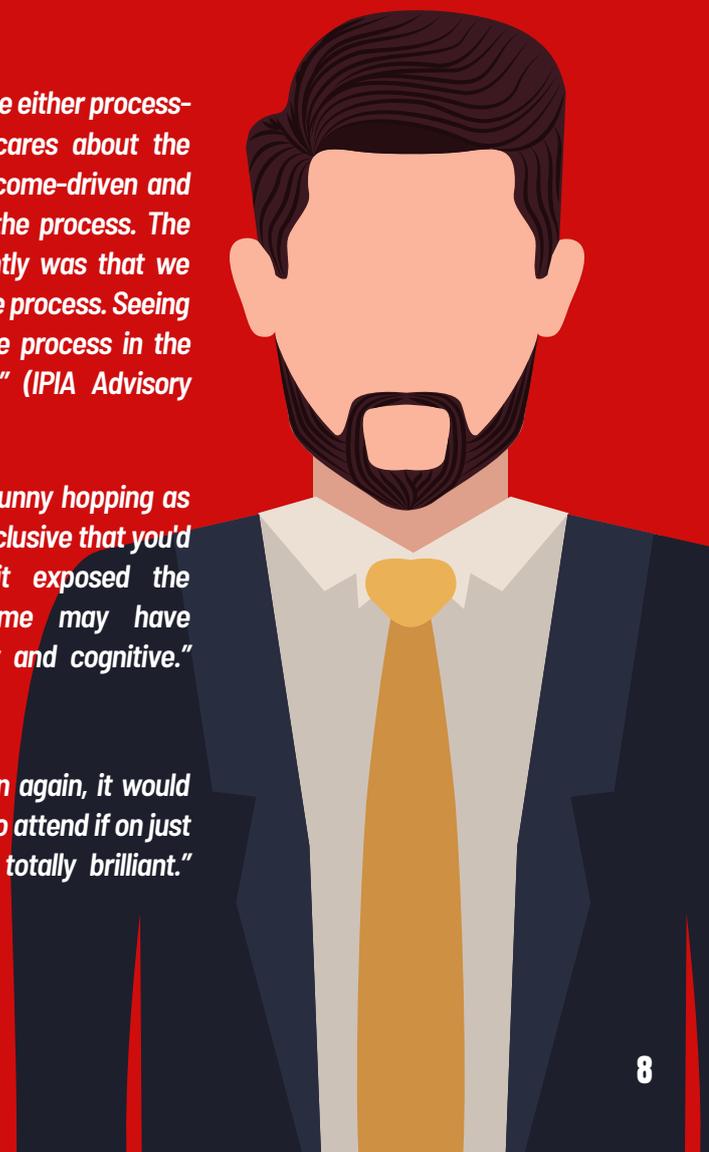
“I thought the YouTube presentations were great because I felt more relaxed watching via YouTube rather than on Zoom because on Zoom I feel as though I am constantly on show, which becomes exhausting. Zoom is great for other things, and I liked the breakout room sessions.” (IPIA delegate)

“I would have loved to have the chat disabled on a couple of the YouTube live sessions....controversial I know!!!! (I did work out how to get it to disappear myself on the second day. But I would have valued not having the distraction whilst the speakers were sharing their provocations. I found the programme a little overwhelming to navigate!! It was very beautiful though!” (IPIA delegate)

“A lot of the time you’re either process-driven and no one cares about the outcome or your outcome-driven and no one cares about the process. The thing we did differently was that we paid equal value to the process. Seeing things come from the process in the outcome was great.” (IPIA Advisory group member)

“Platform/software bunny hopping as it made it a lot less inclusive that you’d think. I feel like it exposed the limitations that some may have physically, financially and cognitive.” (IPIA delegate)

“If this was to happen again, it would be better and easier to attend if on just one day but it was totally brilliant.” (IPIA delegate)



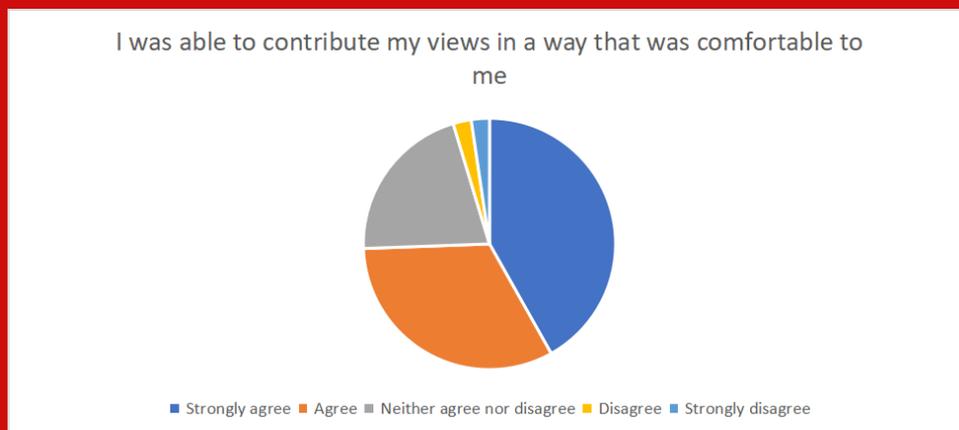
Networking opportunities understandably were rated weakest, most likely due to this being in an online space. There wasn't an obvious way that individuals could connect with each other and follow-up conversations and connections when the main space talks were taking place.

"I think more opportunities for delegate interaction would have been good" (IPIA delegate)

"Somehow didn't find the space/courage to reach out to potential partners or allies - perhaps a downside of the online format?" (IPIA delegate)

"I missed the networking side of things, the easiness of being there in person. Zoom is just not a substitute. Couldn't be helped though!" (IPIA delegate)

There was some disagreement around how delegates were able to contribute their views, again potentially representing the challenges of delivering in a virtual space.



"The preparation that went into providing support for those who may be emotionally affected by the sit-in: that was incredible." (IPIA delegate)

"Voicing ideas and opinions felt welcomed and I enjoyed the way each meeting was structure allowing open discussion. In terms of future conferences I would love to see, the young producers involved a bit more within the programming side of the event. including the topics of discussion and having more input on possible speakers. Also a wider scope of responsibility for all the young producers involved I think would be very valuable." (Young producer)

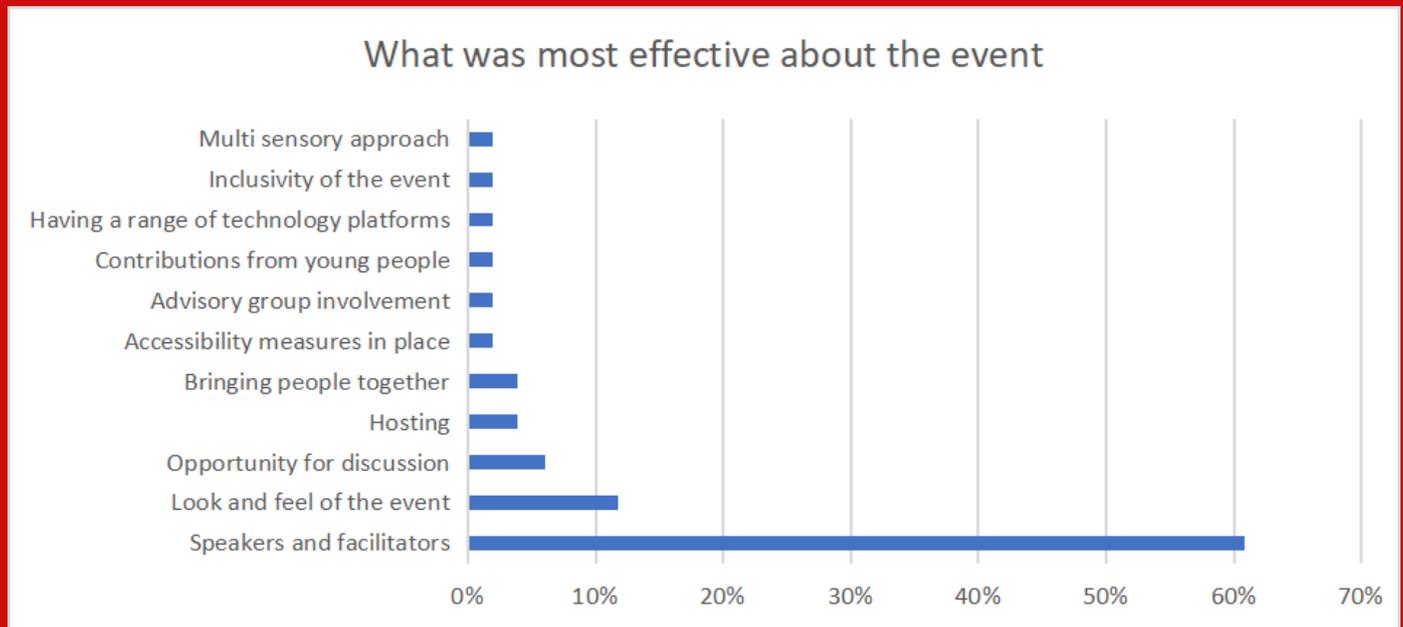
"A lot of care went into the event and Brenda really portrayed this throughout. People genuinely felt like they were cared for during their learning. Having the option to contribute through various platforms added to this." (IPIA Advisory group member)

"I struggled to concentrate and focus as I was at home working online- I get easily distracted but know it is all that is possible at the moment." (IPIA delegate)

"The only thing I'd say is a few times there was a question posed that felt far too broad to answer - a closer focus might have made the discussion more productive!" (IPIA delegate)



We asked delegates to share what they felt was most effective about IPIA – with the majority stating it was the speakers and facilitators that they found most compelling.



“The two days evidenced the importance and feasibility of an inclusive intimate and academic event. The weaving of lived experience with research driven provocations etc. was inspiring and moving.” (IPIA delegate)

“It was really lovely to see the audio description and captioning/ BSL interpretation included into the format with such ease. It made me reflect on how I often view these additions as too much hassle to implement when it really isn't.” (IPIA delegate)

I appreciated how Brenda Rattray paced her speaking on 12 March (I couldn't make it on 11 March), as she allowed lovely, long pauses for reflection on what had just been spoken and "Pausing to let that land" which was really great. I think everyone should do that. I also know that the BSL interpreters would have really appreciated that, and for the other speakers to slow down! (IPIA delegate)

“Brenda's reading of the room and ability to capture the key points, keep us connected and gently remind us of our power/responsibility - truly appreciate this” (IPIA delegate)

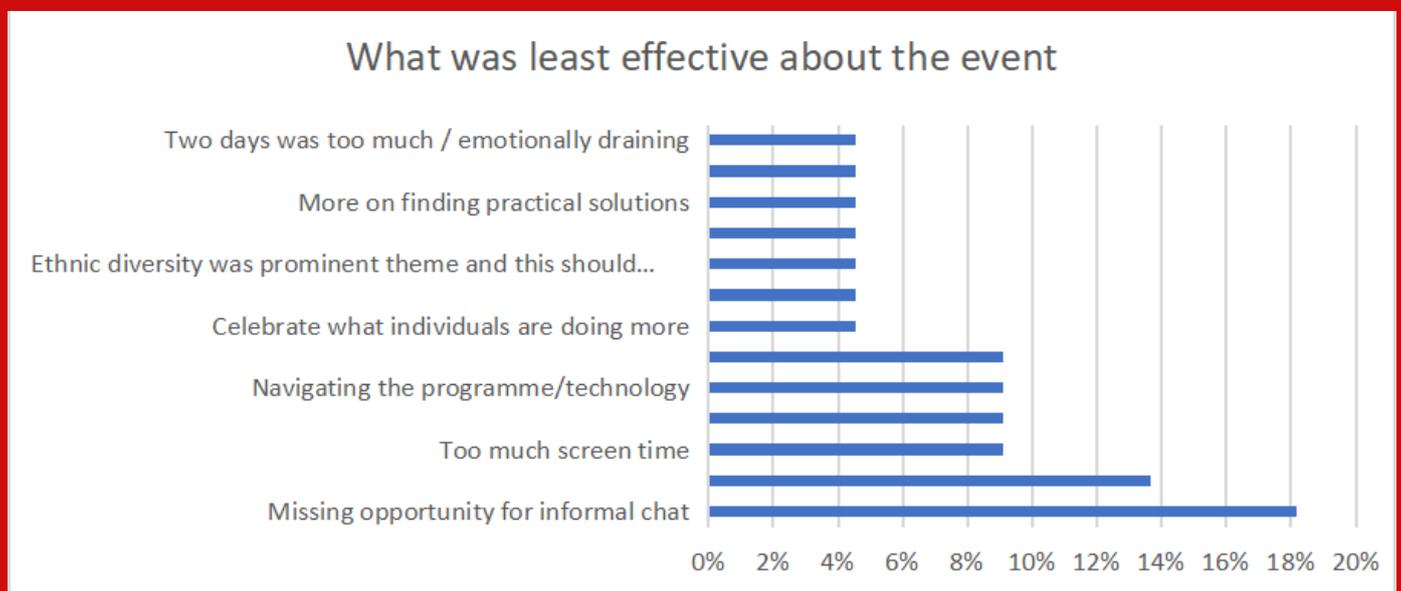
“The concise nature / focus of the theme and narrative. Consistent, high quality and delivered with credibility and accountability.” (IPIA delegate)



One of the ways that we tried to make people feel more connected at the Inclusive Practice in Action event was through collating multi-sensory recommendations from speakers / facilitators to enable delegates to increase understanding of the identities of the speakers and enable them to feel more connected.

“I particularly loved the multi-sensory approach. The list of tastes and smells made me feel more relaxed about attending an event unlike anything else I had attended before. It also caused some revealing reflections even before the conference started, about how I instantly felt more or less connected to a speaker because of similar or different tastes to mine.” (IPIA delegate)

As above, when it came to what was least effective the lack of opportunity for informal chat and networking was the most evident, followed by experiences people had in breakout spaces which has led us to carefully consider how breakout spaces are moderated at future events.



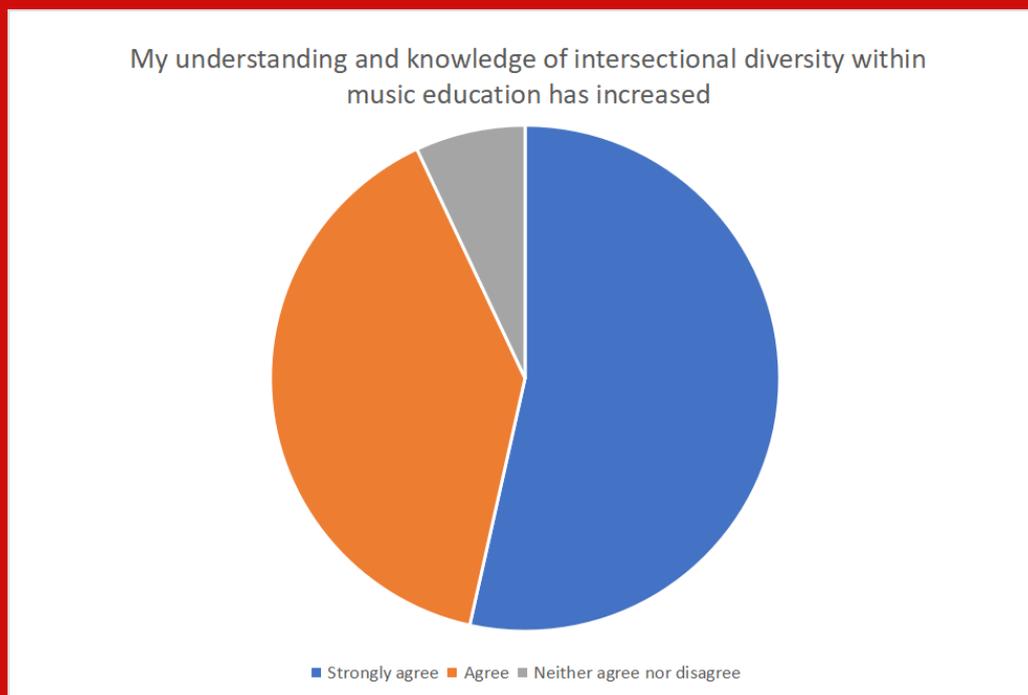
“It felt like senior leaders, funders and policy-makers needed to show up and engage more. Most of the audience are already on board with what needs to happen, so these other power-holding stakeholders needed to be there, listening and explaining what they will do to improve the sector. The conference came at a time when DCMS and DfE are threatening cultural and education institutions with defunding if they talk about decolonisation. This hostile attitude makes the work we need to do even harder. I felt like there was a risk that the conference became too much about individual choices, and less about the wider cause and collective responsibility of fighting discrimination and inequality.” (IPIA delegate)

“The break-out rooms in the afternoon were difficult to fully engage with as I was put in groups of people who work in a slightly different areas of the music education sector so we had different aspects of inclusion that were most relevant to us. There wasn't enough time to fully explore these topics in the break out rooms. I think there could have been more time dedicated to discussing concrete examples of how to bring inclusion into our workplace.” (IPIA delegate)

“There were some times when the focus seemed too narrow to me - we have to all remember that we are doing good things already, and we need to celebrate that as well as seeking to do more.” (IPIA delegate)

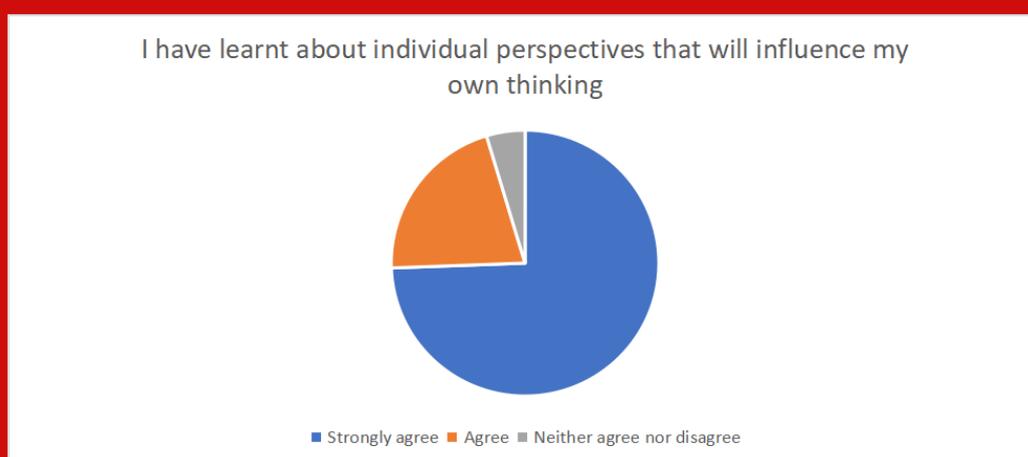
“It felt like ethnic diversity strongly took the lead. Whilst presenters sometimes made an effort to show commonality with other areas of diversity, 'blackness' felt like the most talked about theme. If the leaning towards ethnicity was deliberate it perhaps should have been stated in the information about the event - as it was it seemed that the event slightly went against its own theme of inclusiveness.” (IPIA delegate)

There was evidence of an increase in understanding and knowledge among delegates:

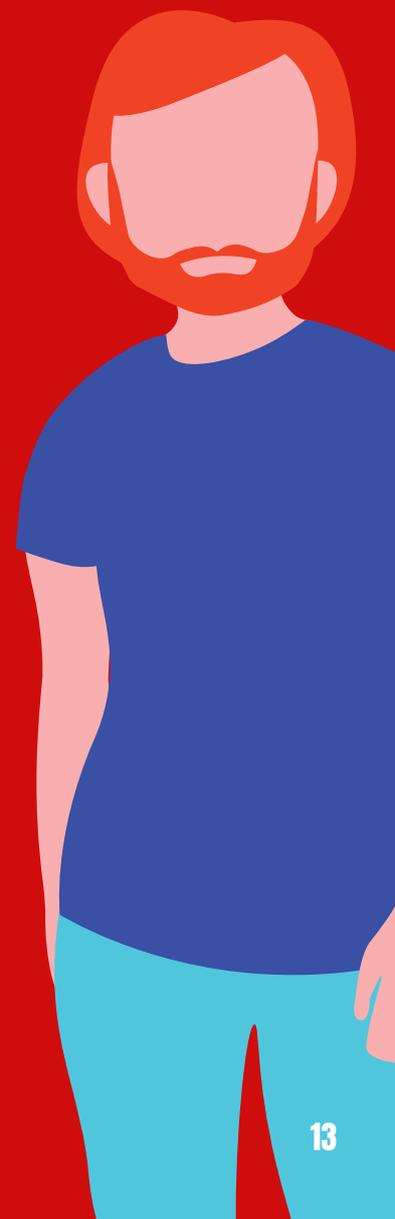


“The presentations need to be sharable - examples of actions taken by white music educators need to be highlighted and reviewed openly - signposting to better D&I practice will be needed ,due to the numbers attending - speakers may need support in dealing with enquiries.” (IPIA delegate)

“Learning more about what it’s like to be on the receiving end of discrimination, and some of the facts and figures behind it. Superb speakers , really well chaired by Brenda, and excellent work by the younger contributors.” (IPIA delegate)



“Committing the time to talk, think and be inspired. It was so good to hear from communities and perspectives from outside the regional area within which I work and I do hope that you will use this format again, even when it is possible to meet in person....inter regional connectivity is so important.” (IPIA delegate)



"The testimony of people working on the front line of music provision was the most powerful thing for me." (IPIA delegate)

"Hearing voices I would not usually come across in my work or personal life." (IPIA delegate)

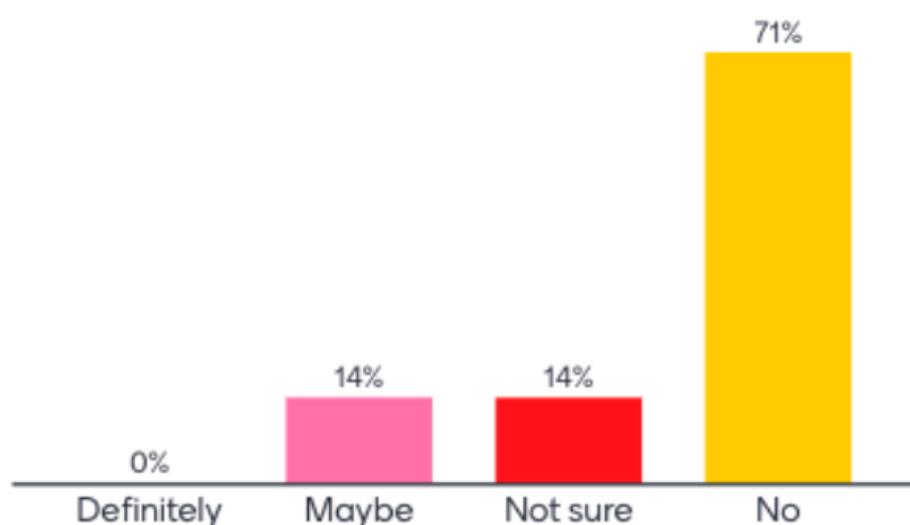
"I think the speaker Asif Sadiq really put it into perspective. I really appreciated hearing lived experiences too. I also liked Jamel Carly's talk." (IPIA delegate)

"The conversations with speakers on the Friday morning and the q&a sessions live on youtube. It was really insightful and challenged my thinking and practice." (IPIA delegate)

Delegates at the end of Day 1 of the event were asked 'are you doing enough to address issues of diversity and representation in the workforce?'. The result was striking with more than 70% disagreeing:



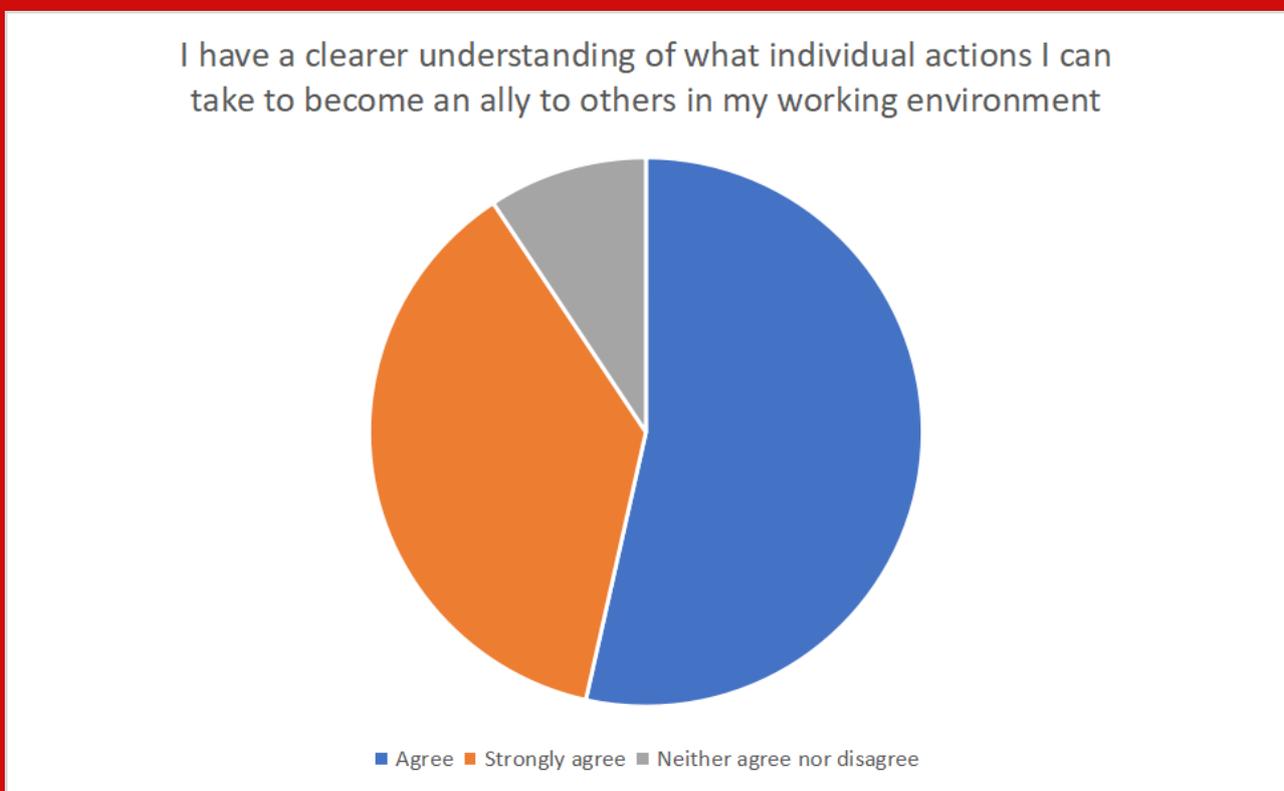
Are you doing enough?



"The conference being Influenced from the death of George Floyd already pulled my interest to the program, and that feeling stayed, the feeling of exhaustion, belittlement people of ethnic background face in the music education." (Young producer)

Applying learning in practice

83% of those attending said that they would apply something learnt from IPIA in their own practice.



“People connected with ideas and experiences in a different way that wasn’t necessarily an aim of ours. It was an emotional reaction to what was said. There’s a difference between motivating people to take action and giving them the tools to take action.” (IPIA Advisory group member)

Learning from the event will directly impact on my teaching/leading with children and young people



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree

People were then asked to share what actions/pledges they would take following the event. While there were a range of individual responses, with some people pledging multiple actions, the most common themes were:

- It will prompt conversations about change with others in the organisation, including challenging the status quo (21% of responses)

"I can take back my thoughts and ideas but I need to convince those who hold the power. Council employment structures and lack of funding make it difficult to make swift and impactful change." (IPIA delegate)

- Reconsider how representative music education offer is, due to the importance of young people seeing themselves reflected (11% of responses)
- Genuinely embrace inclusion principles (7% of responses)

"I was really struck with the idea of approaching Inclusion as an opportunity to embrace rather than a problem to fix and will make attempts to shift the language around this in my organisation. I was also really struck with the idea of giving up some of my role to somebody else in order to properly embrace the opportunity (haven't quite worked out how yet)." (IPIA delegate)

- Find ways to share power / opportunities with those who don't currently hold power (7% of responses)



"I am going to suggest to our management team that we adopt the concept of handing over 25% [of power]. I don't know what that could look like in our organisation, but I don't see why that can't become a KPI of some sort within our strategy. Also, I would like to take the idea of disruption further in our charity. I think it could be a lens to look through and apply to all aspects of our work. Disruption is a powerful creative force, so let's have more of it!" (IPIA delegate)

- Be better at listening to different voices: young people, those who experience micro aggressions (7% of responses)

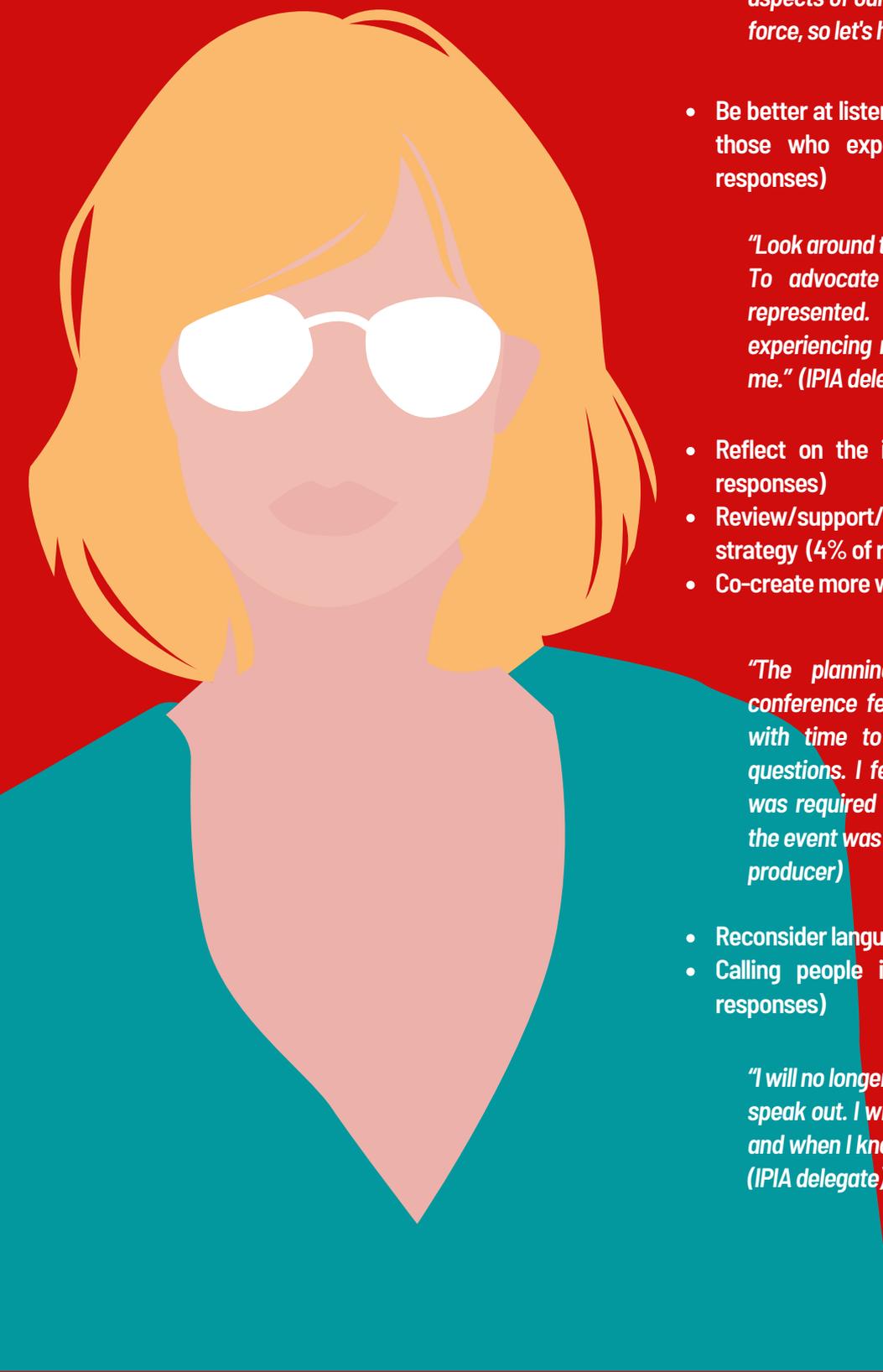
"Look around the spaces I am in to see who is missing. To advocate for including people who are not represented. To listen when those who are experiencing microaggressions share feedback with me." (IPIA delegate)

- Reflect on the impact of individual actions (6% of responses)
- Review/support/challenge the organisations' EDI strategy (4% of responses)
- Co-create more with young people (4% of responses)

"The planning element in preparation for the conference felt well organised, inclusive, respectful with time to acknowledge points, feedback and questions. I felt listened to and any extra help that was required for the purpose of being prepared for the event was quickly offered and supported." (Young producer)

- Reconsider language / vocabulary (4% of responses)
- Calling people in (not calling people out) (3% of responses)

"I will no longer keep silent. I will use my voice and I will speak out. I will continue to find out how to do better, and when I know better, I will endeavour to do better." (IPIA delegate)





"Calling people in rather than calling people out is an important way of making change rather than polarising people and this event did that really well." (IPIA delegate)

- Rethinking 'safe spaces' (3% of responses)

"The idea of 'safe spaces' being impossible for those who experience microaggressions, and opening this to be more specific eg a brave space or a calm space." (IPIA delegate)

- Improve accessibility in my work (3% of responses)

"Making sure that any inclusion isn't performative or singling out the person with additional/ separate needs. Considering the need for captioning/ BSL/ AD in meetings and conferences." (IPIA delegate)

- Challenge those who make decisions (3% of responses)

"Feel like there could have been a lot of organisations there that weren't i.e. Music Mark, ISM, MU as well as communities who don't normally attend music education events. This is an ongoing struggle of how to reach people, especially in a pandemic. We had a decent number of delegates but it's always good to reflect on what we could have done better." (Sound Connections team debrief)

Other responses included making changes to recruitment practices; embracing difficult conversations and increasing confidence with talking about racism; lobbying for more inclusive board representation; applying how to be an ally.

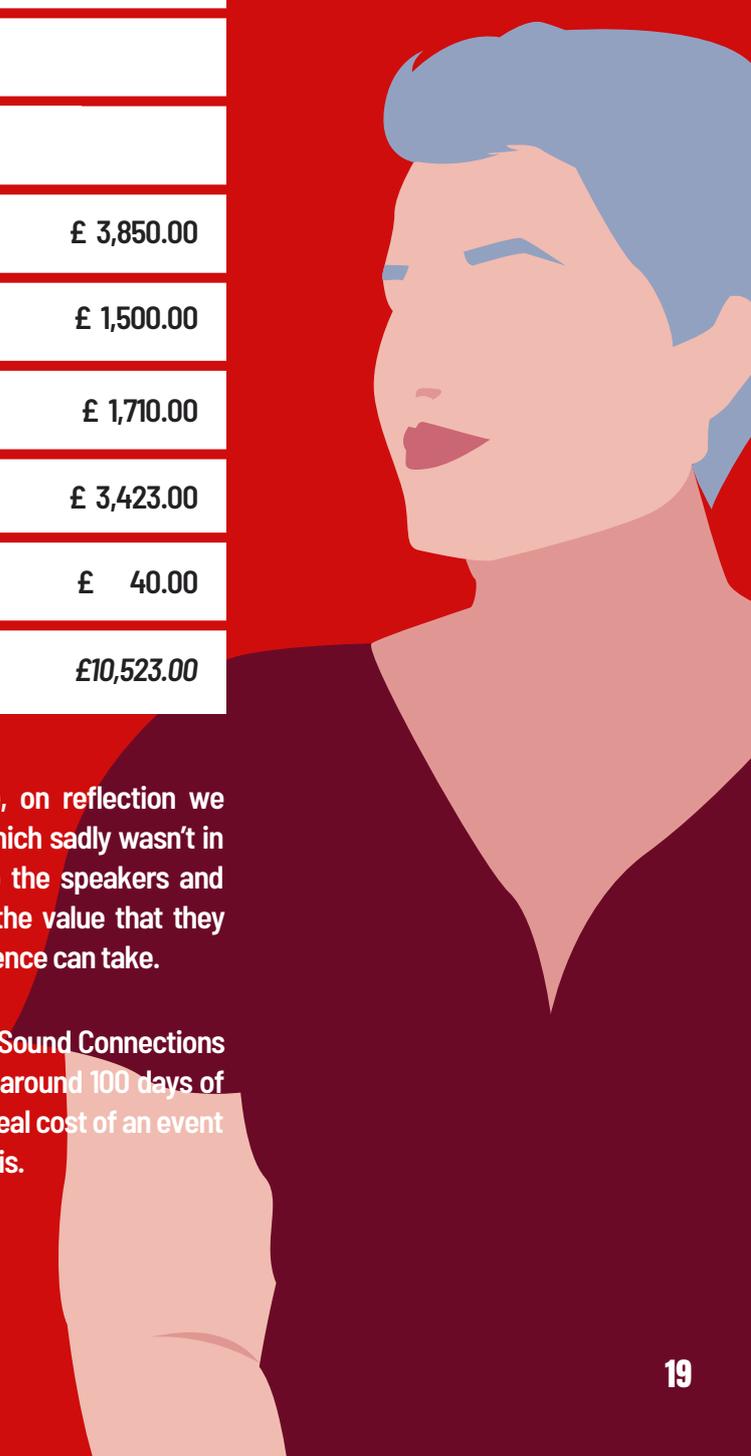
Finance

This event began with a budget of £5,500, but as it evolved and developed we relocated additional budget from other Sound Connections programmes. We had dramatically under-budgeted for accessibility costs, and needed to increase this.

Budget	
Youth Music and Rachel Baker funding subsidy	£ 9,500.00
Ticket sales income	£4,575
<i>Total</i>	<i>£14,075.00</i>
Expenditure	
Speakers, facilitators and host	£ 3,850.00
Advisory group	£ 1,500.00
Young producers	£ 1,710.00
Accessibility	£ 3,423.00
Platform costs	£ 40.00
<i>Total</i>	<i>£10,523.00</i>

While all speakers and facilitators were paid for their time, on reflection we acknowledge that their fees should have been much higher which sadly wasn't in the scope of our budget (and we were incredibly grateful to the speakers and facilitators for participating regardless of this). Not only for the value that they brought, but for the emotional toll we know sharing lived experience can take.

This budget also doesn't take into account the vast amount of Sound Connections staff time (and emotional toll) taken up, which is estimated at around 100 days of staff planning and delivery. We recommend therefore that the real cost of an event like this should be £25,000, and future budgets should reflect this.



Next Steps

We are delighted to announce that IPIA host Brenda Rattray has been appointed as guest curator of the workforce development programme for 2021-22. Brenda will be programming the content and format of the majority of Sound Connections learning and development events for the next year, including Inclusive Practice in Action in Spring 2022.

For IPIA 2022, we will focus on a more realistic budget to ensure adequate payment for speakers and facilitators, and a realistic budget for accessibility. This will either mean an event on a much smaller scale, or a similar size event but with increased ticket prices or with funds raised to support a subsidy. We would welcome feedback on this from IPIA 2021 delegates.



Acknowledgements

With grateful thanks to each and every individual involved in this event.

Host

Brenda Rattray

Advisory group and facilitators

Imrana Mahmood

Jenetta Hurst

John Kelly

Nate Holder

Samantha Spence

Speakers

Asif Sadiq

Dr Muna Abdi

Dr Melanie-Marie Haywood

Deborah Williams

Miss Jacqui

Suhaiymah Manzoor-Khan

Geraldine Smith

Jamel Carly-Campbell

Speakers

Asif Sadiq

Dr Muna Abdi

Dr Melanie-Marie Haywood

Deborah Williams

Miss Jacqui

Suhaiymah Manzoor-Khan

Geraldine Smith

Jamel Carly-Campbell

'Routes into Music Education' contributors

Carys Evans

Clarence Adoo

Colin Brent

Sharon Jagdev Powell

Sophie Fox

Young producers

Elijah Akinfenwa

Eva Rose Hicks

Rochelle Blair

Henry Baker

Siobhan Clough

Sound Connections team

Abi D'Amore: Event Director

Camara Pinnock: Campaigns and Creative Content Producer

Emily Perryman: Delegate liaison and coordination support

Jasmine Kambi: Facilitator and Wired4Music liaison

Jennifer Raven: Facilitator and host

Katherine de Halpert: Finance manager

Liz Coomb: Event Producer

Maria Turley: Connect, network and action spaces coordinator and facilitator

Philip Flood: Facilitator and host

Sandra Howgate: Graphic illustrator

Tee Peters: Film editing and communications support

BSL interpretation via Involve Interpreters

Electronic Note Takers: Catja Hamilton, Eluned Charnley, Georgina Sullivan; Karen Pritchard; Laura Carlisle Goldthorpe

Report compiled by Abi D'Amore with Jennifer Raven (Sound Connections)

Report designed by Camara Pinnock

INCLUSIVE PRACTICE



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