Help Musicians UK, formerly the Musicians Benevolent Fund, is the leading UK charity for professional musicians of all genres, from starting out through to retirement.

We help at times of crisis and also at times of opportunity, giving people the support they need at a crucial stage that could make or break their career.

Everything we do is made possible by your help. Whether that’s physiotherapy, special instruments for musicians affected by accident or illness, helping older musicians cope with the challenges of retirement or giving young musicians a vital first career break – your support makes it happen.

We can only offer help if people know we are here for them. So we are working hard to make sure every professional musician in the UK knows about us and understands what we do.

As a result, we saw growing demand for our support in 2013 (20% more than in 2012). With more musicians turning to us every year, we rely on your donations and gifts in wills to plan for the future.

This is the story of the difference your support made in 2013.
In 2013 we spent £4 million changing the lives and careers of 2,101 musicians.

- We helped 670 musicians to access expert healthcare advice.
- We supported 524 older musicians to cope with retirement.
- We assisted 417 young artists to develop their careers.
- We provided 320 professional musicians through the crisis of illness or accident.
- We supported 106 music students with the costs of advanced training.
- We assisted 64 musicians with long-term or terminal illness.
At 27, Mandhira was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. We supported her financially so she could take a complete break to recover and get back on track. Musicians often return to work too soon after they’ve been ill because they need to pay the bills. This means they can’t fully recuperate.

Mandhira is one of 320 musicians we supported through the crisis of illness in 2013. We also helped 64 musicians facing long-term or terminal illness.

We can only offer this support if people know we exist and ask us for help. 229 musicians approached us for the first time in 2013, a 20% increase on 2012 and a 36% increase on 2011. Most were facing a short-term problem and with our help were able to get back to work, with only 10% needing long-term support. Most were from musicians suffering from an illness or injury that affected their ability to perform and earn – with musculoskeletal problems being the single biggest medical problem. We’re here to help musicians from all genres, which is reflected in increasing diversity every year. While 37% of those we helped in 2013 work in classical music, 63% came from other genres including rock, pop, jazz and folk.

Results are all-important, so we asked everyone we helped how they were six months later. 78% said they were back at work. Of those, 57% said they had as much, or more, work than before.

We know that each musician who comes to us is different. The advice, guidance and financial support we offer is specially designed for each case. £5,000 can help up to three musicians hit by life-changing circumstances to return to work and continue playing.

“Help Musicians UK supported me emotionally and financially through serious illness.”

MANDHIRA
29
VIOLINIST
When injury to his hands and wrists meant he could no longer play, Adam turned to Help Musicians UK. We helped him get the specialist treatment he needed, and also helped with living costs for the six months when he couldn’t work. This meant he was able to make a fast and full recovery.

Adam is one of 670 musicians who accessed specialist expert healthcare advice thanks to our support in 2013.

We also partner with BAPAM on our Music Student Health Scheme, which provides swift access to the healthcare students need. In 2013, we helped 117 students with treatment costs totalling £35,000.

“I am eternally grateful to Help Musicians UK for the unbelievable support they gave me during an enforced and extended lay-off due to injury. I simply couldn’t have done it without them.”

ADAM
31
SAXOPHONIST

To provide this vital service, Help Musicians UK makes an annual grant to the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM). BAPAM gives free health advice to musicians and can refer on to appropriate experts when specialist treatment is needed.

We know there are stresses and strains placed on music students. If a performance-related condition interrupts studies, the impact can be serious. £500 gives a music student access to the specialist treatment they need to continue playing.
Ronnie had a successful career as a singer for over 60 years, but when injury to his voice meant he could no longer sing, he got into financial difficulties. Like many musicians, Ronnie had been unable to save as he grew older due to the erratic nature of a freelance career. We’re helping him with regular visits and financial help towards living costs to make sure he can enjoy life now his career has ended.

Ronnie is one of 524 musicians we helped in retirement in 2013.

Retirement for musicians is very different compared to other professions. Some continue to perform or write well into their 70s and 80s, while others find their musical prowess diminishes in their 50s and they can’t find the work they did before.

A common theme is that, through no fault of their own and because of the insecure pattern of work and financial rewards, many musicians don’t have savings and have little or no pension provision. Our work is targeted at people who can’t afford an adequate standard of living, have unexpected needs, or who are ill. We aim to help them live an independent life.

We know that musicians can struggle financially in retirement. £1,300 helps an older musician for a year with essential costs such as heating, enabling them to be independent and keep enjoying life.

“When I couldn’t perform any more, things were getting very tight. It was difficult to do anything other than exist. Help Musicians UK has given me a whole new whack of freedom.”

RONNIE
79
SINGER
Lauretta started performing in 1929 and still continues today when she can. We first got to know her when health issues made it difficult for her to work. We understand how important music is to those who have made it their career—which is why, as well as helping Lauretta with living costs, we make sure her piano is tuned regularly.

Lauretta is one of 482 musicians who were visited by our team in 2013.

“Help Musicians UK has helped me financially with my piano tuning, domestic help and friendly visits, never forgetting my birthday or Christmas – little kindnesses that make such a difference to my wellbeing.”

LAURETTA
91
SINGER AND PIANIST

Regular visits and social contact are a vital part of what we do. We aim to visit everyone who gets financial help once a year, to keep in touch and make sure our help is just what’s needed. We also have volunteers who do a wonderful job visiting older musicians three or four times a year to provide companionship and support.

We worked with 19 volunteers across the UK in 2013, giving 67 musicians a much-welcomed visit. The programme is a great way to keep people connected to our work and the world of music.

We know how important our visits are to the musicians we help. £500 pays for the training and travel of one volunteer visitor for a year.
HELP MUSICIANS DEVELOP THEIR TALENT

Our Talent Programme is a lifeline for many aspiring musicians like Soraya. We are providing her with funding towards her studies and living costs as she focuses on becoming a professional musician.

Soraya is one of 106 student musicians who received advanced training at a major conservatoire or performing college in 2013, thanks to our financial assistance.

We understand that training to become a musician is a long and expensive journey. Throughout 2013, we supported the next generation of professional musicians with the steeply rising costs of postgraduate study and advanced training. Grants ranged from £1,000 to £5,000.

Our research tells us that the students we support are committed to pursuing a professional career – 96% of our 2012-13 group either started careers in music or were continuing with their studies.

Research also underlines the financial implications of that commitment, with a rising number (42% in 2013 against 37% in 2012) saying they couldn’t have completed their training without our help.

The competitive nature of the music industry means musicians need the highest levels of training and experience possible. You can help an exceptional young performer pursue their dream by donating £3,000 as a scholarship in your name or that of a loved one.

“Without support from Help Musicians UK, I wouldn’t have been able to afford to study at the Royal College of Music – which prepared me for a career in opera.”

SORAYA
25
SINGER
Kareem, Wayne, Ahmad and Yussef are United Vibrations. We supported them through our Talent Programme, helping them to expand and develop.

United Vibrations are among 417 young artists who developed their careers with targeted funding and opportunities through our network of partners in 2013.

This figure includes 56 awards to talented individual musicians and groups at the start of their careers, supporting the professional development of 117 musicians. Awards included grants for musical residencies, touring across the UK and Europe, as well as important mentoring and creative opportunities.

Also included are more than 300 musicians who were given access to high-quality professional development and performance opportunities, through 19 projects with partners. These projects involved some of the UK’s top music organisations, including the London Symphony Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, National Opera Studio, English Folk Dance and Song Society and the National Youth Jazz Orchestra.

2013 saw 60 musicians and music industry experts involved in identifying the best young talent through audition and selection panels, collectively giving around 400 hours of their time to help us make the best-informed decisions possible.

“We know how crucial a small amount of support can be at the right time in a young artist’s career. £750 could make all the difference to an aspiring musician, allowing them to receive professional coaching sessions, prepare for the release of an EP, or tour.”
None of our work in 2013 would have been possible without the help of our supporters, who invested time and money in so many different ways.

Our Community Fundraisers did an amazing job, contributing over £100,000 to our work. Over £25,000 was donated in memory of loved ones and nearly 200 people took part in fundraising challenges, including Jacob Nathan who achieved the incredible feat of completing a triathlon at the age of 12.

Membership of our Friends and Love Music:Help Musicians schemes continues to grow. These very special supporters donated £37,000 in 2013 and we are indebted to them for their dedicated and ongoing support. In 2013 our annual celebratory and fundraising event, the Festival of Saint Cecilia, took place at Westminster Abbey. We were delighted that over 1,600 people joined us and helped us raise almost £10,000 from the collection on the day.

Legacies remain vital to our work – more than half the support we give to musicians each year is made possible by people remembering Help Musicians UK in their wills. All gifts are important to us and allow us to help someone who really needs our support. We are grateful to everyone who helps us in this way.

“A gift in your will could be the most important contribution to music you ever make, giving the joy of music to generations to come.”

In 2013 our income was £4.1 million, of which 79% was spent on our charitable activities. Gifts in wills remain a vital source of donations however, this unpredictable source has shown a decline on previous years. All other areas of income, including fundraising, have shown growth on the previous year.

We keep our investments at a level to provide about a third of our annual income, yielding £1.5 million in 2013 (around 37% of total income). This income covers our overhead costs, including costs of fundraising and communications, allowing us to invest more in our charitable work.

“I felt that I wanted to give something back to the people that have taught me and my family the love of music.”

JACOB NATHAN
12 FUNDRAISER
EXPENDITURE (in £000s)

- CRISIS & CONTINUING CARE £2,147 (53%)
- EMERGING ARTISTS £626 (15%)
- PROJECTS WITH PARTNERS £282 (7%)
- GRANT TO BAPAM £180 (4%)
- COMMUNICATIONS & FUNDRAISING £442 (11%)
- INVESTMENT & PROPERTY COSTS £97 (2%)
- GOVERNANCE COSTS £89 (2%)
- INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT FEES £209 (5%)

INCOME (in £000s)

- GIFTS IN WILLS £1,838 (45%)
- OTHER INCOME £45 (1%)
- FUNDRAISING & TRADING INCOME £694 (17%)
- INVESTMENT INCOME £1,540 (37%)
LOOKING AHEAD

Our vision is that all professional musicians in the UK know about us and understand we will always be here to help. That includes musicians of all genres, from training and entering the profession through to retirement and later life.

Despite growing numbers of musicians coming to us for help, we know from research that many still don’t know we are here for them or what we do. It’s the main reason why we adopted a new name, Help Musicians UK, in January 2014. Alongside our new look, it explains what we do much more clearly.

This is the first step in our plan called ‘Time to evolve.’ 2014 will see us talking and listening to musicians and those who are passionate about music. Reaching more musicians means we will need more money to support the increased numbers coming to us for help. We are grateful to those who already generously support what we do, but we need to reach many more to ensure the UK’s music culture grows and flourishes.

THE RIGHT HELP AT THE RIGHT TIME

As well as a projected total rise in grants of 20% in 2014, we are working hard to ensure that our services evolve to meet the needs of musicians today.

A major strand of development will be expanding our advice services across a range of areas – especially health and wellbeing. We know that some musicians need intensive support from us, either short or longer term, while others may just be going through a bad patch and need someone to talk to or one-off advice. That’s why in 2014 we are talking to musicians to find out exactly what they need and what our response will be.
IN 2014 WE ARE REACHING OUT TO MUSICIANS AND EVERYONE WHO LOVES MUSIC

OUR PEOPLE

To provide the complex and growing range of support that musicians need, we have a small team based at our offices in Britannia Street, near King’s Cross in London.

We also work with a network of visitors across the UK, who call on musicians in their homes.

We couldn’t do what we do without a fantastic group of people who give their time to us, including all our dedicated volunteers, those who work on our Committees and Board of Trustees.

Thank you for helping musicians.
JOIN IN
AND
HELP
MUSICIANS UK

MUSIC ENRICHES EVERYONE’S LIFE, WHETHER YOU PLAY, SING, WRITE OR LISTEN. IT’S A WONDERFUL GIFT, BUT WE KNOW IT CAN BE A UNIQUELY DEMANDING CAREER.

IF YOU LOVE MUSIC, HELP US HELP MUSICIANS

EVERYONE WHO GETS INVOLVED MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE, ENSURING THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A LIFELINE FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED IT.
THANK YOU FOR HELPING US HELP MUSICIANS

We are grateful to every supporter who helped us in 2013. We would like to offer particular thanks to the following people and organisations:

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Windsor and Eton Choral Society
Wyseliot Charitable Trust

All members of the
Love Music:Help Musicians scheme

All members of the Friends scheme