



# Helping Musicians CHANGE THE WORLD

A CASE FOR SUPPORT **2025-2028**

*Oscar Salamanca, MTL Juried Artist, MCA Workshop, Cincinnati, OH, Photo by Ed Sawicki  
Andreina Maldonado, MCA Academy Graduate and Juried Artist  
MCA Workshop, Tulsa, OK, Photo by Greg Bollinger*



## **MISSION**

Music to Life connects socially conscious musicians with the mentors, resources and training needed to realize their bold visions for community change.

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# Letter from the **FOUNDERS**

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## *Dear Friends and Partners in Social Change,*

For generations, music has been the undeniable, indispensable voice of movements for a better world. From the streets of the Civil Rights era to today's digital forums, we know that songs possess the power to move hearts, shift perspectives, and demand justice. While this legacy guides us, today we face a new urgent opportunity: to help the artist transform from a lone voice for change into a self-sustaining force for community good.

**This is the core purpose of Music to Life: to revolutionize the role that musicians play in creating a better future.**

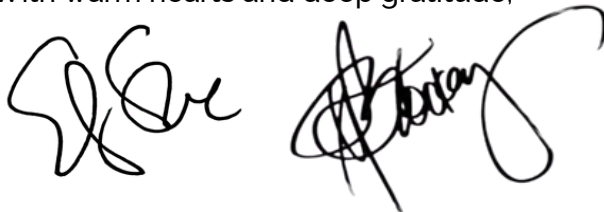
We are not simply supporting artists; we are empowering them as **social entrepreneurs**, capable of addressing the issues of our time through their craft. We provide them with the resources, training, and business skills they need to make a living while making change.

Now we stand at a critical inflection point. The need for artist-driven community bridge-building is at an all-time high, and the opportunity to scale our impact has never been greater.

In response, we're launching our three-year sustainability campaign: ***Tuning into Change***. By investing in Music to Life, you are investing in a future where artists - with their ingenuity and courage - are empowered to be the architects of a resilient and more unified world.

We invite you to embrace this vision with us and be an integral part of our movement to sustain innovative artists. Because when musicians are emboldened to lead through their craft, communities do more than just listen; they heal and grow.

With warm hearts and deep gratitude,



**Elizabeth Stookey Sunde**  
**Noel Paul Stookey**



## Mentor Introductions

- Name/Affiliation
- Area of expertise

# About **MUSIC TO LIFE**

*MCA Workshop, Kansas City, MO, Photo by Markel Randle*

## Our Purpose

Music to Life (MtL) is a national nonprofit advancing community impact by equipping mission-driven musicians to become entrepreneurs for social change. Founded by Noel Paul Stookey (Peter, Paul & Mary) and his daughter Liz, Music to Life offers an integrated network of community, training, technical support, and key connections—enabling artists to transform visionary ideas into music-led solutions that uplift and empower communities.

## The Challenge

A thriving arts and culture ecosystem is vital to the health of our communities. Music, in particular, has the power to build empathy, bridge divides, spotlight injustice, and facilitate innovative solutions. Yet 70% of independent artists in the U.S. earn less than \$10K annually from their work. These artists are deeply embedded in their communities, offering local insight and real-world perspective, yet they're often overlooked as leaders, capable of driving impact beyond the stage or recording studio. **Without investment in their potential, we lose out on musicians' ability to foster creative, community-based solutions to pressing social issues.**

## Our Solution

At Music to Life, we view these artists as entrepreneurial changemakers. With training, tools, and the right connections, they can launch powerful, music-driven responses—like mobile studios bridging divides for youth, songwriting circles in prisons, or festivals promoting food justice. These efforts not only advance healing and equity, but they also open up new economic opportunities for artists and their communities. When we equip musicians to lead, we unlock bold, creative solutions that strengthen communities from the ground up.

## Our Approach



### TRAIN

BUILD ARTISTS' SOCIAL IMPACT SKILLS



### SUSTAIN

CONNECT ARTISTS WITH FINANCIAL SUPPORT



### AMPLIFY

RAISE AWARENESS OF ARTISTS' PROJECTS



### CONNECT

ENGAGE ARTISTS WITH A DIVERSE NETWORK

## Our Commitment to Paying Musicians

Our mission centers around the belief that musicians deserve to get paid for their work—and more than that, the world becomes a better place when creatives have the resources needed to implement their ideas. Therefore, every time we work with artists, either as performers, advisors, or speakers, those artists get paid accordingly and equitably.

A woman with a black turban, glasses, and a yellow cardigan is performing on stage. She is holding a microphone in her right hand and gesturing with her left hand. She is wearing a blue and white patterned dress under the cardigan. The background is a dark stage with purple lighting.

# MUSICIAN CHANGEMAKER:

*Noun.*

A socially conscious artist who uses music, community connections, and entrepreneurial skills to drive measurable social impact.

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*Siri Imani, MtL Juried Artist, MCA Workshop, Cincinnati, OH  
Photo by Ed Sawicki*

# Profile of a **MUSICIAN CHANGEMAKER**

## Location:

Urban, suburban, and rural communities across the U.S.; artists are locally rooted and community-centered.

## Career Stage

Emerging musicians, career pivoters, and seasoned musician changemakers with decades of lived and professional experience, aged early 20s to late 60s and beyond.

## Personal Identity:

Open to all genders, races, ethnicities, abilities, and identities. 50% of artists in our network are women, and 50% are people of color.

## Musical Identity:

Our artist roster represents 39+ genres, from classical to folk to hip-hop; all are welcome.

## What Musician Changemakers Seek:

- Entrepreneurial training
- Funding pathways
- Community partnerships
- Mentorship & guidance
- Peer network

## Examples of Issues Addressed by Music to Life Artists



**Racial Justice**



**Youth Empowerment**



**Poverty**



**Environmental Justice**



**Health**



**Human Rights**



*Beny Esguerra, MCA Academy Graduate, Wheel it Studios, Toronto, CA, Photo by Esco*

# Teaching

## PHILOSOPHY

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Music to Life's **teaching philosophy** was developed by experts in social enterprise, business, and community practice. All of our training programs are guided by these core pillars, using a field-tested curriculum that meets artists where they are and provides practical tools for real-world impact.



### **Elevating Musicians as Changemakers**

*Artists learn to define, appreciate, and communicate their value as entrepreneurial changemakers, shaping their identity, mission, and ability to inspire change.*

*Curriculum: Social change branding, defining artistic value, impact storytelling, seasoned artist guest speakers.*



### **Grounding Projects in Community & Place**

*Artists create projects rooted in personal experience and local engagement, ensuring relevance, sustainability, and a deeper connection to those they serve.*

*Curriculum: Origin story development, community connection, stakeholder mapping, place-based impact strategy.*



### **Creating Measurable & Meaningful Impact**

*Artists design projects that drive long-term, measurable change by tracking outcomes, assessing success, and turning challenges into opportunities for adaptation.*

*Curriculum: Impact measurement, project sustainability, outcomes tracking.*



### **Advancing Financial Sustainability as an Artist**

*Artists develop revenue strategies that balance purpose with profitability, ensuring they are paid for their work, generating value for their community, and financially sustaining their careers and impact.*

*Curriculum: Business planning, abundance mindset, seed funding, diversified income.*



### **Building Strategic Partnerships for Growth**

*Artists learn to cultivate relationships, collaborate with experts, identify stakeholders, and secure funding through strategic resource and grants/partnership development.*

*Curriculum: Relationship-building and MOU development, grant writing, concept pitch training, coaching/mentorship, contextual awareness.*

**Music opens  
the heart so  
the mind  
can learn.**

MUSIC TO LIFE CO-FOUNDER,  
NOEL PAUL STOOKEY

*MCA Workshop, Kansas City, MO, Photo by Markel Randle*

# Transformative Support FROM THE EXPERTS

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Music to Life's extended team of instructors, coaches, and mentors brings deep experience across music, business, and nonprofit sectors. With expertise in arts administration, financial management, entrepreneurial development, and community organizing, they equip artists with the tools to turn bold musical visions into social change.

## Music to Life Instructors



### **Vreni Michelini Castillo (Chhoti Maa)** MCA Instructor

A versatile artist and leader, Vreni is a rapper, singer, songwriter, cultural producer, and educator. Her work, rooted in community organizing and hip-hop, centers on decolonial living, migrant empowerment, and social justice, with a global reach.



### **Liz Deering** MCA Instructor

Liz is a designer, storyteller, and coach with a background in tech and creative agencies. She's co-founded impact organizations like Un.Inc and 121Giving, and has spent a decade coaching women and minority founders, helping them raise over \$1M in angel funding.



### **Tanya Johnson** MCA Instructor

Tanya is a strategic impact consultant focused on transforming inequitable systems. She specializes in program design, creating tools for educators to address adversity's impact on learning, and building equitable learning environments. She brings leadership experience from prominent education networks and expertise in backward mapping for measurable results.



### **Elaine Grogan Luttrull** MCA Instructor

Dedicated to empowering creatives, Elaine is a financial expert (CPA-PFS, AFC®) who builds financial literacy through her company, Minerva Financial Arts, and book, Arts & Numbers. Her background includes financial analysis at The Juilliard School and Ernst & Young.

## Music to Life Coaches



### **Leti Bueno** MCA Coach

Leti champions equitable growth in the artisan economy. Her extensive background in fundraising, operations, and partnership development for nonprofits, combined with her advocacy for arts, ethical trade, immigration, and WOC-led entrepreneurship, reflects her commitment to community impact.



### **Meena Malik** MCA Coach

Meena champions equity in the arts as a musician, arts consultant, mediator, and coach. She's a key figure in anti-oppression efforts, having managed national grant programs and performed extensively with opera companies and an international band.



### **Jenifer Simon** MCA Coach

Jenifer is a seasoned arts leader with over 20 years of experience. She's led national creative entrepreneurship programs, held senior roles at Artrepreneur, CERF+, and Arts Horizons, and developed strategic partnerships for institutions like UNC Chapel Hill and Penn State. She holds an M.A. in Arts Administration from Columbia University.



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*Verónica Pérez-Picasso, Director of Programs, MCA Workshop, Kansas City, MO, Photo by Markel Randle*



### **TRAIN**

**BUILD ARTISTS'  
SOCIAL IMPACT  
SKILLS**



### **SUSTAIN**

**CONNECT ARTISTS  
WITH FINANCIAL  
SUPPORT**



### **AMPLIFY**

**RAISE AWARENESS  
OF ARTISTS'  
PROJECTS**



### **CONNECT**

**ENGAGE ARTISTS  
WITH A DIVERSE  
NETWORK**

# Musician Changemaker Accelerator (MCA) **ACADEMY & WORKSHOP**

# MCA Academy

## OVERVIEW

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**The Musician Changemaker Accelerator (MCA) Academy is Music to Life's flagship program—the first incubator of its kind to equip musicians with the tools they need to launch sustainable, community-led solutions to issues of concern.**

### Program Overview

**6.5 months** of online social entrepreneurial training and mentorship for **10 musicians across the country**, offering:

- **A distinctive blend** of core business tenets with social impact design.
- **1:1 coaching** to guide artists through the creation and launch of their projects.
- **National artist cohort** for peer-to-peer support and cross-pollination of ideas.
- **Financial support** at multiple stages.
- **Curated expertise** from skilled professionals across the arts, business, academic, and social impact sectors.

### What Sets Us Apart

The MCA Academy is not just a training program: it's an intensive project incubator. We focus on a small group of artists to ensure they receive the specific resources and mentoring needed to make their work in communities a sustainable reality. We make smart investments in artists who are poised to take action. The MCA Academy provides a \$10k value to artists, including a variety of direct funding:

- **Participation Stipends** We invest in artists' unique ideas and value as changemakers to ensure their access and commitment to the program.
- **Community Funds** We provide discretionary funds for artists to engage diverse partners in their program development process.
- **Matching Grants** We help artists leverage their capacity to attract support for their projects.
- **Resource Development Training** We offer comprehensive training, including grant writing, contracting, and fundraising strategies to sustain their work long-term.

**The MCA Academy is completely free for artists. By removing financial roadblocks, we help artists move from vision to action to make real change happen. This ensures that their groundbreaking musical initiatives can flourish and create lasting impact in communities.**

# MCA Academy

## GRADUATES IN ACTION



### Andreína Maldonado

**Graduate:** Fall 2023  
**Project:** Raíces y Voces: Canciones de Lucha y Esperanza (Roots and Voices: Songs of Struggle and Hope)

*"This work matters because it not only preserves the cultural memory of frontline workers, but also amplifies their stories and leadership in a time when immigrant voices are often silenced."*



### Andreína & Her Work

Andreína Maldonado is a San Francisco-based artist and community organizer using music to uplift the voices of immigrant workers. Her project, Raíces y Voces, amplifies the lived experiences of domestic workers and day laborers through original songs, live performances, and collective storytelling rooted in cultural pride and resistance.

Through the Music to Life MCA Academy, Andreína gained the tools to grow her project with confidence—securing funding, forming new partnerships, and expanding her reach. One teaching that especially grounded her came from her instructor, Vreni Castillo, who encouraged her to apply both traditional organizing methods and ancestral wisdom to guide her creative path.

### Andreína's Impact within the 1st Year of Graduation:



#### Grounded in Community

- 13-member worker choir launched, offering space for healing and empowerment
- 500+ community members engaged through live performances



#### Measurable Impact

- Participants reported increased confidence and a desire to continue organizing



#### Advancing Financial Sustainability

- \$50,000 raised from local government and national foundations



#### Partnerships & Growth

- Partnerships formed with 5+ local nonprofits and dozens of artists
- Album + songbook scheduled for release

# MCA Academy

## GRADUATES IN ACTION



**Saxon Kincy**  
**Graduate:** Spring 2023  
**Project:** Healing Futures

*"When I felt like my project was becoming stagnant, my coach helped me find new ways to think about it which led to the project expanding to better serve my community."*



### Saxon & His Work

Saxon Kincy is a Denver-based hip-hop artist and educator who empowers youth through music. After learning the average age at death of rappers is 35 (51% by homicide), Saxon asked middle schoolers who listened to mainstream rap what age they saw themselves living to - the answer was their early 20s. Thus, he created Healing Futures, using songwriting to help students envision brighter futures, build emotional resilience, and challenge harmful cultural narratives.

Through the Music to Life MCA Academy, Saxon found clarity and momentum. The Academy gave him the strategy and confidence to grow his vision, secure funding, deepen partnerships, and expand his reach across Denver's underserved schools.

### Saxon's Impact within the 1st Year of Graduation:



#### Grounded in Community

- 220+ youth participants reached across four school and nonprofit sites



#### Measurable Impact

- 83% of students reported improved emotional well-being
- 87% of students envisioned significantly longer life spans post-program



#### Advancing Financial Sustainability

- \$17,000+ raised from foundations, small businesses, and individual donors



#### Partnerships & Growth

- Original songs released on streaming platforms to celebrate student voices
- Strong foundation built for future growth and replication

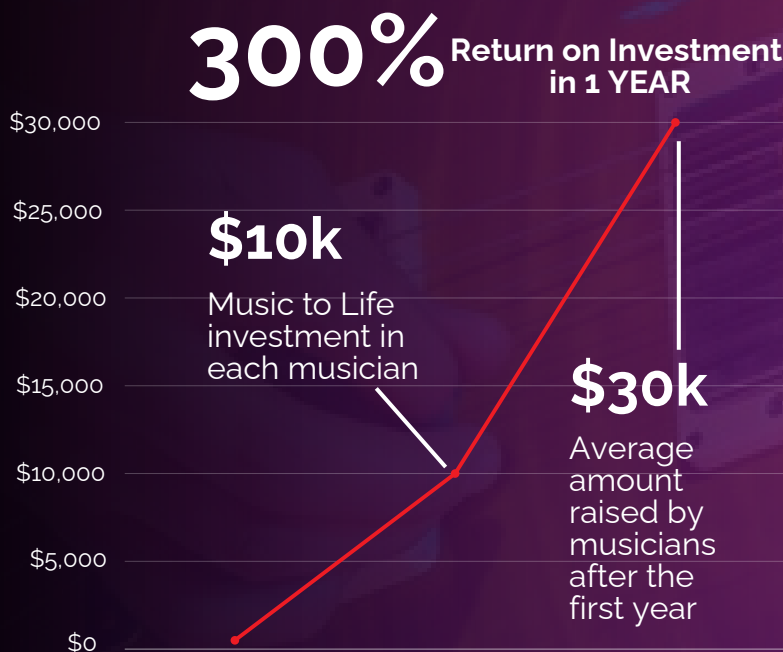


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*MCA Workshop, Cincinnati, OH, Photo by Kendall Ross*

## The MCA Academy Turns Vision into Action

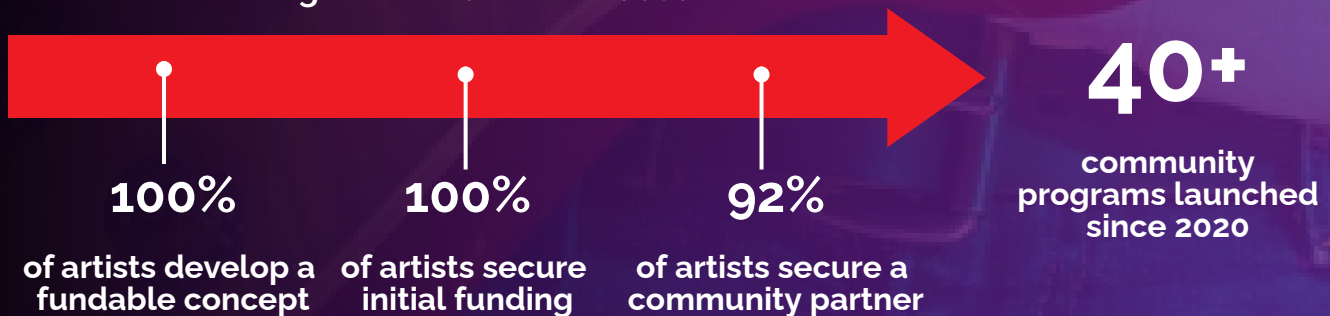
These numbers reflect the concrete outcomes participants achieve after completing the MCA Academy, showing just how quickly music-driven ideas can evolve into funded, impactful community initiatives.



## Diversity of Funding Sources for Artist Projects



## Artist Progress 1 Year Post-Graduation



From intimate gatherings to large-scale initiatives, each artist's project impacts anywhere from **15** to **11,000+** lives annually.

# MCA Workshop

## OVERVIEW

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**The Musician Changemaker Accelerator (MCA) Workshop is a crash course in music-driven social entrepreneurship, offered across formats and rooted in local partnerships to jumpstart musicians on their path as changemakers.**

### Program Overview

A **day-long** deep-dive training incubator for **15-30 artists** in a community, held as an **in-person, hybrid, or online** offering:

- **An introduction** to practical methods of using music as a tool for change.
- **Networking and connections** for local artists across genres and issue areas.
- **Continued local mentorship** from business and arts leaders within the community.
- **Local economy engagement**, bringing in local caterers, photographers, etc.
- **Community Showcase (optional)** to spur local interest in supporting artists' visions for change.

### What Sets Us Apart

What makes the MCA Workshop different isn't just what we do—it's how we do it. Each workshop is tailored to local priorities and designed to engage both artists and the communities where they live, enhancing their collective strengths through the strategic application of music, stakeholder engagement, and social impact.

- **Entrepreneurial Empowerment** We equip musicians with the creative business skills to launch and sustain music-based social impact projects.
- **Collaborative Network Building** We foster crucial partnerships between artists and local community stakeholders to expand their work.
- **Sustainable Program Development** We guide artists to design and implement long-lasting, community-enriching initiatives that address specific needs.
- **Nationwide Support System** We connect local artists with our national network of changemakers, mentors, and resources to amplify their impact.

The MCA Workshop's unique blend of programming empowers artists to build enduring initiatives that are uniquely suited to address the needs of their community. This holistic approach prepares both musicians and communities for fruitful collaborations that result in sustainable solutions.

## The MCA Workshop Builds Momentum from the Ground Up

In just one day, participants move from early-stage ideas to structured concepts, laying the foundation to drive action. With the right tools and support, artists leave thinking differently about their role as musicians in their communities.

### Community Host 3+

*3 local coordinators*

### MCA Musician Participants 15+

*MCA trained musicians*

### Curated Experts 5+

*Local influential speakers and session visitors*

### Curated Mentors 5+

*Local mentors that support participants after the workshop*

### Music to Life Peers 75+

*Annual network of graduated MCA participants*

### Partner Organizations 30+

*1-2 local cause focused organizations x 15 musicians*

### Core Beneficiaries 135+

*5-8 individuals per musician x 15 musicians*

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# 268+

Musicians & Allies  
Activated for each  
MCA Workshop



100%

now think differently  
about themselves as a  
musician changemaker



96%

came away with ideas to  
deliver music-driven  
change in their community



87%

gained skills to connect and  
network with organizations  
in their community

# MCA Workshop

## FEATURED HOST

**“Music to Life offered both a beautifully structured learning path catered to our musicians’ needs and a level of understanding and empathy that was felt by every participant. Their team brought absolute professionalism, deep respect for the artists, and so much heart to the work they do.”**

*-Kesha Bruce,  
Arizona Commission on the Arts*



*MCA Workshop, Arizona*

### **The Client: Arizona Commission on the Arts**

#### **The Need:**

The Arizona Commission on the Arts recognized a growing need for mentorship and practical support among musicians across the state. Seeking a partner that deeply understood both the professional and community impact of musicians, the agency selected Music to Life for its tailored, artist-centered approach.

#### **Our Response:**

Music to Life delivered a comprehensive program combining core curricular pillars, peer learning, and mentorship, effectively uniting musicians from across Arizona to build skills, foster collaboration, and strengthen community ties.

#### **Our Impact:**

As a result, host leaders gained a clearer picture of the barriers local musicians face and saw meaningful relationship-building emerge during the Workshop. Artist Programs Manager for the AZ Commission on the Arts, Kesha Bruce, stated, *“It was amazing to witness the sparks of ideas and collaborations taking shape in real time. We have no doubt they built lasting relationships that will continue for years beyond the end of the program.”*

# MCA Workshop

## ARTIST IN ACTION



### Bo Shimmin

**Workshop:** Tucson, AZ  
**Project:** This is OUR Land: A Gathering of Indigenous Excellence and Artistry

*"The instructors' advice and mentorship inspired me to pursue leadership roles in musical activism and arts advocacy. They've got me thinking about my artistry and vision more than ever."*

### Bo & His Work

Bo is an indigenous operatic tenor and arts advocate from the Pueblo of Acoma. He is a two-time Fulbright grantee to Italy, where he taught English and researched 20th-century vocal chamber music. He is an avid performer of new music and aims to incorporate his identity into all of the music he creates.

Bo's MCA idea, *This is OUR Land: A Gathering of Indigenous Excellence and Artistry*, strives to bring music education, performances, and outreach to tribal communities in Southern Arizona. Growing up on a reservation in New Mexico opened Bo's eyes to musical inequality for indigenous communities. Starting with bimonthly gatherings on the Tohono O'odham Nation in Tucson, Bo will bring native artists and musicians together to share music, take lessons, network, and bask in each other's talents. He hopes that he will expose audiences to a vast wealth of musical genres and inspire future musicians to follow paths in the arts.



*Bo Shimmin, MCA Workshop Participant, in his community with fellow MCA Workshop Participant Jenny Bement*

### Workshop Impact & Program Development:

Through the Music to Life workshop, Bo was able to develop outreach strategies that are now being implemented to create relationships with tribal leaders. The first gathering was planned directly after the class. One of the highlights of the Workshop was connecting with fellow attendee Jenny, a native tubist, and they are now in the early stages of producing more projects to bring classical music to tribal communities across Arizona.



### TRAIN

BUILD ARTISTS'  
SOCIAL IMPACT  
SKILLS



### SUSTAIN

CONNECT ARTISTS  
WITH FINANCIAL  
SUPPORT



### AMPLIFY

RAISE AWARENESS  
OF ARTISTS'  
PROJECTS



### CONNECT

ENGAGE ARTISTS  
WITH A DIVERSE  
NETWORK

# Juried Artist NETWORK

*Peter Crescimanno (Ánno), MCA Workshop Participant, MCA Workshop Showcase, Cincinnati, OH, Photo by Ed Sawicki*

# Juried Artist Network

## OVERVIEW

**The Juried Artist Network is a vibrant collective of socially conscious musicians driving change through music. Artists gain access to resources, visibility, and support that turn their artistry into a lasting force for community transformation.**

### What Sets Us Apart

Through a competitive application process, we curate a vetted roster of talented artists from across the country who are using their music and creative ideas to drive social change in the communities they call home. Our community represents over 425 artists across genres and social issues of concern, ensuring they have the resources and support they need to continue their work.



### SUSTAIN

*We sustain the careers of musicians, helping them find paid opportunities through:*

- Speakers Bureau
- Ongoing Professional Development
- Monthly Newsletter of funding/performance opportunities
- Leadership Development with Artist Advisory Council & Board Positions



### AMPLIFY

*We amplify the work of musicians to help them build a base of supporters through:*

- Online Performances
- Presentations at national conferences
- Social Media, Newsletter, and press promotion of artist projects
- Social Change Song Promotion via compilation albums & playlists



### CONNECT

*We connect musicians to each other and to mentors for mutual support through:*

- Reunion meetings for MCA graduates
- Mentorship from seasoned artists and business experts
- Upcoming searchable database of like-minded artists across genre, issue & location

**The Juried Artist Network empowers musicians to become lasting forces for change. This sustained support ensures their impact resonates far beyond the stage and into the communities they serve.**

# The Juried Artist Network Connects Musicians across Genre, Geography, and Generations

425+

Juried Artists

42

States (and Canada)

**DAYO AYODELE** BOISE, ID  
*GLOBAL LOUNGE*  
Promoting cross-cultural connectivity through all genres of arts, entertainment, exhibitions, workshops, and mentorships.

**AMI YARES** PHILADELPHIA, PA  
*BUILDABRIDGE INTERNATIONAL*  
Training artists and community personnel to use arts intervention tools to uplift youth who have experienced trauma.



**CORY HILLS** NEWBURY PARK, CA  
*PERCUSSIVE STORYTELLING*  
Increasing access to music for children in low-income communities through creative percussion-based stories.



**KAREEN KING** LAWRENCE, KS  
*THE GOLDEN EXPERIENCE*  
Inspiring a new generation of connection and dignified caregiving for the elderly using storytelling and song.



**LILLI LEWIS** BUSH, LA  
*BLACK AMERICAN MUSIC SUMMIT*  
Providing a space for black musicians to reclaim their place and share their contributions within Folk/Americana music.



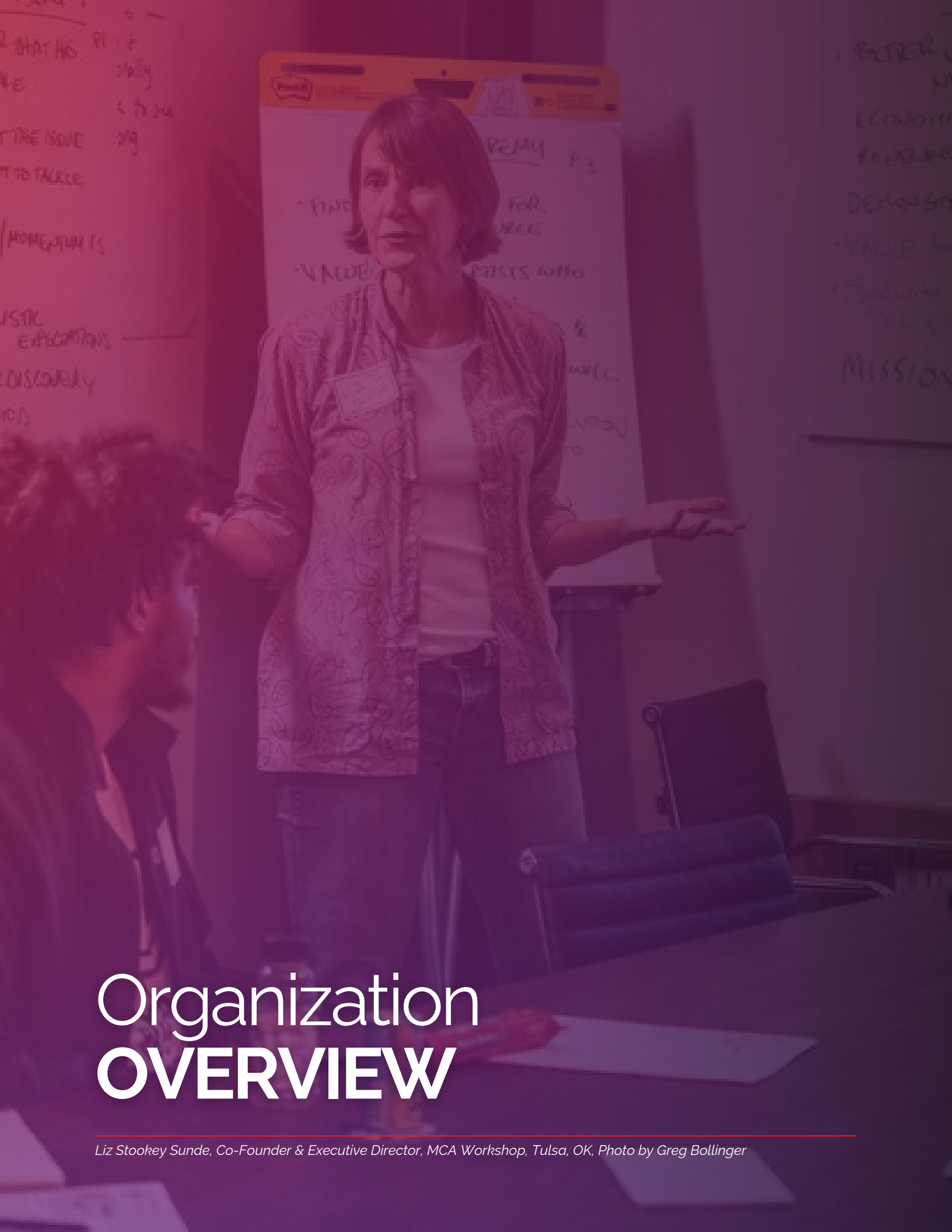
*Being part of this community means a lot to me. It aligns deeply with my purpose of using music not only to create but to uplift, advocate, and make a difference. I'm grateful to be joining a network of artists who are moving culture forward."*

*- Jesus Olivas (Waves)*



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*Amanda Pascali, MCA Academy Pilot graduate, Juried Artist, and former MTL Board Member and Artist Advisory Council Member, Houston, TX. Photo by Andrew McNish*



# Organization **OVERVIEW**

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*Liz Stookey Sunde, Co-Founder & Executive Director, MCA Workshop, Tulsa, OK, Photo by Greg Bollinger*

# Org Snapshot

## WHO WE ARE



**Liz Stookey Sunde**  
Co-Founder &  
Executive Director



**Noel "Paul" Stookey**  
Co-Founder &  
Board Member



**Verónica Pérez-Picasso**  
Director of Programs



**Camryn Wells**  
Development  
Director



**Kyra Shaughnessy**  
Artist Liaison



**Sarah Morge**  
Operations & Special  
Projects Manager



**Shannon Marshall**  
Communications &  
Social Media Manager



**Leonora Wengraf**  
Finance Coordinator

### Music to Life Board

**Ruth Scheer** - *Board Chair*  
Former Director, Cabot Family Charitable Trust

**Noel "Paul" Stookey**  
Artist; Co-Founder, Music to Life

**Elizabeth Stookey Sunde**  
Co-Founder & Exec. Director, Music to Life

**Barbara Newman** - *Board Treasurer*  
Not-for-Profit Consultant and Retired CEO, The Blues Foundation

**David Altschul**  
Partner, Altschul Olin & Vandergast, LLP

**Nancy Buffington**  
Principal, Communications Trainer/Coach

**Andrew Casillas**  
Attorney, Oracle America, Inc.

**Belinda Chiu**  
Founder, Hummingbird Research, Coaching & Consulting

**Richard Choi**  
Global Marketing Consultant

**Stellar Dutcher** - *Juried Artist Representative*  
Artist & Graduate, Musician Changemaker Accelerator

**Eric Dozier** - *Juried Artist Representative*  
Artist & Graduate, Musician Changemaker Accelerator

**Karen Hudson**  
Marketing & Strategy Consultant

**Deana McCloud**  
Owner/Partner, Museum Collective

**Peri Smilow**  
Artist; Executive Director, Shards of Light Foundation

**Adrienne Waddell**  
Associate, Holland & Knight LLP

### Artist Advisors

Ysaÿe Barnwell  
Paul Beaubrun  
Judy Collins  
Kemp Harris  
Reggie Harris  
Diana Jones  
Tom Paxton  
Jasiri X  
*In Memorium*  
Peter Yarrow

# Music to Life's DEFINING MOMENTS

1972-2000

**Seed Funding** Proceeds from Noel Paul Stookey's "Wedding Song" are distributed to charity; a portion funds the development of Music to Life in 1999.

2002-2010

**Early Wins** Music to Life begins as a songwriting contest, attracting 1,500+ social change musicians across genres, generations and geographies.

2010-2018

**Defining Vision** Music to Life explores its purpose: producing multimedia programs, HOPE RISES compilation albums, educational panels, and commemorative events.

2018-2020

**Mission Formalized** Music to Life becomes a 501(c)(3) to support musicians who make change, and develops the Musician Changemaker Accelerator (MCA) model. In 2020, Music to Life graduates the first MCA Academy class of 10 musician changemakers.

2020-2021

**Changemaker Focus** Music to Life offers the Brave Troubadours series, an online quarterly talk/music series during COVID, showcasing more than a dozen social impact musicians and reaching thousands of viewers.

2021-2022

**Proven Model** Music to Life's MCA model is positively assessed by Dartmouth's Amos Tuck School of Business and Animating Democracy (Americans for the Arts).

2022

**Major Backing** Music to Life receives its first multi-year foundation gift: \$500K from the Mellon Foundation through FY25.

2023-2025

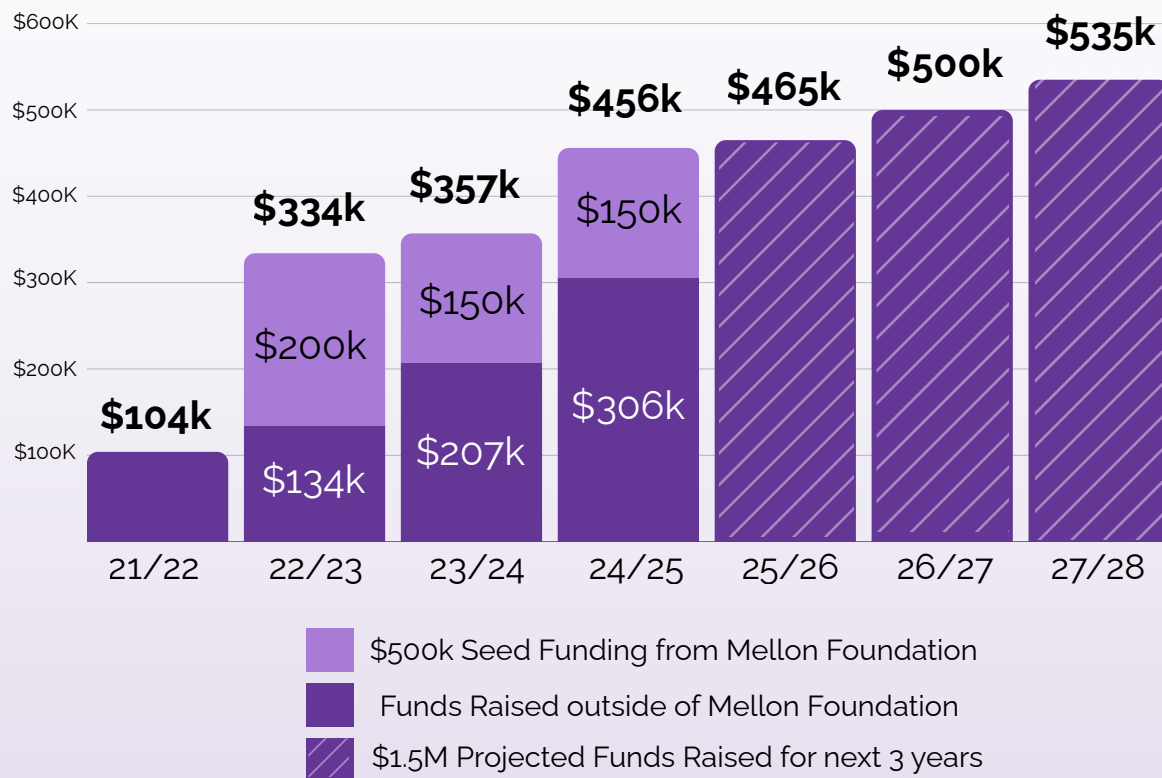
**Expanding Reach** Music to Life is nominated for awards (Music Cities), invited to panels and talk shows, and engaged in earned income planning to expand the MCA Academy and Workshop models through national partners.



Photos, 1. Juried Artist Taiyo Na, Co-Founder Noel Paul Stookey, Juried Artist Shea Rose, Music Matters, NYC 2017, 2. Bloomberg Media Speaker Series, NYC, 2018, 3. MCA Pilot Academy 2020, 4. Cincinnati MCA Workshop Showcase 2024

# Annual Revenue Growth

## 2021 - 2028



### Our Story of Growth

In 2022, Music to Life received \$500k in seed funding from the Mellon Foundation to develop the Musician Changemaker Accelerator. This investment gave us the resources to grow our capacity significantly and strategically - we expanded the team from 3 to 7 staff members, delivered (and continued to improve) 5 MCA Academies and 12 Workshops, and established a diverse network of 425+ Juried Artists across the country.

Over the past three years, we have built a strong foundation for sustainable growth thanks to this seed funding. Now, as we launch our 3-year campaign, we are well-positioned to reach our \$465k fundraising goal for FY 25/26 and build toward the future - expanding our community of committed funders to ensure we can continue to serve artists and their rising demand for social entrepreneurship training.

# Financial Snapshot

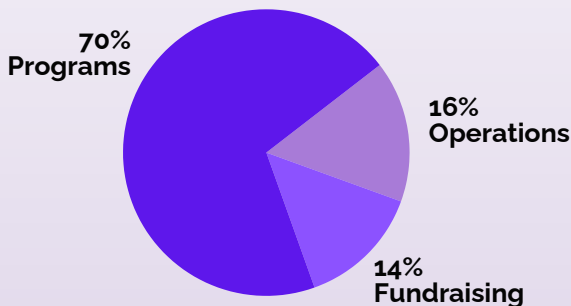
## 2023 - 2025

\*Based on June-July Fiscal Year

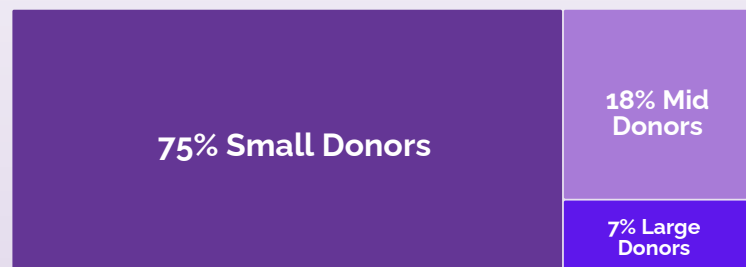
### ▼ DIVERSITY OF REVENUE



### ▼ OPERATING COSTS



### ▼ 350+ INDIVIDUAL DONORS



# \$0.14

Every dollar raised costs Music to Life 14 cents compared to the industry average of 25 cents. Donor contributions stretch more than twice as far, putting more money directly into impact.

Source: Charity Navigator, Nonprofit Quarterly, Candid (Guidestar)

# 70%

Music to Life channels 70% of its budget into program delivery, compared to the 65% industry average. Operational resources are invested strategically to sustain growth and impact.

Source: Better Business Bureau Standards for Charity Accountability

# 37/50

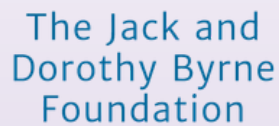
Since implementing our new Donor Management System, we've had the opportunity to more personally build our donor base across 37 states. We're on track to cultivate donors in all 50 states by 2028.

# With Our **APPRECIATION**

We acknowledge the many funders, partners, and allies who have accompanied us on this journey to serve musician changemakers.



WARNER MUSIC GROUP





# Tuning Into Change **OUR THREE-YEAR CAMPAIGN**

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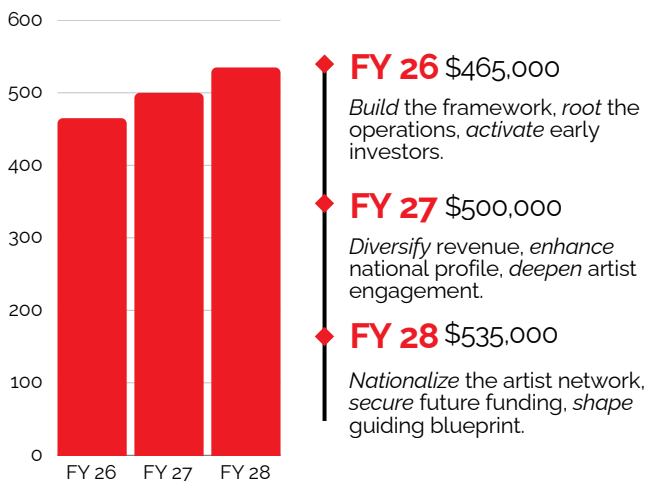
*Elexa Dawson, MCA Academy Graduate, Juried Artist & former MTL Board Member and Artist Advisory Council Member, Good Way Gardens, Emporia, KS. Photo by Benning Creative*

# Bold Goals FOR GROWTH

## Raising \$1,500,000

July 2025 - June 2028

Over the next three years, Music to Life is making a bold, shared commitment: to sustain our artists, our organization, and the movement we've built together. Through this \$1.5 million campaign, we'll expand **how** we serve, **whom** we serve, and amplify **why** we serve them, ensuring that musicians working for change have the resources, recognition, and stability they need and deserve. Your support is not just a donation; it's a promise kept—to invest in the power of music to heal, unite, and transform communities across the country. Together, we're not only sustaining our work. We're fueling their future.



\*Based on June-July Fiscal Year

## 1 YEAR 1 SETTING THE STAGE

**Integrate** 3-4 operational systems and procedures that promote efficiency and sustainable growth.

**Refine** existing training models and launch 1-3 new artist development programs for Juried Artists.

**Grow** the Juried Artist network of 425 artists by 10%, capturing new states, genres, and social issues while maintaining a 90%+ artist retention rate.

**Secure** 60% of the Year 1 campaign goal from Catalyst Investors.

## 2 YEAR 2 SCALING THE WORK

**Affiliate** Music to Life programs with 2-3 regional and national music industry conferences.

**Introduce** a membership program to deepen our Juried Artists' financial investment in the mission, with a participation target of 150 members in the first year.

**Build** an earned income pipeline to secure 2-3 sponsorship partners, with business contracts representing 8-10% of total revenue.

**Increase** digital engagement by industry standard (1-3%) and secure major national media placement.

## 3 YEAR 3 ADVANCING THE IMPACT

**Achieve** artist representation in all 50 U.S. states with active engagement across 80% of social issue areas.

**Increase** enrollment in the artist membership program to 225 Juried Artists.

**Secure** 50%+ of FY 29 revenue in advance through diversified funding streams.

**Publish** final campaign outcomes report and strategic roadmap for sustained growth and impact.

## Giving Opportunities

# STAND WITH US AS WE TAKE THE NEXT STEP

At Music to Life, we've always believed in the power of grassroots action. That belief has carried us this far, building a national network of musicians driving real change. But today's nonprofit landscape is tougher than ever. To meet this moment and expand our impact, we need partners like you walking alongside us. Whether you give financially or through your time and connections, your support powers musicians creating a more just and connected world.

### GIVE FINANCIALLY

- Direct Donations
- Recurring Gifts
- Employee Giving Programs
- Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs)
- Stock Transfers, IRAs, and Trusts

### SPREAD THE WORD

- Connect us with funders, partners, or changemaker musicians
- Share our mission with your community
- Help bring our programs to your city
- Host a Music to Life gathering or house party



*An Evening with Peter Yarrow and Noel Paul Stookey, Benefit for Music to Life, Levitan Opera House*

# Our Commitment to You

## ANNUAL DONOR BENEFITS



Every contribution—monetary or otherwise—fuels this movement. Together, we can amplify change that will resonate for generations. Your partnership powers what comes next.



	\$5K–\$9,999 <i>Composer</i>	\$10K–\$19,999 <i>Harmonizer</i>	\$20K–\$49,999 <i>Orchestrator</i>	\$50K+ <i>Maestro</i>
Website Legacy Recognition	🎵	🎵	🎵	🎵
Annual Impact Briefing		🎵	🎵	🎵
Invitation to MCA Workshops		🎵	🎵	🎵
Early Access to Annual Events/Auctions		🎵	🎵	🎵
Personal Thank You from Juried Artist			🎵	🎵
Inside Look at Program Planning Process			🎵	🎵
Bi-Annual Progress Reports from MCA Academy Artists			🎵	🎵
Create Personalized Video/Song with Juried Artist				🎵
Exclusive Q&A Session with Juried Artists				🎵



If you believe in **the power of musicians** to change the world, and you're ready to invest in their ideas for **healing communities**, please contact our Director of Development, Cam Wells, at [devdirector@musictolife.org](mailto:devdirector@musictolife.org) to **explore your giving options**.

## WELCOME TO THE MOVEMENT.



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 [@musictolife\\_org](https://www.instagram.com/musictolife_org)  
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