

Executive Director's Report 2025-26

Andy Glydon, Executive Director

This report covers activities from the 2025–2026 fiscal year, beginning April 1, 2025 and ending March 31, 2026. It reflects a year of growth for Music PEI, not only in the programs and opportunities we delivered, but also in the organization itself.

Throughout this report you'll see four recurring themes. The first is building organizational capacity by investing in our people, systems, and long-term sustainability. The second is creating opportunities for artists through funding, professional development, export initiatives, and industry events that help build sustainable careers. The third is the importance of building meaningful partnerships with governments, industry organizations, municipalities, community groups, and international collaborators to create opportunities that would not be possible on our own. Finally, you'll see our commitment to looking ahead by planning strategically for the future while remaining responsive to the evolving needs of Prince Edward Island's music industry.

While this report looks back on another successful year for Music PEI, it is equally about looking ahead. The work of strengthening our organization, supporting artists, building partnerships, and planning for the future is ongoing, and we remain committed to ensuring Music PEI continues to grow alongside the industry we serve.

Operations

Board of Directors

Music PEI is fortunate to be guided by a dedicated Board of Directors whose leadership, expertise, and volunteer commitment help shape the organization's direction and ensure strong governance.

- Mark Watts – President
- Emma Fugate – Treasurer
- Braeden Van Asperen – Director
- Hannah Beck – Director
- Karson McKeown – Director
- Sashki Roper – Black Community Representative
- Julie Plessier-Lush – Indigenous Community Representative
- Sean Corcoran – Appointed Legal Advisor

Staff

This year marked a period of growth and transition for the Music PEI team.

Following two successful years leading our SkillsPEI Work Experience Program, Dylan Menzie stepped into the role of Programs Manager. Dylan's experience as both an artist and arts administrator, combined with his passion for member service, makes him a natural fit to lead our artist development and investment programs.

We also welcomed Shawna Picard as Event Team Lead. Shawna quickly became an invaluable member of the team, bringing exceptional organization, attention to detail, and a calm, solutions-focused approach to delivering Music PEI's growing calendar of events.

Finance Manager Shannon Smith continued strengthening our financial management practices through improved budgeting, reporting, forecasting, and financial oversight. Together, our staff continue to build an organization that is collaborative, adaptable, and member-focused.

- Andy Glydon – Executive Director
- Shannon Smith – Finance Manager
- Dylan Menzie – Programs Manager
- Shawna Picard – Event Team Lead

Contractors

Music PEI continues to work alongside talented contractors whose specialized expertise strengthens key programs and expands our capacity to serve members.

- Colin Buchanan – Golden Ticket Program Mentor
- Katrina Lopes – Diverse Voices Program Mentor
- Andrew Cormier – Ripple Effect Coordinator
- Hannah Bridger – Communications Coordinator & Newsletter Editor

SkillsPEI Work Experience Program

Supporting the next generation of arts workers remains an important part of Music PEI's work. Through the SkillsPEI Work Experience Program, we continue to provide meaningful employment opportunities while increasing our capacity to deliver programs and events. Many former participants have gone on to careers within Prince Edward Island's creative sector, strengthening the industry as a whole.

2025–2026 Participants

- Hannah Bridger
- Ryan Van Winkle

- Spencer Swaine
- Dazey Steinman
- Andrea Medina
- Noelle Pettipas

Student Placements

Music PEI also continued partnering with local post-secondary institutions to provide internship and work placement opportunities for students beginning careers in the arts sector.

- Anjali Meprovil – University of Prince Edward Island
- Carter McDevitt – Holland College

Office

Located on the third floor of The Arts Guild in Charlottetown, 2026 marks ten years since Music PEI made the building its home. Over the past decade, The Arts Guild has become one of Prince Edward Island's most important creative hubs, bringing together artists, arts organizations, and creative businesses under one roof. That shared environment continues to foster collaboration, strengthen partnerships, and create opportunities that extend far beyond our office walls.

Organizational Capacity

As Music PEI has grown from a small organization with a single staff member into a provincial music industry association delivering nearly \$900,000 in annual programming and services, we've become increasingly focused on strengthening the organization behind the programs we deliver. Building a sustainable music industry means building an organization with the people, systems, and leadership needed to support it.

During the year, staff strengthened internal operations through improved financial reporting, budgeting, Board reporting, documentation, operational planning, and clearer staff roles and responsibilities. These ongoing improvements help create greater continuity, empower staff to take ownership of their work, and position the organization for long-term success.

Music PEI also invested in professional development. Staff participated in conferences, workshops, and industry meetings throughout the year, while Executive Director Andy Glydon completed the Contemporary Management in Arts & Culture certificate through the University of New Brunswick, strengthening the organization's expertise in governance, strategic planning, financial management, and human resources.

Music PEI's annual operating budget has grown from approximately \$150,000 in 2008 to nearly \$900,000 annually, reflecting the continued expansion of programs, services, and investment in Prince Edward

Island's music industry. This work is made possible through the ongoing support of Innovation PEI, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), FACTOR, the City of Charlottetown, and a wide range of project funding partners.

As the organization has grown, so too has the importance of strong governance and clear organizational policies. During the year, staff advanced several key policies and frameworks that will strengthen accountability, support staff and volunteers, and help foster a safe, equitable, and inclusive music community, including:

- Equity Policy
- Protective & Inclusive Spaces Policy
- Complaints & Response Policy
- EDIA Employment Practices
- Succession Planning Framework

Music PEI also introduced voluntary demographic data collection across funding and program applications, jury and delegate recruitment, and hiring processes. Better information will help us understand who is participating in our programs, identify patterns or gaps where they exist, and evaluate whether our opportunities are reaching the diverse communities we aim to serve. This work will support more informed decision-making while strengthening our commitment to equity, accessibility, and accountability.

Much of this work happens behind the scenes and may never be visible to our members, but it provides the foundation that allows Music PEI to deliver stronger programs, respond to new opportunities, and continue supporting Prince Edward Island's music community well into the future.

Supporting Artists & Growing the Industry

Supporting sustainable careers for Prince Edward Island musicians, songwriters, and music industry professionals remains at the heart of Music PEI's work. This year, we invested in artist development, professional training, export opportunities, and industry partnerships that help artists build meaningful careers both at home and abroad.

This year marked the 18th edition of Showcase PEI and the 12th edition of the Canadian Song Conference. Music PEI also delivered seven artist development programs, presented 30 artists at export events across Prince Edward Island, Montréal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, and Manchester (UK), and received a record number of applications to our Investment Program. Membership also grew to 344 individual members, reflecting both the strength of Prince Edward Island's music community and the growing demand for career development support.

While these numbers are encouraging, they tell only part of the story. Music PEI's role extends beyond producing events or administering funding programs. Our work is about creating opportunities that

individual artists often couldn't access on their own, connecting them with presenters, managers, booking agents, publishers, funders, and fellow artists who help turn creative ambition into sustainable careers. Many of those relationships continue to create opportunities months and even years after an initial introduction.

Events & Export Development

Showcase PEI

For eighteen years, Showcase PEI has been Music PEI's flagship export development initiative, connecting Prince Edward Island artists with music industry professionals from across Canada and internationally. The 2025 edition welcomed delegates representing festivals, venues, agencies, labels, management companies, and presenters, creating more than 150 curated one-on-one business meetings alongside showcase performances throughout Charlottetown.

The value of Showcase PEI lies in the relationships it creates. Since 2008, Showcase PEI has generated an estimated \$5 million in work for PEI artists, and this year's participants reported new festival bookings, management representation, agency offers, and touring opportunities. Joce Reyome's Showcase PEI meetings resulted in festival bookings across Canada and Europe, while Gizmo secured management, agency representation, and a record deal—clear examples of how opportunities created during Showcase PEI continue to unfold long after the event concludes.

Canadian Song Conference

Now in its twelfth year, the Canadian Song Conference continues to hold a unique place within Canada's music industry by helping artists build careers beyond the stage. Through workshops, listening sessions, and one-on-one meetings, participants connected directly with publishers, broadcasters, labels, rights organizations, and music supervisors while gaining a deeper understanding of songwriting, publishing, royalties, and sync licensing.

The conference's boutique format remains one of its greatest strengths, creating an environment where meaningful conversations can lead to long-term professional relationships. Those relationships continue to generate opportunities well beyond the conference itself and reinforce the importance of diversified, sustainable careers for today's artists.

Export Development

Export development remains one of Music PEI's core priorities. This year, artists represented Prince Edward Island at events including BreakOut West, Folk Music Ontario, Mundial Montréal, and English Folk Expo, while Music PEI continued strengthening collaborative export initiatives with our Atlantic Canadian counterparts.

This work is guided by a simple philosophy: successful export begins with strong relationships. Rather than focusing solely on showcase performances, Music PEI works to connect artists with collaborators, industry professionals, and new markets in ways that support long-term career growth.

One of this year's strongest examples was Noah Malcolm's partnership with UK artist Izzy Yardley through the Artist Exchange Program. What began as a songwriting exchange evolved into Noah's first independently organized UK tour, new songwriting collaborations, and lasting relationships within the UK music industry. It demonstrates how international partnerships can create opportunities that extend far beyond a single performance.

Music PEI Week

The 25th anniversary edition of Music PEI Week celebrated both the incredible talent within Prince Edward Island's music community and an important milestone in the organization's history. More than 1,400 people attended thirteen events featuring thirty-five artists, while expanded programming—including an all-ages showcase, Battle of the Bands, and increased activity in Western PEI—helped engage new audiences and celebrate the diversity of Island music.

Twenty-five years after the first Music PEI Awards, Music PEI Week continues to be more than an awards show. It remains a celebration of our music community, a platform for emerging and established artists, and an opportunity to bring Islanders together through live music.

Building Relationships Beyond Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island's music industry does not exist in isolation. Creating sustainable careers for our members requires strong relationships with industry organizations, funders, government partners, community organizations, and music networks across Canada and internationally. Throughout the year, Music PEI invested in these partnerships to ensure PEI artists have a voice in national conversations and access to opportunities that extend well beyond our province.

Our partnership with English Folk Expo continued to grow through the Artist Exchange Program, creating opportunities for PEI artists to collaborate internationally while strengthening long-term relationships between the Canadian and UK music industries. What began as a songwriting exchange has evolved into an ongoing partnership supporting touring, co-writing, industry networking, and cultural exchange.

Music PEI also worked closely with our Atlantic Canadian counterparts through the regional Music Industry Association network. By collaborating on export initiatives, advocacy, and knowledge sharing, we create stronger opportunities for artists while ensuring Atlantic Canada's voice remains well represented within Canada's music industry.

Throughout the year, Music PEI maintained active relationships with organizations including FACTOR, CIMA, Canada Council for the Arts, Innovation PEI, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), the

City of Charlottetown, and other government partners. These relationships are about more than funding—they ensure the needs and perspectives of Prince Edward Island's music industry are reflected in policy discussions, program development, and national advocacy.

Music PEI also remained actively engaged with the East Coast Music Association (ECMA) during a period of significant organizational change. Working alongside our Atlantic colleagues, we advocated for a strong, accountable regional organization that creates meaningful opportunities for artists and industry professionals throughout Atlantic Canada.

Closer to home, reciprocal partnerships continued to strengthen our work. Pride PEI once again partnered with Music PEI to deliver the Q-AMP program while supporting Music PEI Week, creating professional development and performance opportunities for 2SLGBTQIA+ artists. We also established an exciting new partnership with the City of Summerside, whose support played an important role in the success of the 25th Anniversary Music PEI Awards and demonstrated how municipalities can help strengthen PEI's arts and culture sector.

Our partnership with Whitecap Entertainment expanded through Ripple Effect, allowing Music PEI to strengthen safer-spaces training, onsite support, outreach, and harm reduction initiatives at major live music events. We also strengthened our relationship with the Rising Tide Community Fund, whose support of the Golden Ticket Program reflects a shared commitment to investing in emerging PEI artists.

Ultimately, these partnerships are about far more than meetings or funding agreements. Every relationship strengthened helps Music PEI create new opportunities, improve programs, advocate more effectively, and connect our members with people and markets beyond Prince Edward Island. As a small province, our greatest strength is often our ability to collaborate. By working together with communities, governments, funders, and industry partners, Music PEI continues to ensure that Prince Edward Island punches well above its weight.

Looking Ahead

As Music PEI enters its next chapter, our focus remains clear: building a stronger music industry where Prince Edward Island artists and music professionals can build sustainable careers.

Over the coming year, we'll continue strengthening the organization by investing in strategic planning, strong governance, sustainable financial management, and the systems that support our work behind the scenes. As Music PEI grows, so too must our ability to respond to the changing needs of our members and our industry.

Ensuring the organization's long-term success will also require diversifying our revenue streams. While government investment remains essential, we'll continue developing new partnerships, sponsorship opportunities, and philanthropic support that allow Music PEI to grow strategically while remaining responsive to emerging opportunities.

We'll also continue working to strengthen Prince Edward Island's music industry as a whole. This includes improving how we collect and use industry data so we can better demonstrate the economic and cultural impact of our sector, advocate more effectively for increased investment, and make informed decisions that reflect the needs of our members.

Building a stronger music industry also means strengthening the infrastructure that supports it. Over the coming years, Music PEI will continue working alongside venues, festivals, recording studios, educators, technicians, managers, promoters, municipalities, businesses, and community organizations to help create an environment where artists can build successful careers without leaving Prince Edward Island.

Export development will remain a key priority, with a continued focus on helping artists establish strong foundations here at home and across Canada before expanding into international markets. By investing in long-term relationships rather than one-time opportunities, we can help artists build careers that are both ambitious and sustainable.

The coming year will also mark the completion of Music PEI's current Strategic Plan and the beginning of work on the next. This process will provide an opportunity to reflect on our progress, engage members and partners in shaping our future, and ensure Music PEI continues evolving alongside the industry we serve.

The future of Prince Edward Island's music industry is bright. Every day, we see artists creating exceptional work, industry professionals building new opportunities, and communities recognizing the value that music brings to our province. Music PEI is proud to be part of that story, and we're excited to continue building it together.