

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a blue textured dress, singing passionately into a microphone on a stage. The background is a brick wall, and there are yellow wavy patterns on the left side of the image. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# Turner Sims Impact Report 2024-25

Exceptional  
artists

Extraordinary  
experiences

All for the  
joy of music

turner  
sims

# Vision

Communities connected locally and globally through the joy of live music.

# Mission

To share live music that connects, moves and inspires people through extraordinary experiences in our venue and beyond.

# Our Values and Behaviours

**We are:**

**Passionate** about the power of music to connect people

**Curious** about the music that brings people joy

**Playful** in how and where we make music happen

**Ambitious** in creating musical adventures for all

**Bold** in presenting new music and tackling underrepresentation



Early Weaves, Summer Family Day, 2025

# All for the joy of music

In 2024-25, Turner Sims, the University of Southampton's music venue, continued to be a vibrant home for live performance, learning and connection. Our programme brought people of all ages and backgrounds together to experience music that inspires, challenges and delights.

Alongside a rich artistic season, our building remained an open, inclusive and welcoming space for students, societies, community groups and choirs.

// It was such a unique experience for me and my son - completely fantastic and memorable, and evidence of the life-changing power of art.

Audience Survey Response

**50,171** attendees in 2024-2025

**25,830** concert audience members

**24,341** additional visitors through our building

**c. 16,000** students attending lectures, recitals and workshops

**c. 7,500** community and society members, including the Southampton University Symphony Orchestra (SUSO), the University of Southampton Voices (USV), and the Southampton Philharmonic Choir

**140** concerts and events

# All for our young people

Our student and youth programmes continued to create meaningful employment pathways into the creative industries, supporting young people to gain skills, confidence and professional networks crucial for entering a competitive sector. Employability for young people remains a high priority, and our high success rate for participants transitioning from Turner Sims' initiatives into paid roles was a notable achievement of the year.

Across the year, our Assistant Producers, the Vibe Collective and our wider youth engagement activity positioned Turner Sims as a sector leader in nurturing early-career talent and amplifying youth voice.

Students and young creatives told us that their involvement strengthened their wellbeing, broadened career possibilities and nurtured a sense of belonging at the University.

Our Vibe Collective and Assistant Producers with Afrosync, Summer Festival, 2025







**// Having entry level roles that give you experience and can lead to something more established is really helpful.**

Antonio, The Vibe Collective / Assistant Producer

**10**

Assistant  
Producers

**79**

young  
musicians

**21**

Paid  
opportunities

**50%**

of Vibe participants  
secured paid work,  
with others gaining  
volunteer  
roles

**75%**

of Assistant  
Producers moved  
into paid  
cultural-sector  
roles



Winchester Jazz Collective, Vibe Lounge, 2023

# All for our students

Our work speaks directly to the university's Social Value Framework, an evaluation mechanism that enables the measurement of impact through research excellence, knowledge exchange and our role as a civic university asset. Through this framework, we confirmed that our young people's programmes held demonstrable positive effects on:

**Health & wellbeing:** Participation improved confidence, reduced isolation and supported positive mental health.

**Creativity, culture & society:** Young people contributed directly to programming and cultural leadership.

**The local economy:** Many participants secured employment, bringing new talent into the regional creative workforce.

**Learning & participation:** Practical, real-world experiences strengthened employability outcomes.

We achieved strong employment outcomes, with **7 participants in paid work and 4 participants in volunteer roles** (out of 12).

**We're proud of our central role within the university's civic strategy.**

## **Our work has supported:**

**Education, learning & employability:** Two Assistant Producers went on to programme and fundraise for their own events, developing entrepreneurial skills vital for future creative leaders.

### **Social justice & equality**

- **50%** of participants were not in higher education.
- Representation has improved significantly: under-35 representation rose from **3% to 31%** over three years; ethnically diverse representation rose from **3% to 12%**.
- Young people from underrepresented groups now actively shape programming, driving organisational and sector-wide change.



Summer Festival, 2025



Tunde Jegede, Voyages of the Heart, Turner Sims at 50, 2025

# All for our artists

**// It was a joyful experience provided by performers at the top of their game.**

Audience Survey Response

Turner Sims is a creative home for established performers, emerging artists and cross-genre innovators. This year, we supported **1,379** artists, performers and participants, offering a platform for artistic excellence and exploration.

Our season featured high-profile collaborations, international guest artists and ambitious projects that brought new energy to the South-East, from our **50th Anniversary gala** to residencies, masterclasses and partnerships with leading ensembles.

**// Quite simply the finest jazz concert I can ever remember attending.**

Audience Survey Response

## Season highlights included:

BBC Singers residency • Gary Crosby & Denys Baptiste • Elias String Quartet projects • Chloë Hanslip & Danny Driver • Cordelia Williams • Alfredo Rodriguez • Ni Maxine • Neil Cowley Trio • Yazz Ahmed • Lady Maisery & O'Hooley & Tidow • Tunde Jegede



# All for our audiences

Our audience experience continues to exceed national sector benchmarks. Visitors tell us Turner Sims delivers exceptional quality, warmth and value, making it a place people return to again and again.

// **Brilliant venue, with friendly, welcoming staff.**

Audience Survey Response

**Net Promoter Score: 84** (UK benchmark: 74)

**4.7/5** overall audience rating (benchmark: 4.5)

**71%** very likely to visit again in 12 months (benchmark: 57%)

**4.4/5** ticket value (benchmark: 4.2)

**4.7/5** staff rating (benchmark: 4.6)

// **I absolutely loved the performers and their musicianship, plus the opportunity to sit and socialise in the bar before the performance.**

Audience Survey Response

**// It was the best show I've been to as far as a one-year-old baby is concerned (and we go to many). Just the right amount of stimulation. My daughter was focused, laughing, dancing, and extremely comfortable. This is very rare!**

Audience Survey Response



# All for our families

This year we expanded our offer for families and schools, creating joyful, accessible opportunities for children to discover music. From free concerts for schools to our biggest Summer Family Day yet, we helped young audiences explore creativity in playful, imaginative ways.

**4** free concerts for schools  
and early years, working with  
local music hubs

**631** children reached across 14  
schools/Early Years Settings (EYS)

## Summer Family Day

**1,592** attendees

**30** artists and workshop leaders

**9** events, performances  
and activities

## Rhymes for our Times

This innovative literacy and music project, led by Portsmouth rap artist Baby Panna in collaboration with Cantell and Mountbatten Schools, was supported by Hampshire Music Hub. Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) worked with the artist to write original lyrics, perform to tracks, and build skills in creative writing, performance, and collaboration. The project concluded with a professional recording session at Turner Sims.

# All for our community

Turner Sims remains deeply rooted in Southampton's cultural life, whilst also acting as a sector-leading creative hub in the wider Hampshire and Solent regions. More than a third of our audiences come from nearby neighbourhoods, demonstrating our strong role as a hyperlocal anchor. Further afield, we attract and nurture communities to our venue from across the South-East, a lighthouse for high quality live performance accessible and available to all.

**// It's always a relaxed and friendly venue.**

Audience Survey Response

**// Turner Sims is my favourite concert hall. The fact I come from as far as Plymouth and so many times , speaks volumes.**

Audience Survey Response

**34%** of audiences from hyperlocal postcodes

**91%** feel welcomed and included

**92%** believe Turner Sims is important to the community



Summer Festival, 2024

# All for inclusivity

Our commitment to inclusivity shapes everything from programming to recruitment. This year we continued to foreground diverse voices, widen access and expand representation on stage, behind the scenes and in our audiences.

**50%** of performances female-led

**21%** led by communities with Protected Characteristics

Under-35 representation in staff/volunteers grew from

**3% → 31%** over three years

Ticket-booking by 18–25-year-olds rose from

**8.6% → 12.6%**, with **1,000+ additional tickets** sold

**// I loved the varied demographic attending, it felt very inclusive.**



# All for our volunteers & team

Our wonderful volunteers are central to everything we do. From our Strategic Board to our concert ushers, they enable us to deliver on our mission for an inclusive world, connected through the joy of music.

**39** volunteers supporting our work

**12** Turner Sims Strategic Board members

**26** ushers

Nearly **2,000** volunteer hours donated to support our work



Summer Festival, 2025

**We're also grateful to our dedicated team, including:**

Joanna Borg, Leyanne Coombs, Daniel Cox, Louise Coysh, Val Drayton, Jilly Evans, Polly Eldridge, Ellie Grant, Elizabeth Howard, David Hurlock, Maddie Risbridger and Jessica Santer.



The Piatti Quartet, Turner Sims at 50, 2025

# All for you

## Thank you for supporting the joy of live music

Turner Sims exists today because of an extraordinary act of generosity. In 1967, Miss Margaret Grassam Sims left a legacy that enabled the creation of our concert hall. More than 50 years later, her gift continues to enrich the cultural life of Southampton.

Today, tens of thousands of students, artists, audiences and community members make memories at Turner Sims each year. At a time when society feels increasingly divided, we remain committed to bringing people together through the unifying power of music.

If you share our belief in the transformative impact of the arts, we invite you to support our vision to connect communities through live music, now and for generations to come.

<https://www.turnersims.co.uk/support-us/make-a-donation/>



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Cover: Voyages of the Heart, Turner Sims at 50, 2025

Turner Sims is part of the  
University of Southampton  
and gratefully acknowledges  
the support of Arts Council  
England.



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**