



# PPL Momentum Music Fund

PRS Foundation

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## 10 Year Evaluation Report

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## Foreword

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Following extensive consultation with the music sector in 2012, Arts Council England launched an open call which PRS Foundation responded to in order to co-develop a 'Music Industry Talent Development Fund' inspired by successful Canadian funding models.

The Momentum Music Fund was announced at The Great Escape 2013, and for the first time, significant grant support was available to artists and bands working in contemporary pop genres.

Aims of the programme included investing in a range of distinctive music that reflects the diversity of music in the UK, while establishing effective funding models to support music industry talent development and bolster artists' creativity and career progression.

10 years, 40 deadlines, 7,300 applications, over £5.2m and 526 grantees later, I think it's safe to say that this collaborative partnership programme is working and has completely changed the music funding landscape.

The PPL Momentum Music Fund has been a vital stepping-stone for so many incredible artists who have gone on to top the charts, dominate playlists, sell out shows around the world and scoop multiple music awards. We're regularly blown away by the music being created as a result of this programme.

Written by Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, this independent evaluation report makes it clear that we are proactively addressing pipeline gaps and keeping pace with industry trends in order to meet the changing needs of talented artists and creators who have reached a tipping point.

Through its fair selection process – which has involved hundreds of independent industry experts – the Fund is supporting the right artists at the right time, offering up to £15,000 to empower and enable grantees to build sustainable careers.

The knock-on impact for team members and for the wider industry should not be underestimated. In helping to generate over £22m for the music industry, the economic argument for more support for tipping point talent is clear. Partner donations, combined with co-investment in each grantees' project from the labels, publishers, management teams and others has helped to ensure this ground-breaking fund be as impactful as possible.

While we celebrate a close working relationship with the music industry, we are uniquely placed to understand the challenges facing the creative community, and we refuse to shy away from tackling financial, social and cultural inequities that exist across the sector. Thanks to colleagues, Trustees, external advisors and partners, PRS Foundation plays an important role in shaping a fairer, more inclusive music sector. So I am proud that this report highlights the ways in which this flagship programme has diversified since our '5 Years of Momentum' report was published.

Since then, over half of the Fund's grantees have been women, gender expansive artists or mixed gender bands. This report also shows that nearly one-fifth of grantees identify as LGBTQIA+, and we are supporting a significant proportion of global majority artists, while also ensuring that more grants are pledged to those based outside London.

I am determined to make sure that we learn from the first 10 years of this Fund to ensure that we're here for many more artists who need support to fulfil their potential. We remain committed to investing in talent at crucial tipping points, and will continue to collaborate with key players across the industry for the benefit of the whole ecosystem.

I'd like to thank Creative Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland, Spotify and PRS for Music as well as Arts Council England and all other funding partners throughout the years, not least PPL whose significant investment over the last few years has helped make this the game-changing programme we set out to develop all those years ago.

The ability to "take risks" and back artists when this type of support is most needed requires industry-wide collaboration and a type of long-termism that can only be achieved when the non-profit and commercial sectors are working towards the same goals.

In order to sustain the impact of the PPL Momentum Fund and to support a greater proportion of worthy applicants, we require additional investment from new partners. I would encourage those in all sectors who feel the impact of seed funding for artists to join us to enable the next generation of exciting and diverse talent to sustain careers, to create exceptional new music, and to reach global audiences.

**Joe Frankland, PRS Foundation**



# Foreword

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This report reinforces the crucial role the PPL Momentum Music Fund plays in the development of our national talent pipeline, as well as the future success of the music industry and its contribution to the growth of the UK economy. Having supported the Fund since 2016, we were proud to build on the relationship in 2020 by becoming a major partner and lending our name, expertise and significant financial support to this important initiative.

Every day, the PPL team works with performers, labels, managers, accountants and others in the industry ecosystem who are united in their desire to nurture talent and equip artists with the tools they need to build a sustainable career in music. The PPL Momentum Music Fund plays a pivotal role in achieving this ambition, uplifting “tipping point” artists on the cusp of a national breakthrough to deliver commercial and cultural impact.

Together with PRS Foundation and partners across the UK, we have invested in hundreds of acts over the last ten years. The economic return is undoubtedly positive, but, critically, the impact is also felt culturally and socially through the creation of incredible, award-winning music. Talent from local communities throughout the UK is being supported, regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, social class or any other protected characteristic; and younger generations are being inspired, encouraged and reflected in today's music business as a result of the Fund's work.

Alongside PPL Momentum Accelerator which focusses on infrastructural development in regions and nations of the UK, the International Showcase Fund and the Talent Development Partners network - all of which we invest in - the PPL Momentum Music Fund fuels music creation, accelerates career development and drives progress in the industry.

As our journey with the Foundation continues, we will continue to lend our support to new music, ensuring that we play our part in making the UK's music sector more diverse, more innovative and more sustainable.

**Peter Leathem OBE, CEO, PPL**



# Ten Years of the PPL Momentum Music Fund

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*"The pure number of artists that the Fund has supported is incredible and the record speaks for itself. Without developing grassroots artists, there is no music industry, so thank you to the PPL Momentum Fund. [I'm] proud to have been a recipient."*

**Love Ssega**

2023 marks the tenth anniversary of the PPL Momentum Music Fund, a music industry talent development fund that contributes to the health and dynamism of the UK music industry. Set up in 2013 by the Performing Right Society Foundation (PRS Foundation) and Arts Council England<sup>1</sup>, the PPL Momentum Music Fund is run in partnership with Creative Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland and Spotify, with PPL supporting the programme since 2016 and becoming a major partner and headline sponsor since 2020.

The PPL Momentum Music Fund offers career-boosting grants of £5,000-£15,000 to independent artists and bands working in any genre, based anywhere in the UK who are at a pivotal point in their development.<sup>2</sup>

The Fund works to support music talent to build their careers, go to the next level and literally build on and gain further momentum. The Fund has proved critical in nurturing a resilient, diverse and innovative UK music sector.



***Jerry Williams***

There have been 40 funding rounds, with over £5.2 million investment reaching 526 grant recipients, helping the careers of some of the UK's brightest talent:

- **49.5%** of grants have been awarded to artists of Black, Asian or other ethnically diverse heritage
- **51.0%** of grants have gone to artists based outside London
- **47.9%** of grantees identify as women, gender expansive artists or are in mixed gender groups
- the Fund helped to generate **£22 million** for the UK music industry

Over its first decade, Momentum has enabled artists to write, record, tour and promote their music when barriers to development threaten to prevent some of the brightest music creators from forging thriving careers.

The ongoing digital transformation and restructuring of the music industry, the cost-of-living crisis, a global pandemic, Brexit-induced restrictions on freedom of movement – to name a few – make building a career in music ever more challenging.

The PPL Momentum Music Fund has given music artists (and their teams) that extra support needed to not only keep going, but to step up and break through to the next level. Complementing other funds and support offered by PRS Foundation and partners, The Fund has become a much-valued contributor to a diverse, inclusive, innovative UK music industry. It is also much in demand: there have been over 7,300 applications, with partners only able to support 7% of applicants.

PPL Momentum has supported artists from all genres across the UK. This includes Kae Tempest, Ms Banks, Sam Fender, Anna Calvi, Novelist, Moses Boyd, Ezra Collective, Years & Years, Little Simz, Nabilah Iqbal, Cosmo Sheldrake, Hannah Peel, Adwaith, Sarathy Korwar, Yazmin Lacey, Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs, Nova Twins, Låpsley, Stealing Sheep, Ibibio Sound Machine, Yard Act, Frank Carter, WH Lung, Knucks, Jay Prince, Jerry Williams, and Floating Points. The full list of grantees since 2013 is available at [prsfoundation.com](http://prsfoundation.com).

<sup>1</sup> Arts Council England (ACE) initiated the fund with PRS Foundation after extensive ACE consultation with the music sector in 2012, and invested £2m from April 2013–March 2018. While Arts Council England no longer funds the PPL Momentum Music Fund, support is in place for PPL Momentum Accelerator in Yorkshire.

<sup>2</sup> The Fund is available to self-releasing artists and those signed to independent labels. Artists signed to major labels are not eligible to apply.

*"For PPL, Momentum is an investment in an exciting future for music and for our industry. It embraces artists who are having (or going to have) some kind of real tangible cultural and commercial impact. It's so important that we at PPL are able to support Momentum's ability to platform those artists who are from different genres, geographies and backgrounds, so that we can build a future that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable."*

**Sarah Wall, Senior Events and Marketing Manager, PPL.**

*Flohio*





# Since 2013



526

Artists supported



7,300

Applications received



Over £5.2 million

given out in grants across  
40 funding rounds



Investment through the PPL Momentum Music Fund has helped to generate  
over £22m for the UK music industry

## Impact for music creators

94%

of the artists said **the grant came at the right time for them**

85%

of artists say the PPL Momentum funding had **helped to grow their audience**

77%

said the funding had **helped them develop as a live act**

83%

of grantees said they were more able to **sustain a career in music** as a result of Momentum funding

80%

of artists said PPL Momentum funding had **helped them develop creatively**

81%

of artists said the PPL Momentum grant and PRS Foundation support had **improved their confidence**

## For the music industry as a whole

**90%**  
of artists  
feel PPL  
Momentum  
funding is  
making a real  
and significant  
difference in  
encouraging  
the craft of  
music making.

**81%**  
of artists felt the  
PPL Momentum  
Fund was  
making a real  
difference in  
supporting  
artists from  
ethnically  
diverse  
backgrounds to  
develop

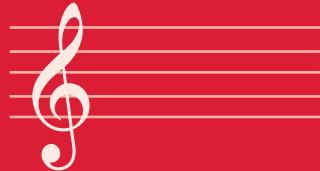
**87%**  
of artists  
felt PPL  
Momentum  
was making  
a real  
difference in  
supporting  
women  
artists to  
develop

**56%**

that the Fund was making a  
difference in developing the  
careers of Deaf, Disabled artists  
and those living with a long-term  
health condition

**67%**

felt the Fund  
supported  
gender  
expansive  
artists

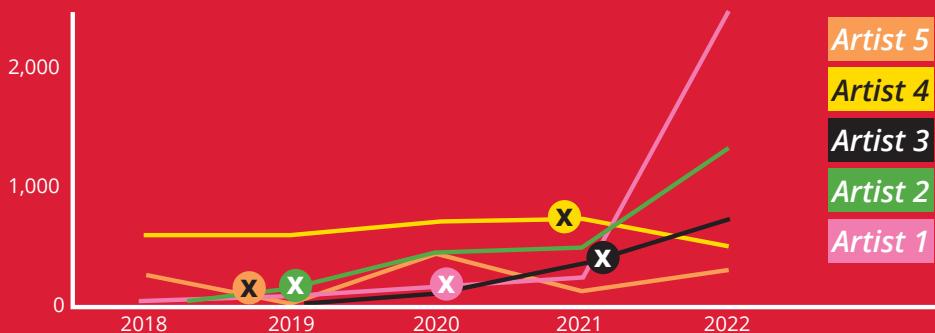


### 51% of grants outside London over 10 years

East Anglia.....	2.3%
East Midlands.....	2.3%
London.....	49.0%
North East.....	1.9%
North West .....	10.1%
Northern Ireland.....	3.0%
Scotland.....	4.6%
South East.....	9.1%
South West.....	5.9%
Wales.....	4.6%
West Midlands.....	4.2%
Yorkshire and the Humber..	3.0%

The Fund has only been available UK-wide since 2018-19. In the last 5 years, 57.9% of grantees have been based outside London, including 9.4% in Scotland, 9.1% in Wales, and 6.3% in Northern Ireland

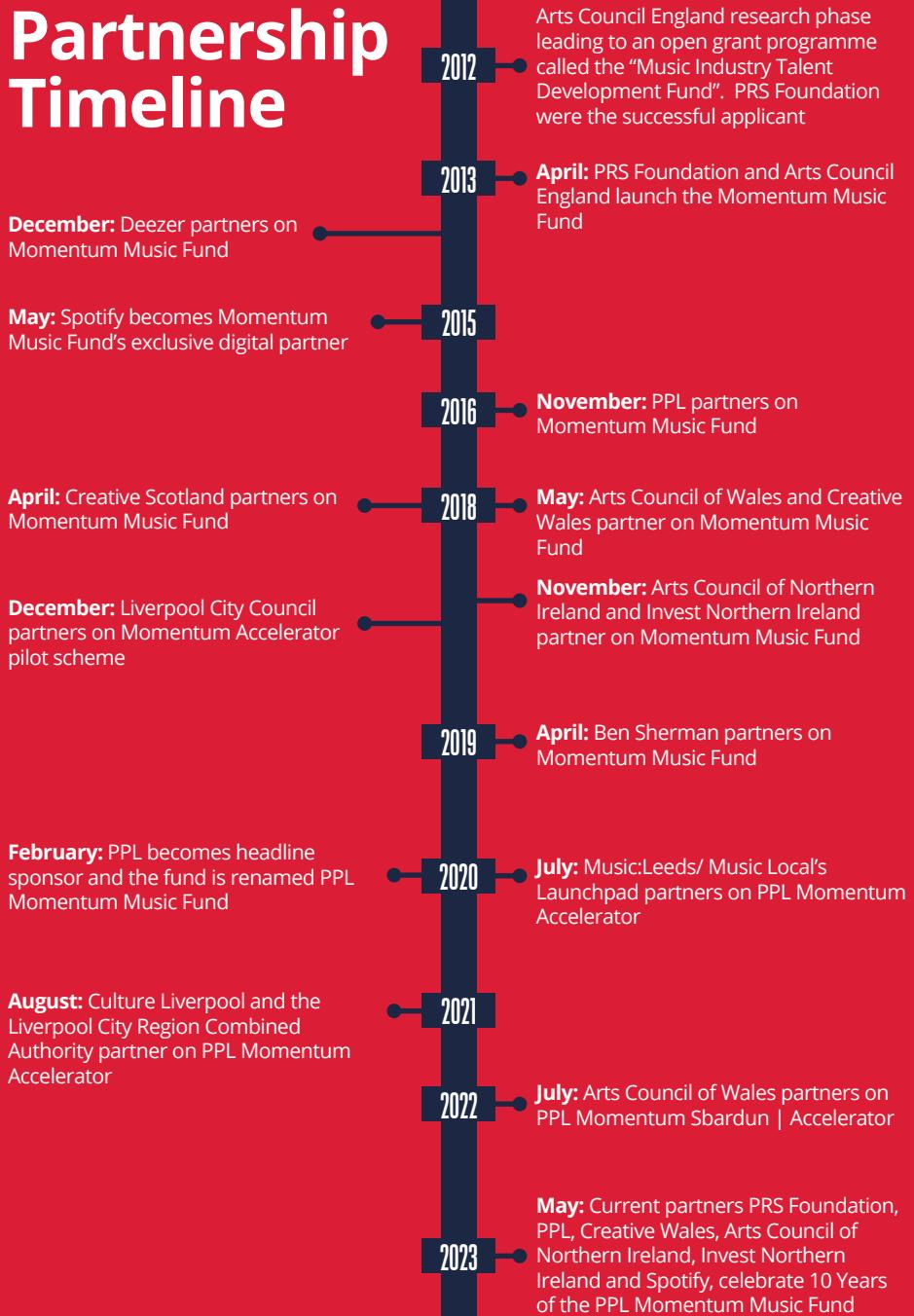
## Overview of UK radio plays – BBC & Commercial Radio



The Fund has had a significant impact on grantees' audience growth. The above chart shows the number of plays on UK BBC and Commercial Radio stations reported by PPL for 5 case study grantees.

x = date of PPL Momentum Fund support

# Partnership Timeline



# Between 2020-2023

## Gender

- 55.5% of grantees identified as women, gender expansive artists or are in mixed gender groups:
- 44.5% Men
- 39% Women
- 10.2% Mixed Gender Group
- 6.3% Gender Expansive



**6.25%**  
*identified as Deaf or disabled*



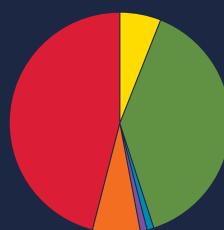
*artists identified as LGBTQIA+*



*Since 2013 7.4% of grantees report having a long-term health condition and/or impairment that affects their day-to-day life*

**55% of grants were awarded to artists of Black, Asian or other ethnically diverse heritage**

- 38.9% of grantees identified as Black or have mixed heritage including Black
- 6.1% identified as Asian or have mixed heritage including Asian
- 1.5% identified as 'mixed heritage - 'other'
- 0.8% identified as coming from another ethnic minority background
- 7.6% identified as 'White - Other'
- 45% identified as White British"



# PPL Momentum Music Fund Partners

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PPL, the UK music licencing company, ensuring that those who invest their time, talent and money to make recorded music are fairly paid for their work. <https://www.ppluk.com>



Arts Council Northern Ireland, the funding and development organisation for the Arts in Northern Ireland, distributing Public and National Lottery funds.

<https://arts council-ni.org>



Invest Northern Ireland, is the Economic Development Agency for Northern Ireland, helping new and existing businesses to compete internationally, and attracting new investment to Northern Ireland.  
<https://www.investni.com>



Cymru Greadigol  
Creative Wales

Creative Wales, the Welsh Government agency providing support to the creative industry in Wales.  
<https://www.creative.wales>



Spotify®

Spotify, leading digital music service giving access to millions of songs.

# Top Six Impacts of PPL Momentum Music Funding

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Independent evaluation by TFCC<sup>3</sup> has measured the role and impact of the PPL Momentum Music Fund over ten years. This includes a survey to grant recipients, review of applicant and grantee data, plus interviews with artists, managers and investment partners.

The Fund has had a transformational impact on the careers of many artists and has shifted perception toward one that values independent investment as a vital part of the industry's current ecology.

In a decade of radical restructuring across the music industry – partners including labels (indie and major), publishers, managers, promoters, venues, studios and funders – have had to explore new ways to support a pipeline of UK music talent. This is to ensure that artists from all backgrounds are able to develop, grow and infuse the creative economy in ways that, as with previous generations, position the UK as a market leader for great music globally.

PPL Momentum has played an important role in this restructuring landscape – in terms of its impact on artists careers, on artists' right to independent creative expression, and what the PPL Momentum Music Fund signals for a more sustainable, inclusive and collaborative approach to talent development.

<sup>3</sup> Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy (TFCC) has worked as learning and evaluation partners to the PRS Foundation over the last ten years – from Momentum's start-up phase to its ten-year anniversary: [www.tfconsultancy.co.uk](http://www.tfconsultancy.co.uk)

## Impact 1: Supporting artists to thrive and survive

Many artists are struggling: to get the next album together, to find the time to write when they need to actively earn, or to promote their work to achieve anything like the recorded income needed to survive, let alone thrive. The Covid-19 pandemic has made artist development even more challenging, constraining opportunities to build profile, restricting touring, with the need to adjust to the opportunities from the accelerated shift to streaming.

The situation is particularly, but not exclusively, challenging for independent artists (including self-releasing artists and those signed to independent labels). It is also particularly so for artists from more deprived backgrounds or for genres and scenes for which the 'ecosystem' or industry infrastructure is less developed.

Put simply, the PPL Momentum Music Fund has provided a lifeline for artists to build their careers in a time of enormous fragility.

*"The PPL Momentum Music Fund was instrumental in the creation of my album 'Don't Drink the Poison'. Especially during the pandemic, it was very encouraging to know I had the backing of PRS Foundation to be creative. My album went on to be shortlisted for Scotland's SAY Award (for album of the year) and I would not have been able to achieve this without the funding from PPL Momentum to record and promote the album."*

**Kobi Onyame**

The Fund has played a vital role in supporting artists to get to the next level – whether this be through reducing the financial burden of making new work, touring, marketing or helping to boost confidence – validating artists and giving them the energy to continue when they might in other circumstances walk away.

**83% of grantees said PPL Momentum funding and PRS Foundation support had made them more able to sustain a career in music<sup>4</sup>.**

*"Momentum funding can be crucial for an artist's career to support the increasing challenges of the music industry. Investment can build creative partnerships and networks and give artists the confidence to develop creatively but also their teams and understanding of their business and the industry."*

**Tom Calvert**

**41% of artists had part-time music careers when they applied for Momentum funding. The funding enabled 33% of those part-time artists to become full-time in music.**

Investment was used for a variety of purposes, with applicants required to set out a firm vision, plan and rationale to describe how funding will be impactful on their career development and contribute to taking them to the next level. Most artists requested investment for a blend of activities – e.g. touring and PR, or recording and targeted marketing. This demonstrates the flexibility of the Fund to be shaped around the complex requirements of the artists. It also signals the breadth of support artists – and especially independent artists – require.

**66% of artists use all or some of the grant to contribute towards costs of marketing and promotion.**

<sup>4</sup> 11% were neutral, 5% said it had not helped much and 1% not helped at all.

**85% of artists say the PPL Momentum funding has helped to grow their audience, 47% saying it has helped significantly.**

**77% said the funding helped them develop as a live act, 39% saying it had helped significantly.<sup>5</sup>**

*"I owe the successes so far in my career wholeheartedly to PPL Momentum Funding and PRS Foundation, especially in the earlier stages in my career. It set me on a path that I had once only dreamed of, and due to their support really early on, I was able to begin to achieve my dreams much earlier than I had anticipated."*

**James Vickery**

## **Impact 2. The right investment at the right time – building teams and supporting artist development**

*"The funding awarded was an incredibly huge breakthrough for me. Up until that point all my music was self-funded and as a result progress was slow. The kudos of being backed by Momentum also helped to shine a light on my work, I am honoured to have been a grantee."*

**IMAN**

The high level of demand for PPL Momentum funding means that applicants need to not only demonstrate they need the funding, but that they need it now and can show that it will have a significant impact.

Whether to support an artist to find the space to write, to tour, to fund recording and production, to boost promotion and brand development, to build on their team, or all of the above, PPL Momentum provides the small-scale flexible finance to unlock career development opportunities.

## **94% of the artists said the grant came at the right time for them.**

*"The support we received from the Momentum Fund was an incredibly important turning point in our career - where we otherwise would not have had the financial means to continue our journey to match the industry and fan interest that was building at the time - being able to persevere at this crucial tipping point was really important for us as a band."*

**Femi Koleoso (Ezra Collective)**

By supporting artists directly – whether or not there is co-investment from labels and/or support from management - to access funding at a pivotal moment in their development has improved the financial viability of acts from across the country. This includes direct impact on increased revenue through streaming and live performance. In turn, by supporting their sustainability, PPL Momentum has provided a pipeline or runway for other investment – both through the PRS Foundation and other sources. It has become a vital part of the investment mix for talented artists from diverse backgrounds engaged in a range of genres from across the country.

## **PPL Momentum funding has supported three quarters of artists to secure follow-on investment from a variety of sources.<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>6</sup> From PRS Foundation (29%), Arts Council (22%), traditional music industry investment such as recording deals, advances, investment from managers (63%), new investment models such as brand partnership deals, sync fees (42%).

*"I didn't have the money to record and I needed somewhere to go and write. I was so grateful and blessed to get the funding and to get the space in Studio 13. It's so tough – concentrating on the LP meant I didn't do many gigs, which meant I didn't make any money...but I also want to develop creatively."*

**Nabihah Iqbal**

As a flexible fund which can be used to invest in a variety of activities, many grant recipients have chosen to invest in their wider team. This is particularly important for emergent artists who may lack established relations with producers, radio-pluggers, PR agencies, digital marketing specialists and so on. PPL Momentum funding has given artists the opportunity to bring in specialist support, which in many cases has seeded longer-term relationships – effectively developing the right team around the artist.

While some grantees foster relations with artist managers as a result of funding, a large proportion of grantees are already working with and supported by artist managers at the time of applying. As a consequence, PPL Momentum funding recognises and validates the role managers play in developing artist careers and in many cases managing grant projects by default. The UK's Music Managers Forum (The MMF) provided feedback to PRS Foundation on behalf of the management community which resulted in an evolution of guidelines which now allow for a proportion of funding support being allocated to 'project management' costs for artist managers who are not in a position to co-invest in an artist's project and deserve an allocation of PPL Momentum support. This flexibility and recognition of the importance of team-building for career progression, is a key strength of the Fund.

*Erland Cooper*



Plus, it has facilitated co-investment from other sources including music publishers, as well as real-world income from the recording sector, live sector and other sources, with The Fund both unlocking and adding value to other investments.

## **Impact 3. Increasing profile, reach and supporting career progression**

PPL Momentum funding has improved the profile and reach of artists, with greater media presence (including social media) to both launch new records and consolidate artists as brands. Funding for touring has enabled artists to reach new audiences and build relationships with existing audiences.

**72% said funding has helped increase their media coverage.<sup>7</sup> 66% of grantees used their grant to support marketing and PR.**

*"PPL Momentum and PRS Foundation support has been career defining and integral to the success we have achieved in taking our music to a global audience. Without their belief we would not have been able to build the team we have around us that are enabling us to take even bolder creative strides on our next creative journey on album three."*

**Gruffydd Owen, Manager, Adwaith**

This is particularly important in a post-Covid and post-Brexit reality where live shows are more expensive than ever to produce and where some audience segments are slow to return to venues.

*"As one of the first bands out touring Europe after the pandemic and Brexit, it felt like a real struggle. The support we received from PPL Momentum Funding not only made it possible financially but gave us the confidence we needed to smash it."*

**Lyndsey McDougall (New Pagans)**

*PPL Momentum Funding allowed us to invest in areas we never before thought would be possible as a small band releasing our own music. Through it we were able to establish contacts in radio and press that proved invaluable to our second album campaign. Our online presence, album sales and fanbase grew as a direct result of this. I'm so grateful for having been given this amazing opportunity."*

**Laurie Corlett-Donald, Stillhound**

*"Being able to work full-time as an artist with the help of the PPL Momentum Fund is really important for D.I.Y artists. This has provided a pillar of support and allowed me to support the release of my new album, which has led to me to going on to do really exciting things like my first headline show in New York, my music being featured in a BBC drama, and running my own record label".*

**Siobhan Wilson**

*Sam Fender*



Many outstanding grantees have been supported by PPL Momentum Fund to write, record, tour and, fundamentally, increase their profile and grow their audience. Many have also gone on to be nominated for and win multiple music prizes. This includes:

- Little Simz – winner of the Mercury Prize 2022 and MOBO Award for Album of the Year jointly alongside fellow grantee Knucks
- Emma Jean-Thackray – winner of Album of the Year at the Jazz FM Awards 2022
- Sam Fender – winner of a BRIT Award for Best British Alternative/Rock Act
- Adwaith - winners of the Welsh Music Prize for PPL Momentum-funded Bato Mato as album of the year in 2022
- Murkage Dave - Madison Square Gardens Award - Best Newcomer (Winner), UK Music Video Awards - Best R&B/Soul Newcomer (Nominated)
- James Vickery - Rhythm in Britain Rnb Collab of the Year. With U featuring Kojey Radical
- Floating Points – Mercury nomination 2021 for Best Album for Promises with Pharoah Sanders and London Symphony Orchestra
- FLOHIO – winner of UK MVA award in 2019 for music videos 10 More Rounds and Music Moves Europe Music Award in 2020
- Svalbard - Kerrang Award Best Breakthrough Band 2019, Metal Hammer top 5 album of the year 2020
- Elles Bailey - Song of the Year UK Americana Awards 2020 Artist and Album Of the Year UK Blues Awards 2020, Artist of the Year UK Blues Awards 2021
- Robocobra Quartet - Living Isn't Easy won the NI Music Prize Album of The Year 2022
- English Teacher - winners of the Rising Star Award at Youth Music Awards 2022
- At the AIM Awards 2022, Nova Twins, Nilufer Yanya and Rina Sawayama were awarded Best Independent Track, Best (Difficult) Second Album and the Innovator Award, respectively

## **Impact 4. Wider impacts for the UK music industry**

The knock-on impact of PPL Momentum support for team members and for the wider industry should not be underestimated. As our long-term return on investment analysis five years and ten years in has shown, the economic argument for more support for tipping point talent is clear.

With funding partners co-investing alongside each artist, and where relevant their labels, publishers, managers and other team members, it is clear that the Fund has achieved original aims of bolstering the economic health of the UK music sector.

### **Investment through the PPL Momentum Music Fund has helped to generate over £22 million for the UK music industry**

The likes of Years & Years, Sam Fender, Yonaka, Yard Act and more recently Sans Soucis, have signed to major labels as an outcome of successfully funded projects. The majority of grantees are either already signed to independent labels or have gone on to release albums on independent labels such as 4AD, Believe, Rough Trade, Bella Union, Ninja Tune, Warp, Mute, Memphis Industries, Moshi Moshi and XL Recordings.

And the Fund has done an impressive job of responding to industry trends and music creator needs, including the growth of Artist & Label Services deals and new models of industry investment while constantly ensuring that those most in need and most ready for support can access grants of £5,000-£15,000.

However, PRS Foundation and partners must reflect on the ways in which recent crises have impacted artist grantees and their ability to sustain careers.

Return on investment figures for those funded in the first five years of the Momentum Fund were significantly higher than they have been over the last few years (the Fund helped to generate approximately £18m for the UK music industry from 2013-2018 compared to £4m generated in 2018-2023). Factors including the recent climate of a rapidly changing music industry and wider challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit and the cost-of-living crisis could all be contributing to extending the time it takes an artist to build earnings to levels seen more than 5 years ago. Looking at the latest data on annual earnings in 2023, the average increased income for artists funded in the first five years of the Fund is £35,818. This compares to an average increase in annual income of £15,755 for those receiving funding in the last five years.

Partners should expect a return to the trend that annual income is significantly higher within 2-3 years of receiving support as grantees have mostly been able to sustain careers and navigate the complexities of a post-Covid world (in part thanks to the ways in which the Fund enabled artists to adapt. While it is impossible to overstate the impact of the last few years on emerging talent, the resilience of the programme and its grantees within this context is impressive. 81% of grantees said their income had increased since receiving their grant, 9% said that it had stayed the same, and 10% reported a decrease in annual revenues.

It is important that PPL Momentum Fund partners continue to listen to the needs of artists and music creators, and bring in additional support to help to tackle serious financial, social and cultural inequities and barriers that exist in today's music sector.



## **Impact 5. Supporting creative freedom, independence and confidence**

*Momentum is music giving back to music.  
The purest form of growth."*

**Frank Carter**

The Fund is particularly valued because of the ways it has enabled artists to develop more sustainably and independently – in some cases, enabling a record to be made or brand identity developed before label involvement. In other cases, enabling an artist to remain in control of the rights, licencing their own music, enabling them to explore their creativity with additional freedom and independence.

**80% of artists said PPL Momentum funding had helped them develop creatively.**

*"The Fund has enabled me to reach and exceed my expectations to create, release and promote my music independently, and in a way that gave me 100% control as a self-releasing artist. As a result, I am able to keep going as a full-time musician and create more and more work for the near future."*

**Elizabeth Bernholtz (Gazelle Twin)**

The diversity of genres funded and the increasingly genre-defying work created by grant recipients, further demonstrates how the fund supports creative independence.

PPL Momentum Fund has invested in specialist music and music that crosses boundaries, following the creative impulse of the artist rather than a pre-defined commercial template.

*"PRS Foundation and PPL Momentum support has allowed me to have creative control of the sound and look of the music that I want to create and perform on stage. As an independent artist this creative control is of utmost importance to me musically and what continually inspires me to make music. It has helped me continue to gain confidence and develop my craft."*

**Zara McFarlane**

The independent panels which make funding decisions are made up of respected music industry professionals (including managers, labels, publishers and media professionals), each with a passion for a diversity of genres, help give the Momentum award integrity and to help validate the creative journey of the funded artist.

*"As an artist you just need that one leap of faith from a single investor to take the next steps in your career and I can honestly say since [partners] made that leap of faith in me it has changed my life. The freedom it has provided to just focus on the art!"*

**Harleighblu**

## **90% of artists feel PPL Momentum funding is making a real and significant difference in encouraging the craft of music making.**

*"I was looking for funding to continue the work I do in a way I don't have to compromise. I didn't want to get corporate involvement on their terms or sign a less favourable record deal. So, it's been so important and I am so grateful to get Momentum funding so I could involve the people I wanted to and generate the right sound and energy."*

**Kate Stables (This is the Kit)**

The dedicated PRS Foundation team is also much-valued for their passion and knowledge across multiple music genres, and for the support, guidance and connections they provide. For grantees, the support is more than just funding and relationships often continue over the longer-term, regularly leading to new investment and advice. This works to validate their role as independent music creators and to boost confidence.

*"We're extremely grateful for to PRS Foundation and PPL Momentum partners for supporting us through the recording process of our next album during this difficult time. Their support has helped us grow as musicians and has given us more faith in ourselves as recording artists."*

**Audrey Pavlovic, Allusinlove**

## **81% of artists said the PPL Momentum grant and PRS Foundation support had improved their confidence. 52% said their confidence had improved significantly.**

*"I couldn't have made my album without the help of Momentum Fund. In addition, the music equipment and the time it gave me helped me master new exciting skills. I'm so proud to have written and also produced this new record."*

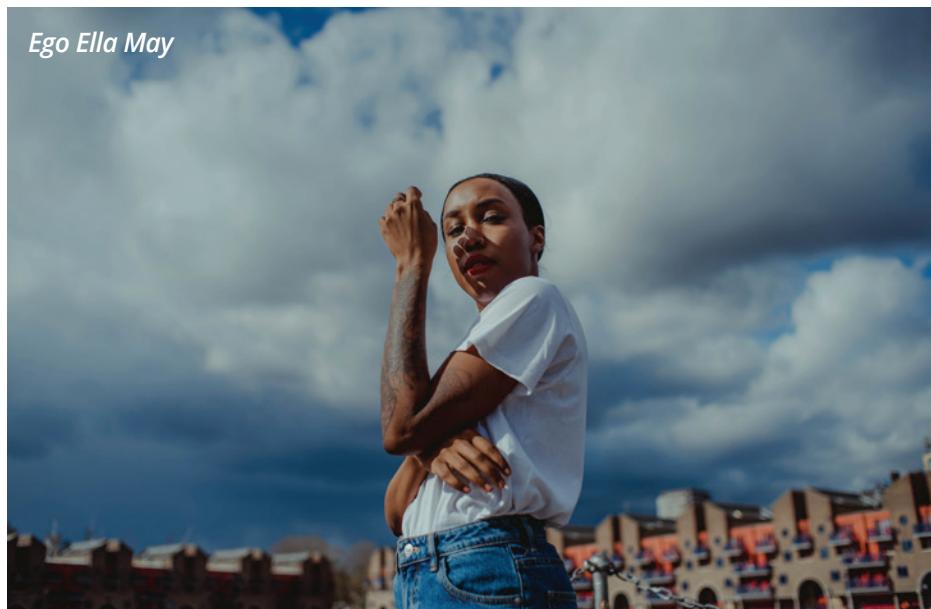
**Eska**

Over the ten years of Momentum, the decision-making process has become more robust, inclusive and progressive, which further enhances the reputation of the fund and serves to validate the artists and teams awarded with funding:

- Decision makers are experts in their field and reliable tastemakers.
- External advisors reflect the diversity of the music scene in the UK, with PRS Foundation constantly seeking new advisors working in multiple genres and based across the UK.
- Diversity & Inclusion are considered in the selection of external advisors used in each funding round, ensuring a good representation of gender, ethnicity, UK region, genre and area of expertise.

This combination of expertise from all backgrounds helps the PRS Foundation to deliver an increasingly diverse and inclusive programme of investment. It has also helped to nurture distinctive music scenes in different parts of the country – supporting the continued revitalisation of the London jazz scene and genres such as Grime and Drill. Based on the expertise and insights of advisers and decision-makers, and on the openness of the fund, The PPL Momentum Fund has invested at an early stage in local music scenes that have since flourished into key contributors to an innovative and diverse UK music sector.

**Over the 10 years, investment has reached a greater diversity of music genres. Perhaps most significant is the shift in grants to artists working in Black Music genres including Hip-Hop, Grime, Rap, R&B, Soul, Reggae with a shift from 23% of grants in the first five years of funding to 31% in 2020-2023. Overall, 25% of all PPL Momentum Music funding has been awarded to artists from these music genres.**



## **Impact 6. Backing the full diversity of UK music talent**

The music industry is not yet as open and inclusive as it needs to be to enable the full diversity of the nation's talent to have the opportunity to succeed. But the UK music industry is more inclusive and diverse than it would have been without PPL Momentum Music funding.

The Fund has played an important role in supporting artists from different social, cultural and economic backgrounds. It has made real progress in reaching talent outside London - in other big cities but also in the emergent music scenes of smaller places. The very connected, passionate and knowledgeable team has worked hard to reach talent from across the UK working in different scenes which lack the institutional and industry infrastructure of London. This has led to the Fund being particularly impactful for Black music creators.

From the outset, the PPL Momentum Fund has aimed to be open and inclusive.

**49.5% of grants have been awarded to artists of Black, Asian or other ethnically diverse heritage.**

Since PRS Foundation monitored ethnicity in Momentum forms, the data collected shows that **57.9% of grantees identified as White** (50.5% identify as White British and 7.4% as from other White heritage backgrounds); **33.5% are Black** (25.8%) **or have mixed heritage including Black** (7.7%); **4.5% are Asian** (1.9%) **or have mixed heritage including Asian** (2.6%); **0.2% have Arab heritage**; **3% identified as Mixed Heritage - 'other'**; and **0.9% belong to another ethnic group**.

There has been an increase in awards to artists of Black, Asian or other ethnically diverse heritage from 48.6% in the first five years of the fund to 55.0% in most recent funding rounds 2020-2023.

*"Without the support of the PRS Foundation I would not be the musician I am today. One of the biggest obstacles for artists is accessibility and financial support both of which PRS Foundation has helped to provide. This process has allowed me to learn the fundamental structures of music business and be better prepared as a professional musician."*

Candice Lonji Nawesi (C Cane)

## **81% of PPL Momentum artists felt that the Momentum fund was making a real difference in supporting artists from ethnically diverse backgrounds to develop.**

PRS Foundation and partners have also demonstrated a strong track record in supporting women and gender expansive artists<sup>8</sup>. In the first five years of the fund, 25.6% of PPL Momentum grantees identified as women or all-women bands, when asked.

**In the 12 grants rounds 2020-2023, 39.1% of grantees identified as women or all-women groups, 5.5% identified as gender expansive and 10.2% as mixed gender groups.**

**18.2% of 2020-2023 grantees identified as LGBTQI+.**

*"Momentum funding enabled the release of my debut album, the launch show and UK tour. Without this funding I would have had an unreleased album... It has been a real game changer and I am eternally grateful for the support".*

Tawiah

<sup>8</sup> Gender Expansive is an inclusive term used to describe someone with a more flexible gender identity than might be associated with a typical gender binary. This might include those who identify as non-binary, transgender, gender fluid, gender queer, agender and gender non-conforming. PRS Foundation started to include data gathering on artists identifying as gender expansive in 2018.

**87% of artists felt PPL Momentum was making a real difference in supporting women artist to develop. 67% felt the fund supported gender expansive artists and 56% that the fund was making a difference in developing the careers of Deaf, Disabled artists and those living with a long-term health condition.<sup>9</sup>**

PPL Momentum funding has also supported artists from across the UK to build their careers and go to the next level. The fund has played an important role in nurturing local music ecosystems, spotting and supporting talent, validating this talent, and in turn helping to reinvigorate music scenes outside London. This is important given the historic perception that artists needed to relocate to London to build their careers, which has led to an unbalanced music industry where only those with the finance and connections are able to feasibly attempt to establish their career in the Capital.

**51.0% of grants have been made to artists based outside London. Support for artists across English regions, outside London, and all countries of the UK has increased from 44.5% of grants outside London in the first five years of fund to 57.9% in the last five years.**

In the last five years, since investment in artists in all UK nations, 6.3% of grants have been awarded to artists in Northern Ireland, 9.4% to artists in Scotland and 9.1% to Wales.

# Supporting Music Talent Across the UK - PPL Momentum Accelerator

Following the '5 Years of the Momentum Music Fund' report in 2018, PRS Foundation and partners reflected on the proportion of musically-outstanding artists based outside London who were not yet at the 'crucial career tipping point' sought in Momentum Fund guidance. The shortage in support for the talent pipeline in certain parts of the UK means that artists may have less access to team members and industry co-investment, and may be less ready for more significant investment. While the main Momentum funding strand has a strong track-record in these areas, it was clear to the Foundation team that strategic intervention was needed. PPL Momentum Accelerator partners consulted with artists and team members and through conversations with PRS Foundation's network of Talent Development Partner organisations (which are based around the UK), the PPL Momentum Accelerator fund was launched.

The Accelerator strand is a targeted scheme to support the development of outstanding artists and bands showing strong potential, and future industry professionals, all based outside London. First piloted in Liverpool in 2019, PPL Momentum Accelerator now offers targeted support to artists based in Yorkshire (run in partnership with Music:Leeds and Launchpad and match funding from Arts Council England, combined authorities and other funders); Liverpool City Region (with support from the Liverpool City Region Music Board, Culture Liverpool and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority);

Through this strand, the wider PPL Momentum programme supports artists, managers, promoters, labels, publishers, PRs and other industry professionals; and is able to partner with experts in those regions and nations to ensure that money and expertise stays in these hub areas for the benefit of the wider music ecosystem. PPL Momentum Accelerator is ever-evolving and has the potential to counteract the talent drain and help the UK's scenes to 'level up'. Early success stories include Yorkshire based band English Teacher and Liverpool City region's Astles whose UK tour was promoted by fellow Accelerator grantee Abby Meysenburg.



**PPL Momentum  
Accelerator**  
PRS Foundation



Spotify  
PRS  
Foundation



METRO MAYOR  
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION



ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

Culture LIVERPOOL  
Liverpool City Region  
Music Board

Cymdeithas Celfyddydau Cymru  
Arts Council of Wales

# The Future: Why the PPL Momentum Music Fund Matters

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*"PPL Momentum and PRS Foundation are providing the financial support for a nation of artists. Without this...we would move towards an industry and an arts practice full of inherited wealth and homogenised/"safe" expression that purely represents financial return. This isn't and shouldn't ever be the primary path of art and expression."*

**Pig Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs**

The Fund has an outstanding track record in supporting diverse music talent, working across multiple genres and based in different parts of the UK, to go to the next level. This can mean different things to different grant recipients. Some are able to isolate the direct impact of grant support because it funded an activity which was otherwise unaffordable and for which impact was immediate – such as recording new material, investing in a particular producer, or touring to a standard compatible with the aspirations of the artist. While some value investment as part of a blend of support funding and revenue solutions which have, for example, enabled a greater level of creative independence, facilitated the development of a stronger team, and boosted their confidence and reputation as a credible artist.

*Anna B Savage*



This range of impacts stems from the openness, flexibility and responsiveness of the Fund. Plus, such impacts illustrate just how difficult it is to build a sustainable career in the contemporary music industry where access to finance is limited, revenue generation complex and very unevenly distributed, and operational costs through the roof. It is not uncommon for well-known artists to have more than one job. Many tours have been truncated or cancelled. There are plenty of examples of celebrated music talent leaving the industry or compromising on their creative integrity and independence to survive.

*A PPL Momentum grant shows the industry that there's belief in a project at a very serious level. So there is a huge gravitas a PPL Momentum grant gives to peers and the industry.*

**Sarah Wall, Senior Events and Marketing Manager, PPL**

Over ten years, Momentum has been a force for good in the music industry, investing in the inclusive renewal of the sector and helping to secure the future and legacies of many great artists. The Fund has become widely known as a vital tool in artist development and as a prestigious accolade for music talent.

However, with 93% of applications not successful (due to the disparity between demand and level of funding), many artists are not accessing the support they need to go to the next level. Over ten years, Momentum has diversified its reach – across genres, demographic segments and geographies. This has had a significant, often transformational impact on individual artists and provided an uplift for music genres and scenes which would otherwise struggle for attention or sustainability. But many artists from a broad range of backgrounds, will struggle to go to the next level because they don't have the funds, contacts or know-how to do so.

For the next ten years, as technology continues to transform the entire music value chain, the UK music industry will need diverse, original, independent music talent if it is to continue to compete globally. This is going to require radical new funding models, support programmes and partnerships.

The PPL Momentum Fund, in the ways it has both directly impacted music talent and shifted its approach to keep pace with the fast-changing reality of the UK music industry, has proven the concept of a dedicated, independent funding programme for music talent. It has changed the game in terms of music industry funding, providing a source of much needed-investment and demonstrating need for much greater funding. But it is not enough and the Covid-19 pandemic, cost-of-living crisis and mounting challenges of Brexit mean Momentum is both more urgent and essential than it was a decade ago.

Now industry partners will need to co-design a future programme which is bigger, wider-reaching and thus open to the challenges and opportunities of the future. This will need to consider the following:

- **UK-wide impact.** The Fund has supported musical talent based across the UK to go the next level and to levels which historically would have required relocation to London. But it is likely that music talent in different regions is still missing out, especially given that 93% of applications are unsuccessful and that many artists are still to find out about the Fund (e.g. they lack the management or wider team to source and apply for funding opportunities). Partners will need to consider new ways to reach and support artists and establish an optimum level for non-London-based beneficiaries. Partners can also identify ways to reach and support music creators from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, scrutinising who is missing from application rounds in addition to scoping ways to develop talent which lacks the resources, visibility and confidence of, for example, their middle class peers. PPL Momentum Accelerator might be extended and strengthened to deliver a more inclusive model overall.



- **Increased diversity.** Over ten years, the Fund has diversified – from the decision-makers to be artists, from genre to location. However, persistent barriers exist – such as for disabled talent or talent from fragile communities such as refugees. There is also considerable scope to increase the reach and impact of funding to gender expansive creators. In addition, British Asian music creators are under-represented (as are the areas of the country with a high proportion of British Asian communities). Partners can reflect on successes in reaching Black music creators and consider innovative models to reach outstanding British Asian talent.
- **Innovation and transformation.** Over ten years, the technology landscape has changed so much. But we are still in the foothills of this transformation. Partners will need to ensure that PPL Momentum Fund doesn't just keep up with technological transformation, but is based on foresight of what is coming and how this will influence talent development. This can include partnership-based models which support diverse talent to embrace new technologies with confidence.
- **Growing the investment pot and cementing a partnership-based approach to talent development.** PPL Momentum Fund has supported some of the most talented and vital music creators of the last decade to develop new work, reach new audiences and go to the next level in their creative and professional development. The wider music industry has benefitted from the talent pipeline enabled by the Fund. But Momentum isn't enough. For the next ten years, the PRS Foundation can work with other funders to co-design programmes that builds from Momentum to take music industry investment to the next level. This will need to consider the size of grants, how they link to other funding mechanisms, and how they shape a sequence of development opportunities that support the growth of artists over a longer period of time.

*The impact of PPL Momentum Music funding on individual artists and the wider industry is clear to see.*

*Artists and creators at crucial career tipping points require this type of support more than ever so it is vital we continue to evolve the Fund and receive more support from collaborators across the music industry.*

*This partnership programme has changed the music funding landscape and we're looking forward to seeing what current and future grantees can achieve.*

**Joe Frankland**

# ADWAITH

Formed in Carmarthen in West Wales, Adwaith are a Welsh language indie rock band that have been making waves in four short years. Band members Hollie Singer (vocals and guitar) and Gwenllian Anthony (bass) grew up together and met drummer Heledd Owen at the first gig they played. Soon after, they were taken on by Gruffydd Wyn Owen, Libertino Records.



Their debut album *Melyn* picked up the prestigious Welsh Music Prize in 2019, the same year they played the Green Man Rising Stage at the renowned Green Man Festival, launching their single *Gartre* at Cardiff's Clwb Ifor Bach, and supporting Gwenno at Islington Assembly Hall in London. A tour of UK independent music venues followed in with their audience and profile building, Adwaith were awarded the PPL Momentum Fund grant in 2020 to support the production and promotion of *Bato Mato*.

Whilst the funding was awarded in 2020, due to Covid pandemic lockdowns and restrictions, the album release was put back to 2022. PR, mainly through radio, was seen as key to getting Adwaith and their music to a wider audience beyond Wales and building the profile of band alongside the album release. The funding allowed them to bring Rocket PR on board, with all three singles from the album, playlisted on BBC Radio 6 music, a first for any Welsh language band. They played at Glastonbury on the BBC Introducing Stage, supported Idles at Cardiff's Motorpoint Arena and headlined the Walled Garden Stage at Green Man Festival to the biggest ever audience for a Welsh language band outside Wales. The band has also now signed a booking agent, Dutch based EBB, with the aim to target Europe the UK and US in the next two years.

Following the support of PPL Momentum Fund, the band have significantly built their audiences across the UK and went on to win the Welsh Music Prize again in 2022 for their second album *Bato Mato*.

*"We wouldn't be in this position we're in now if it wasn't for PPL Momentum... being able to invest in Rocket PR and all the things that have happened with the album and singles, have all helped build the CV of the band which puts them in a position to negotiated and secure agents."* Gruffydd Owen

*"We wouldn't have been able to do the campaign we did without PPL Momentum funding and we had it at exactly the right time for us. ... The album was such a tipping point for us. It was brilliant to be able to get the support then and we are so grateful to PRS Foundation for believing in us and supporting us".* Gwenllian Anthony

The aim now is to make the band sustainable so they can dedicate themselves full-time to their music. They are in a much stronger position to do this following the PPL Momentum funding and all the support from PRS Foundation. The band is also now working on their third album. The next steps are to get a North American booking agent and label. Having just returned from SXSW, those discussions have started.

# NOVA TWINS

Nova Twins are a trailblazing double act with a sound that fuses elements of punk, rap, pop, rock and beyond, with a nod to their exposure to 00s R&B and hip-hop during their childhood. Formed in London in 2014, the two childhood friends - vocalist/guitarist Amy Love and bassist Georgia South - released their debut album 'Who Are The Girls?' in 2020, going on to support an array of acts on tours including Bring Me The Horizon, Wolf Alice, Yungblud and Sleaford Mods. In 2022, Nova Twins received PRS Foundation's International Showcase Fund to perform at SXSW and released their second album, Supernova, which went on to garner a Mercury Prize nomination and land the band two BRIT nominations. Now in 2023, Nova Twins are riding high – recently completing a UK and European tour, followed by a run of dates in North America, supporting MUNA alongside headline shows and festival appearances.

PPL Momentum Music funding enabled the band to keep their fiercely entrepreneurial spirit, supporting the recording and campaign around their debut album and the band's touring activities of gigs and festivals, throughout the summer of 2019 – a critical moment in their development. Georgia identifies the significance of this investment:

*"We are so appreciative of the PPL Momentum Fund – it feels like winning the lottery for bands. It helped us market and get PR and a radio plugger. It gave us resources we never had before. As a self-released debut album, with the (Covid-19) lockdowns coming just after, the PR helped us keep momentum in such a trying time".*

Harnessing these relationships across the industry and building out their team in press, radio, TV and digital marketing in order to properly market Nova Twins' debut album, the band were able to build profile and grow an audience, leading into the success of their second album 'Supernova'. Amy Love recognises this:

"It was very important to us because we didn't have the label infrastructure and team. Now we've found our life team."

PPL Momentum Music funding enables artists to hold onto their independence and creative vision by allowing them to self-finance the creation and marketing of their music. As their manager, Rupert King, puts it:

*"Without grants like PPL Momentum, Nova Twins might not have been able to progress their careers, whilst maintaining the kind of artist friendly rights that will pay dividends going forwards".*



Nova Twins demonstrate how PPL Momentum Music funding can catalyse the careers of independent, female, diverse music artists. They view such funding and the wider support from the PRS Foundation as both validating and vital for their profile and development – not least because even with success, the cost barriers to touring are so high:

"The cost of touring has gone up so much, especially if we are to uphold the same production values in every gig. No one wants to have to scale back on production and artists like us need support for this, if we are to continue to grow".

## PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS (PIGS X 7)

Formed in 2012, Newcastle hard rock metal band Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs made up of Matthew Baty (lead vocals), Sam Grant (guitar), Adam Ian Sykes (lead guitar), John-Michael Joseph Hedley (bass) and Ewan Mackenzie (drums) released their first album, Feed the Rats, in 2017, following a couple of singles and EPs.

The band secured PPL Momentum funding in 2018 to fund PR and a radio plucker to support the release and promotion of their second album, King of Cowards. The funding also allowed them to spend more time in the studio honing the final sound. What they achieved with the PPL Momentum Music grant has taken them to the next level in terms audience and profile, garnering 4 star reviews across the board.

Record sales have far exceeded expectation, resulting in an album of the day slot on BBC Radio 6 Music, a repressing of the record just two months after initial release and culminating in a No.1 position in the official independent chart.

*"The PPL Momentum funding [is] critical to where the band are now. Without that they would be nowhere near where they are today. I would say the band is 10 times bigger than they were before the funding. They simply wouldn't have been able to pull together that amount of money between them, at the time, as they have families and responsibilities."*  
Bradley Kulisic, Singing Light Music, Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Manager

The band were due to go to SXSW in 2020 with their third album Viscerals but the Covid pandemic put a stop to that. With the support of PRS Foundation's International Showcase Fund they have just returned from a packed schedule at SXSW 2023, involving 8 gigs in 5 days as part of a comprehensive major market North American headline tour, with shows in New York, LA, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Vancouver, Toronto, Chicago, Boston, Washington DC and Philadelphia, promoting their just released fourth Album Land of Sleeper. The band explains how PPL Momentum came at exactly the right time for them:



"The PPL Momentum fund was invaluable in our progression as a band. It was provided just when we were right at the point of being able to make the next step up in our journey, but didn't have the financial capacity ourselves to fully realise the opportunity."

The band also see the wider impact the PPL Momentum Music Fund has, nurturing a creative, diverse, music industry enabling them to express themselves artistically:

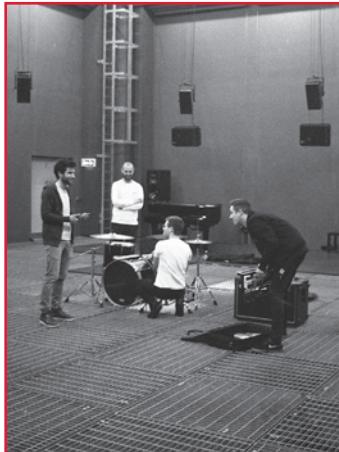
*"It is providing the financial support for a nation of artists. For the most part these artists work in a sector that does not provide any real investment in young or developing talent. More often than not artists are expected to invest in themselves despite often not having the personal funds to do so. Barring the very few that get larger independent or major label support, the vast majority of artists are in no way able to cover the costs of the broad range of needs that are expected in order to move up the ladder and create a sustainable practice. Without funding bodies like PRS Foundation we would move towards an industry and an arts practice full of inherited wealth and homogenised/"safe" expression that purely represents financial return. This isn't and shouldn't ever be the primary path of art and expression."*

## ROBOCOBRA QUARTET

Mining influence from jazz, hardcore punk and contemporary classical music, Robocobra Quartet sound like little else. As an expanding, contracting and ever-changing collective, the group began performing live in 2014 after studying at the Sonic Arts Research Centre in Belfast, Northern Ireland. In 2016 they received a small amount of PRS Foundation Flash Funding support for vinyl pressing of their first record and then investment from the PRS Foundation Open Fund to support their first tour.

PPL Momentum Music funding supported the development and promotion of the 2022 album *Living Isn't Easy*, which won the Northern Ireland Music Prize, Album of The Year. Founder, singer and drummer Chris W. Ryan, makes the point that being based in Northern Ireland "can make you feel cut adrift and touring is prohibitively expensive." This is where the PPL Momentum Music funding made a difference, enabling the band to invest much more in digital marketing and to licence the record to the First Taste Records, which increased the band's autonomy – both commercially and creatively – whilst also adding five new members to their team.

*"Our PPL Momentum-funded album *Living Isn't Easy* reached audiences that it would have never reached without the help of PRS Foundation. Focusing on making our truest creative work with the knowledge that the recording costs were covered allowed us to be bold and creative in decision-making. This album then went on to win the NI Music*



*Prize for Album of The Year which felt like a validation for following this process of making the music that excites ourselves first and foremost. This confidence was imbued in us in part by PPL Momentum".*

Chris values the relationship with the PRS Foundation, which over time has seen the band develop, both musically and in terms of their profile and critical reception. The PRS Foundations' team is credited with being really supportive, making connections and signposting to potential funding or other opportunities – such as an International Musicians in Residence programme which Chris has benefitted from.

*"PPL Momentum has allowed artists to create challenging artistic works through its support. Without PPL Momentum a lot of artists from less privileged backgrounds would likely either not be creating the work, or doing so from a much less confident and artistic standpoint".*

Participation in the PPL Momentum programme has also raised awareness of how funding can impact on artistic and professional development – knowledge which Chris passes on in his 'day job' as a music producer. Chris sees real potential in this kind of knowledge exchange and sector development activity – as a future dimension for the PPL Momentum Music Fund.

## SARATHY KORWAR

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Sarathy Korwar is a drummer, composer and producer raised in India and based in London. Korwar has established himself as one of the most original and compelling voices in the UK jazz scene. His music fuses jazz, electronics, Indian folk and classical influences with a focus on decoloniality, community, race and transcendence. In 2016, Sarathy released his debut album Day To Day on the label, Ninja Tune. This record incorporated field recordings of the Siddi people of Southern India blended with his own compositions drawing from contemporary jazz and electronic music. In 2019, he released his second studio album, More Arriving through The Leaf Label. Recorded over three years in Mumbai and London, the album incorporates rappers from Mumbai and New Delhi with spoken word and his own Indian classical influence and jazz instrumentation. In 2022, Sarathy released his third studio album KALAK, also on The Leaf Label.



The PPL Momentum Music Fund supported Sarathy to develop and promote KALAK, enabling him to increase his profile and build new audiences. Primarily the fund enabled him to pay for production and recording at Real World Studios - which would otherwise have been out of the financial reach of the label, with The Guardian placing it at #2 in their Best Global Albums of 2022. In turn this enabled him to spend more on PR in the UK and Europe.

*"I wanted to find a way to scale up my career ...to find ways to step up. I needed this financial injection to make sure my voice is heard".*

Funding also helped Sarathy focus entirely on the music and creative process because it unburdened him of the additional stress of finding the money to pay different colleagues:

*"I was able to pay everyone. I didn't have to ask any favours, keeping the band happy, which makes all the difference".*

PPL Momentum Music funding builds on a longer-term funding relationship with the PRS Foundation. For example, Sarathy was awarded the Steve Reid InNOVation Award which supported the recording of his debut album and received the International Showcase Fund to play at SXSW in 2017 and BBC Music Introducing and PRS Foundation showcase support to perform at the New York Winter Jazz Festival in 2020.

Sarathy views the PPL Momentum Music funding as a vital enabler in his professional and creative development, acknowledging that for artists working in non-mainstream genres and artists from diverse backgrounds, investment is both validating and vital to go to the next level. In the future, he would value funding which supports artists to develop new ventures – such as to set up labels or platforms that nurture the wider ecosystem:

*"I don't know many people of colour or women who run record labels. It would be very interesting for artists to step across and develop other artists".*

## W.H. LUNG

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The genre-crossing W.H. Lung are a Manchester five-piece band producing music that blends influences from synth pop, Krautrock and dance. They burst onto the music scene in 2017, with the release of the single *Inspiration!/Nothing Is*. Originally conceived as a studio-based project by school friends, Joseph E (vocals, synths), Tom S (guitar), and Tom D (bass), the trio quickly became sought after for live shows and performances off the back of their 2017 debut, playing stages at British festivals including Greenman and End of the Road.

Following their debut LP in 2019, Incidental Music, the band were set to tour and then develop their second LP. However, with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the band weren't able to properly tour, and focused instead on developing their second album.

Tom S describes how PPL Momentum Music funding was "*massively invaluable*" in the development of this record:

*"It enabled us to spend more time in the studio and master the record, which helped us to then go on and grow and tour".*

As a five-piece band, both recording and touring are expensive, meaning that funding from the PPL Momentum Music Fund enabled the band to bridge a specific financial gap and deliver something on their terms: the second LP, *Vanities*, released in 2021.

The maturity & energy of 2nd LP *Vanities* garnered the band further critical praise, not just in the UK but now in the USA, with Stereogum naming them 'One To Watch', & Under The Radar including *Vanities* in their Album of the Year list, alongside coverage in Brooklyn Vegan, Paste & Talkhouse.

Like many music artists, members of W.H. Lung juggle life in a band with making ends meet. Tom S, for example, works for a Counselling Service and in sound design outside the band.

The PPL Momentum Music Fund works with this reality supporting artists to develop and build profile and capacity as independent creators:

*"It invests in time – to develop and create new work. This is invaluable".*

In addition to PPL Momentum Music funding, W.H Lung has been supported by PRS Foundation to develop as a live act – with gigs at Glastonbury and SXSW. They have also accessed follow-up funding through the BPI's Music Export Growth Scheme, with the PPL Momentum Music funding a vital part of a wider funding mix.



# YAZMIN LACEY

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In 2023, jazz-soul singer Yazmin Lacey released her acclaimed debut album *Voice Notes*. Writing in *The Guardian*, Kadish Morris describes the work as "*conceptually and musically accomplished, flourishing with inspired narratives and sensuality at every turn*". Prior to *Voice Notes*, Yazmin had released three EPs and had grown in prominence as one of the most talented singer-songwriters and performers in contemporary UK jazz/soul.

PPL Momentum Music funding enabled Yazmin to record, release and promote a new 4 track EP, *Morning Matters*, retaining her creative control and empowerment as a young, female artist.. In addition, the funding enabled her to connect the dots on the live side of her career, helping to cover the short fall of the financial demands of touring as she played a mini UK tour to promote the release of the EP.

PPL Momentum Music funding can be understood as part of a sequence of support from PRS Foundation, with Yazmin also receiving investment from Women Make Music (for her second EP) and BBC Music Introducing and PRS Foundation showcase support (enabling her to play at the Winter Jazz Festival in New York). This joining together of funding has enabled Yazmin to establish key building blocks in every stage of her development. She appreciates the consistency and openness of the support of the PRS Foundation team – in addition to the financial investment:

*"They've continually been there. There's a human effort – they really make an effort to support you".*

PPL Momentum Music funding has given Yazmin the opportunity to retain control – creatively and strategically:

*"Artists being able to create masters enables them to develop ownership: 'this is my art'. This gave me the space and took the pressure off. It also enabled me to build better relations with a community of musicians, being able to pay them properly".*



# YARD ACT

Yard Act are a modern indie rock band hailing from Leeds. They launched their debut album *The Overload* in January 2022, with support from the PPL Momentum Music Fund.

Friends Ryan Needham (bass) and James Smith (vocals) formed the band in 2019, subsequently joined by fellow Leeds based luminaries Samuel Shipstone on guitar and Jay Russell on drums.

Their first single *The Trapper's Pelts*, released at the height of the first pandemic lockdown in 2020 on their own Zen F.C label, kickstarted a wild ride that saw them build a rabid fan base without the traditional audience building mechanisms. With ongoing pandemic restrictions on playing and even meeting up, they had to be creative about how they were going to move the band forward. Memphis Management took them on and helped the band apply for a PPL Momentum Music Fund grant to record their debut album.

With an album they planned and recorded themselves with Ali Chant at his Playpen studio in Bristol, and having built a buzz around their music, a whole host of labels courted their signature, putting them in an enviable negotiating position. The album, entitled *The Overload*, is officially the fastest-selling debut on vinyl of any band this century, with album of the week slots in The Guardian, The Sunday Times, and The Telegraph. *The Overload* reached No. 2 in the Official Album Charts.

Yard Act have now signed to Islands Records for subsequent records. They toured internationally throughout 2022 and are heading back to the US in 2023 as well as hitting up Japan for the first time. Yard Act are also recording their second album due for release in 2024.

*"Momentum funding came at exactly the right time for Yard Act. Without it they wouldn't have been able to record their debut album *The Overload* or negotiate the deal they subsequently made with Island."* Matt Jacob, Memphis Management





# PPL Momentum Music Fund

**PRS Foundation**

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