

LEADER 2014-2020 (EXTENDED TO 2022) NRN CASE STUDY

Dynamics Music Project

Summary

The Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland (CBOI) was established in 1995 with the aim of building relationships North and South of the border through music. It is recognised as a flagship peace initiative which has played a vital role in nurturing community relations across the border. The CBOI engages members by offering orchestral training and performance opportunities and today it has over 100 members. This 'Dynamics' project, by the CBOI, engages 6 and 7-year-old children in Louth who may not have access to musical instruments or training to be able to learn the violin. This project has led to a number of benefits for students including increased confidence and self-esteem, along with the opportunity to perform their new skills on the big stage.

Context

The Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland (CBOI) was established in 1995 as a peace initiative with the aim of building cooperation and relationships between North and South through music. In order to build these relationships, the CBOI has developed a number of initiatives over its 25 years and today has over 100 young musicians from all over Ireland and Northern Ireland who have been given the opportunity to

Project name: Dynamics Music Project

Date: December 2018 - Ongoing

Local Action Group: Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Implementing Partner: Louth LEADER Partnership

Type of Beneficiary: NGO

Priority & Focus Area: Theme 2: Social Inclusion, Subtheme: Basic Services Targeted at Hard to Reach Communities

Project Beneficiary Name/Organisation: Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland

Address: Room P1175 – Carroll's Building, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dublin Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth

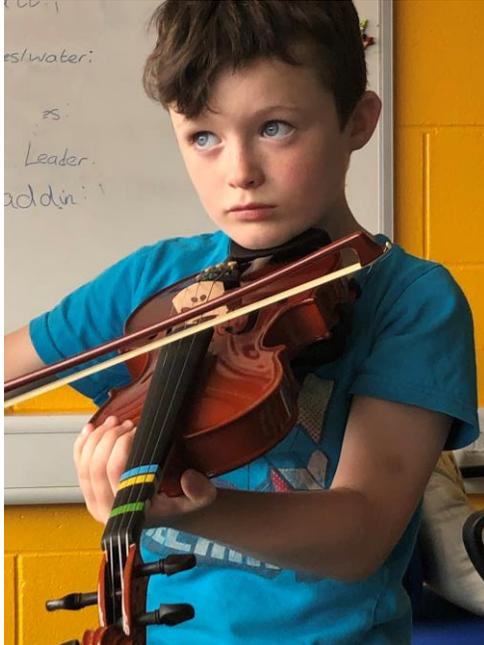
Further information: [Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland](#) | [Peace Proms, Peace Proms \(@cboiofficial\)](#) | [Twitter, Peace Proms - Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland](#) | [Facebook](#)



Participants of the CBOI Dynamics project taking to the stage - Source: CBOI



perform at the highest level in places like Carnegie Hall and the White House.



Dynamics project student perfecting his technique on the violin - Source: CBOI

The CBOI plays a vital role in enhancing Music and Arts Education in Ireland, Northern Ireland, the UK and internationally, for example through their Peace Proms programme. The Peace Proms is a free choral initiative geared towards primary school children to promote peace, harmony and tolerance and to make the arts more accessible to children, their families and the wider community. In its first year, 200 children were involved and today this has grown to over 35,000 participating every year, staging up to 15 arena performances.

CBOI's long-time ambition had been to launch their Dynamics Violin Programme after seeing the impact of such a programme in Venezuela, and other similar initiatives in the US and Scotland, but they had not been funded previously to develop it further. The Dynamics project focuses on a move away from the traditional way of learning music in Ireland which is

often a one to one, once a week lesson where the child is expected to practise on their own with the same enthusiasm. Research has shown that as many as 50% of children who take up a musical instrument and learn via one to one lessons tend to quit. The Dynamics project approach focuses on a move towards a more group-based and peer-to-peer learning experience. Additionally, more often than not, the possibility of learning a musical instrument is not available to all children due to the cost associated with purchasing a musical instrument and the cost of individual music lessons. Dynamics makes learning an instrument accessible to all children and is not only a music education programme, but a programme for social change that builds a belief in each child that he or she can take on really difficult challenges and succeed.

"A massive percentage of children never get the opportunity to play a musical instrument and it's a huge loss in anyone's life that they don't have that opportunity" Sharon Treacy-Dunne, Director, CBOI

Initially, Louth County Council supported a small pilot of this project which proved successful and provided a good basis and support for approaching LEADER to roll this initiative out across County Louth.



Dynamics students learning violin together – Source: CBOI





"I honestly thought I'd never get the opportunity to get this project started and to show everybody that this method of teaching is a complete game changer...and just to have the opportunity to do it and just to show everybody how successful it can be, is unbelievable, for me" Sharon Treacy-Dunne, Director, CBOI

comparison to some other funders where applications are unnecessarily complex" Sharon Treacy-Dunne, Director, CBOI

Objectives

- To help remove the idea of music being elite in Ireland and make music more accessible to more disadvantaged groups
- To show this system of education can help address social issues and be transformative for children

Activities



LEADER funded the purchase of 60 violins – Source: CBOI

After being notified of a call for LEADER projects from Louth LEADER Partnership in the local paper, the CBOI drew up an application, building on the strengths of the pilot study, seeking funding for the purchase of musical instruments and to pay for the tuition of children in schools using the Dynamics approach.

The CBOI worked closely with the project officers in Louth LEADER Partnership to build the project application and get it through to the approval stage.

"We dealt with Tony McCready ... He was great, very clear, very straight forward, so I found it really good in

After being approved, the CBOI engaged with a number of schools across the county to communicate what the project was about, what it would mean for the schools and the commitment that the schools would need to make to be involved. For the schools, this meant getting approval from the staff, the parents and the boards of management.

In targeting specific age groups, the CBOI decided to target 6 and 7-year-old children because of their ability to read and recognise numbers and letters. This age cohort is seen as an ideal time for children to start learning and reading music as at this age they are more open to learning new skills.



Dynamics students with their music tutor Marie Clare Brody & teachers – Source: CBOI

Three schools in Louth, totaling 60 students, decided to come on board for the Dynamics project and the CBOI used LEADER funding to purchase 60 violins and engaged Marie Claire Brody, a former member of CBOI and an accomplished musician and music teacher, to deliver the tuition at the selected schools. Music lessons are given to students daily for 40 minutes – 1 hour. Since the establishment of the project, an additional 20 students have come on board, bringing the total number of students involved to 80.





"It is an amazing opportunity for these children to learn the violin on a daily basis. Some of these children would never have been exposed to instrumental music lessons otherwise. What a fantastic programme!"
School Inspector, Louth

The teachers of the children have also noted how the project has totally transformed the class groups and how they now love school. Attendance has actually improved as the children don't want to miss their violin lesson.

Results

This project targets primary school children who live in isolated rural areas and/or may experience socioeconomic deprivation and offers them the chance to engage with musical education which may not be possible otherwise due to the costs associated with musical instruments and tuition. Aside from the gift of being able to learn and play the violin, this project has had numerous benefits for a range of children in terms of boosting their self-esteem and confidence. In particular, children with anxiety and other issues have benefitted enormously from this project. As the project is based on group learning and performance, some of these children seem to have completely overcome their anxieties and fears, and this project has given them the ability to perform in public for the very first time. Children with learning difficulties also benefited greatly as learning the violin gave them much more confidence and helped them to excel in other areas of their schooling, as well as with the confidence to speak up in class.

"As a parent, I can see how the violin lessons are building self-esteem and confidence in my child. She has loved the lessons and has enjoyed learning the violin so much so that she has asked for a violin so that she can continue practising. We would really love to see the lessons continue next year" Parent of Dynamics Student



Dynamics participants performing 'A Million Dreams' at the RDS – Source: CBOI

A huge achievement of this project is that within one year, the Dynamics children performed the song ['A Million Dreams' in the Royal Dublin Society \(RDS\)](#), in front of 4,000 people and a choir of 2,500 children, along with the full CBOI which proved to be a momentous occasion for the children involved.

"I liked the violin because it is fun and it makes really nice music. There are a lot of different songs you can play with it" Dynamics project student

Following this performance, the children involved in the Dynamics project took part in the Junior Ensemble at Newry Music Festival in March and were awarded 1st, 2nd and 3rd place, which was also a very proud moment for all involved.





Lessons

The CBOI found the application process for LEADER funding relatively good and engaged well with Louth LEADER Partnership who were excellent in giving guidance in pulling the application and supporting materials together to get the project over the line.

“We did have a lot of supplementary materials, justifications and information to pull together to get through the process. But we did have help at the other end of the phone or an email when we needed it and that was key” Sharon Treacy-Dunne, Director, CBOI

The CBOI states that this is a key aspect for anyone developing their own LEADER project - to build a good relationship with your funder and project officer as they will help guide you through the process and help solve any issues you may be experiencing with your application.

+ (b) <i>National / Regional contribution</i>	€16,908.26
+ (ii) <i>Private / Own funds</i>	€7,050.77
+ (iii) <i>Other funding sources</i>	N/A

Contact details

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All smiles at music class – Source: CBOI

Funding

Total project budget (i)+(ii)+(iii) =	€52, 503.09
+ (i) Rural Development Programme support (a)+(b)	€45, 452.32
+ (a) EAFRD (EU) contribution	€28,544.06

