Music Recording: captured and released

A report on the feasibility of setting up
an Irish recording label and/or download platform

September 2008

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"There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come."

Victor Hugo

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A report by the Contemporary Music Centre, Ireland

Based on research by Ronnie Gurr, Sugar Tree Consulting.
Edited with additional contributions by Fergus Sheil and Eve O'Kelly.

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Preface

This report was commissioned by the Contemporary Music Centre (CMC) as an important element of a strategic planning process which has taken place within the organisation throughout 2007 and 2008. It culminates in the publication in September 2008 of a new *Strategic Plan 2009-2011* which proposes a broader vision and enhanced level of activity for the Centre as it enters its third decade. The year 2011 is CMC's 25th anniversary.

The desire for a feasibility study was motivated by the perception that the work of Irish composers and musicians across a range of so-called 'non-commercial' or specialised music genres is not reaching the public to the degree that it should because it is not available in recorded format. As a comparison, this is the equivalent of Irish writers having none of their work published and therefore unavailable to a national or international audience.

For the musician, working in a field which is by definition a performance art, a recording is not only an important way of documenting his or her creative output, it remains one of the most effective ways of bringing that output before a wide audience. Without appropriate support for recordings, Irish composers and performing musicians are operating at a disadvantage with respect to their peers in literature, visual arts and other artforms. Cultural life in Ireland would not tolerate a situation where, for instance, the works of our creative writers – poets, playwrights and novelists – were not published. In the first decade of the 21st century, similar access is still not available to the full span of musical creativity from this country, an anomaly that must not be allowed to stand.

It is time for some fresh thinking on this whole area, and a sense of opportunity is an over-riding theme in the report. Although the traditional record industry is in a state of flux and Ireland is a small player in the global environment, the potential threats are more than matched by the opportunities. Recordings are now easier to make, and formats are more flexible and easier to distribute, than ever before.

This report analyses the present landscape for recorded music and identifies specific initiatives which, if implemented, will have a strong impact over time. The Contemporary Music Centre is ready for new challenges and willing to embrace new developments. We intend to forge partnerships across the music sector and we seek the support of all stakeholders to make the vision contained within this report a reality in the years ahead.

Otherwise, the music of many significant Irish musicians will remain known only to a privileged few.

Eve O'Kelly, Director
The Contemporary Music Centre, Ireland September 2008

Acknowledgements

The Contemporary Music Centre would like to thank the following for their contribution to this study: the many composers, performers and individuals who contributed to the process through interviews, participation in the survey, or by written submission; the representatives of record labels, distribution companies, web sites and resource and support organisations who were so generous with their time and input; the staff of the Contemporary Music Centre who contributed to the work; and especially the report’s author, Ronnie Gurr, and contributing editor, Fergus Sheil.

CMC particularly wishes to thank the members of the Advisory Steering Group whose expertise, encouragement, and belief in the potential of this report was constant throughout: Gareth Costello, RTÉ; Dr Clíona Doris, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama and CMC Board; and Fergus Sheil. They were joined by Eve O’Kelly, CMC Director; and Jonathan Grimes, CMC General Manager.

Part 1 – Introduction and Methodology

1.1 Executive Summary

This report offers a set of recommendations to develop the recording of music in Ireland. It proposes the establishment of a new recording label and a digital download platform for music, both under the aegis of the Contemporary Music Centre but with distinct identities and independent artistic policies. To give life to these proposals, it recommends the development of a detailed business plan supported by further market research.

The report also makes suggestions about the interaction of the Contemporary Music Centre with the Arts Council and other key stakeholders. It advocates a process of partnership building within the broader music sector and the development of strategic alliances with potential investors and resource organisations.

In total these recommendations offer a cost-effective template for the development of music recording and distribution in Ireland. Their implementation would have a profound and long-lasting effect on the visibility and public reach of music from Ireland and on the range of high-quality recordings of music available to Irish and global audiences.

1.1.1 Report structure

The report is presented in seven sections:

- Part 1 outlines the context for the report and the methodology used.
- Part 2 gives an overview of global developments impacting on the recording industry.
- Part 3 describes the current landscape for music recording in Ireland, and the technological changes that have a bearing on its future development.
- Part 4 analyses the data gathered in the research phase.
- Part 5 gives a series of case studies which provide useful learning in an Irish context.
- Part 6 offers a series of specific recommendations for future development.
- Part 7 comprises a set of appendices giving the detailed research data. It also describes the typical life cycle of a recording, to illustrate the stages involved and function as a glossary to demystify jargon.

1.2 Background

Music is central to the concept of civilisation. Music has the power to stimulate, provoke, enlighten, engage and entertain. Music belongs to everybody. Music binds people together. Music does not recognise barriers of age, status, race or class. Music is an expression of who we are. Music is one of the most potent ways in which we define ourselves.

Music as an artform in Ireland is remarkably diverse. Internationally, Ireland is celebrated for its success in the pop and rock sectors, represented by such major names such as U2, Westlife, The Cranberries, The Corrs and Van Morrison. Our traditional music culture is also regarded as one of the most highly developed in the world with artists such as The Chieftains, Sharon Shannon, Frankie Gavin and Martin Hayes all achieving significant international successes. In other areas, artists such as Enya, Christy Moore, Daniel O'Donnell and shows such as Riverdance and Celtic Woman have all attracted enormous followings. Musicians of all backgrounds have contributed strongly to the international view of Ireland as a culturally rich country. These include classical performers such as John O'Conor, James Galway, Ann Murray and Barry Douglas, and composers from John Field to Gerald Barry.

Public policy for the arts in Ireland over many years has sought to foster conditions that nurture the work of artists, and that seek to ensure that audiences throughout the country have access to a range of high-quality artistic experiences. Although, historically, Irish arts funding has lagged behind comparable developed nations, recent years have brought about developments and innovations that contribute significantly to the growth of a vibrant and sustainable arts infrastructure.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland have been the primary supports for the development of the arts in Ireland, north and south. They are now joined by Culture Ireland, the Irish government body for the development of Irish arts overseas and the promotion of international co-operation. The Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism (DAST) funds both the Arts Council and Culture Ireland as well as a range of National Cultural Institutions including the National Concert Hall. DAST has also funded the building of many arts venues nationwide in recent years.

RTÉ, the national broadcasting organisation, is another major player in public sector support for music. As well as its broadcasting remit, RTÉ funds and manages five performing groups including the only two full-time professional orchestras in the Republic of Ireland, and commissions new works by Irish composers for these ensembles. Music Network plays an important national role in bringing live music to venues all around the country and supporting the career development of artists. Another key area of public support for music is the work of local authorities, which have become increasingly important in the development of a sustainable arts environment nationally.

Many forms of Irish music are already supported through public sector grants, but even within this country, let alone internationally, only a fraction of the potential audience gets access to live performances. Relatively little attention has been given to support for recordings, which would significantly democratise access to high quality artistic endeavour and maximise returns on the initial investment. A critical opportunity is being lost in bringing a broad range of music by Irish artists and composers to a wider public, particularly internationally.

This sense of opportunity is an over-riding theme in this report. In Ireland, as with all developed nations, we are experiencing technological advances which mean that recording is now more feasible, more cost-effective and more portable than it has ever been.

For Irish composers and performers to secure their place in the global pantheon of creative music artists, it is imperative that a structured and long-term programme of music recording and distribution is put into place in a creative and strategic way. In doing so, Ireland as a society will learn more about its creativity while international audiences will have enhanced opportunities of accessing our cultural heritage.

This report offers a route through which this objective can be met. The development of the initiatives recommended would have far-reaching and long-lasting benefits for Irish music and culture, nationally and internationally.

1.3 Report Methodology

1.2.1 Tender process

In March 2007 the Contemporary Music Centre published an open invitation to tender for a recording label study. This was issued as part of a two-year strategic planning process which culminates in the autumn of 2008 with the publication of the Centre's new *Strategic Plan 2009-2011.*[1]

The tender[2] invited proposals to report on the feasibility of setting up an Irish recording label and/or download platform with the following aims:

- To draw together a range of specialist/non-commercial musics (contemporary, early Irish classical, jazz, electronic, etc);
- To provide recommendations for the strategic development of such a label;
- To examine effective ways in which existing recordings of Irish music can best be distributed.

Sugar Tree Productions Ltd, Scotland, were appointed in June 2007 and the research was supported by an advisory steering group.

1.2.2 Research objectives

The research objectives were:

- To analyse current activity in recordings of non-commercial music[3] in Ireland at present and look at existing distribution outlets for such recordings;
- To research international models of best practice in recording non-commercial music and make recommendations on how some of these models could be implemented in an Irish context;
- To examine online solutions for distributing recordings and to evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of such systems over CD publishing;
- To conduct a market analysis for recordings of non-commercial Irish music and make recommendations on how these audiences can be reached.

1 Available from www.cmc.ie

2 See Appendix I – Terms of Reference

3 The term 'non-commercial music' is used throughout this report to denote music of a more specialised, less 'mass appeal' nature which would not be regarded by major record labels as likely to generate sufficient volume of sales to be released.

1.2.3 Methodology

To meet the report objectives it was necessary to gather a wide range of information from a variety of sources. The main data collection methods were desk research, a survey of practitioners, and stakeholder interviews.

Desk-based research focused on reviewing current state supports for the recorded and digital music industry through existing print and web-based sources, seeking to identify models of good practice in the recording and digital space.[4]

Case studies were derived from interviews with selected companies and organisations abroad. These and meetings with key stakeholders and leading practitioners informed the analysis of the recording sector, and helped shape eventual recommendations.[5]

An online survey of individual practitioners and practitioner organisations was undertaken to gather quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire was developed and agreed jointly with the advisory steering group.[6]

A report was submitted to CMC in late 2007. This was edited with additional research and contributions by Fergus Sheil and Eve O'Kelly in 2008.

4 See Appendix II – Web sites

5 See Appendix III – Interviews

6 See Appendix IV – Questionnaire

Part 2 – Global Developments

2.1 Introduction

Ever since the first experiments in recording in the late 1800s, scientists have sought to improve the fidelity of recorded sound and to offer listeners an audio experience that is technically and artistically satisfying. When the CD went into commercial production in 1982, many regarded this as the culmination of the history of recording technology. There was a view that the recording industry had arrived at a state that was as close to perfection as could reasonably be expected. CDs and CD players became widely affordable and, for many years in the 1990s, business boomed.

The hallmarks of today's CD recording industry, however, are shrinking sales, a diminishing roster of artists, and the consolidation and centralisation of record labels and record shops. The Internet, meanwhile, has become a major force, with large music sites such as iTunes offering music for downloading to computers and MP3 players. There is no doubt that the music recording industry is in a state of flux, yet the demand on the part of the public for music in recorded form remains. It is timely, therefore, to examine some global trends as well as considering the opportunities and threats offered by today's use of the Internet.

2.2 Global Sales

Whereas in 1997 global sales of music recordings reached US$45 billion, each year since then has seen a decline, and global sales were down an estimated 11% in 2007. In terms of the CD, sales in the USA slid by 6% in 2006 and continued to drop in 2007 and 2008. Major music retailers are closing branches and sales are moving from specialist record stores to supermarkets and online outlets such as Amazon. US grocery giant, Wall-Mart, for instance, currently accounts for 22% of all US CD sales but concentrates on a very small number of best-selling titles.

The rising popularity of digital downloads has contributed to the erosion of the CD market. Sales figures for downloads have increased rapidly, particularly with Apple's launch of the innovative iPod portable media player (2001) and iTunes music download site (2003), but they are still estimated to account for only some 10% of global sales.

In global terms, total estimated sales of music recordings (in all formats) are forecast to stabilise at US$23 billion in 2009, a fall of roughly 50% in just over a decade. This decline is attributed to a complex interaction of changes in consumer activity related to the availability of home music hardware and software, music piracy and illegal file-sharing, and price competition driven by the download market which has contributed to the bankruptcy of major retailers.

For the record companies, the decline in profits from CD sales is only partially mitigated by the rise in sales of digital downloads. The level of future consumer migration from physical sales to digital downloads is hard to predict but downloads are not likely to reach the same level as sales of physical CDs did in the 1990s. At present revenues for digital downloads are only 15% of the CD level, and it is important to realise that despite its growth, this sector has yet to become the mainstream alternative to the CD.

Music publishers, whose royalty income is also adversely impacted by these changes, are now trying to increase their revenues in new ways, e.g. by licensing music for use on sites such as YouTube. However these revenue streams are forecast to grow by only 2.2% in the period 2006-2012. Hopes of returning to the top level figures of the mid-1990s have evaporated. [7]

2.3 CDs

The CD has been the industry standard for a generation and even in a falling market still retains the single highest percentage of total music sales. CDs are portable, reliable and tangible objects and they have strong familiarity and credibility among consumers. They are also an important resource for libraries and collectors, although as an archival medium they are not considered stable over the longer term. For those with a more serious interest in the content, the CD booklet is an important source of information on the artists and repertoire.

In spite of sliding sales, most commentators are slow to predict the demise of the CD. CDs are likely to remain important to people who may be uncomfortable with the technology involved in newer media. Serious audiophiles insist that the superior sound quality on CDs is worth preserving. They are also seen as an important marketing and promotional tool, whose very physicality is thought to register more strongly with journalists, radio presenters, commentators and other stakeholders than a digital download could.

2.4 Digital Downloads

A number of factors have contributed to the rise in digital downloads. Computers are easy to use as music storage devices, and nowadays the average home computer setup has the capability to copy CDs or transfer them to a portable music player. The increasing availability of domestic broadband connections has made it possible to download large music files at speeds far greater than with the old dial-up connections.

Digital download platforms have other advantages. They allow consumers to select the tracks that they want without having to purchase an entire album. These tracks can easily be compiled into personalised playlists. Additionally, downloads are instantly available.

Digital downloading is currently available to customers in a number of ways. Some music web sites offer individual tracks or complete albums for sale. Apple's iTunes, the market leader, operates in this way. Typically, individual tracks cost €0.99 and albums retail at €9.99 (although many variations exist). Tracks are downloaded to customers' computers, mobile phones or other devices and can be retained there or transferred to other devices. Customers can create an account and thereafter purchase music with one mouse click, paying by credit card per transaction.

7 Source*: Recorded Music and Music Publishing*. Enders Analysis Ltd, 2007, 2008.

A subscription model is favoured by sites such as eMusic.com. The customer signs up for a monthly allocation of downloads, paying a regular fee by direct debit and selecting tracks by browsing a large library on the web site. Different levels of package are available depending on the number of downloads allocated per month. Currently eMusic offers a basic package of 30 downloads per month for a fee of €12.99. Customers who wish to exceed their monthly allocation can purchase additional credits. Similar to the iTunes model, tracks are downloaded to a computer, mobile phone or other device and stored there or transferred elsewhere.

A third model, favoured by sites such as Naxos.com, involves unlimited access to a library of online music in return for an annual fee, but the files are streamed rather than downloaded. The site offers more than 5,000 CDs (including all Naxos, Marco Polo and Dacapo recordings) for an annual subscription of €19.95, with additional benefits such as access to some 50 new releases per month and video clips, podcasts, newsletters, etc. In this model the files can only be accessed and played online and cannot be stored on a computer, phone or other digital device, so they are not 'owned' as with the iTunes and eMusic models.

2.5 Web Radio

Web-based radio is a new avenue for music dissemination that has opened up in recent years with the development of the Internet. Web radio stations stream music, either with live or continuously refreshed content, or in a continuous loop. Such stations are operated by many organisations including existing broadcasting corporations as well as independent companies, and indeed sometimes just by a handful of individuals.

An innovative partnership between the Canadian record label Centrediscs and an Internet radio station is outlined later in this report.[8] Another interesting example is Counterstream Radio, run by the American Music Center. This station, noted for its depth and eclecticism, offers 24-hour streams of contemporary American compositions programmed from commercially-available CDs. Playlists are displayed on the Counterstream web site[9] together with links via Amazon.com to enable the purchase of recordings that are currently or recently played.

2.6 Web 2.0 and Beyond

Whereas the initial phase of Internet usage focussed on web sites primarily as a source of information, Web 2.0 implies a two-way interaction between provider and end-user whereby users upload information and files to web sites, and use the Internet to share information and material. Popular manifestations of this phenomenon are video sharing web sites such as YouTube, social networking sites like MySpace, Facebook and Bebo, and the user-controlled reference site, Wikipedia.

Web 2.0 is not a technical change to the Internet *per se*, but rather a change in use brought about by access to faster broadband connections, more availability of bandwidth[10] and a greater grasp by end-users of the possibilities of the Internet.

8 See section 5.3 – Case Studies: Centrediscs.

9 www.counterstreamradio.org

10 Bandwidth: the amount of data that can be transferred to or from a web site or server within a prescribed period of time.

Increasingly, music labels have come to realise the potential of these sites as important avenues to access new markets. Individual musicians, who would be unwillling to give their music compositions or performances to a third party web site free of charge, are willing to do so when the context in which it is presented is a personalised one, as in the case of MySpace. For these artists, therefore, web 2.0 sites have become a way of bypassing the record labels and disseminating their music directly to the public.

However a potential downside of web 2.0 is a growing expectation that content on the Internet will be, or should be, free. The generation of age 35 and upwards are at least accustomed to buying records and CDs, but for the younger generation an expectation not to pay for music online has almost become the norm. The understanding that composers and performers earn their living by selling a product - and that this product must be paid for like any physical item - has been diluted by the availability of so much free material on the web.

2.7 Music Piracy

The rise in home computers running music software has led to an increase in illegal copying of copyright material. Electronically-stored digital music files can easily be passed from one device to another. File sharing via the Internet is also a problem, with peer-to-peer networks allowing users to access music files held on each other's computers.

Some download platforms such as iTunes have attempted to get around this problem by encrypting files in such a way that they can only be copied a limited number of times. Attempts such as this to use technology to limit the use of music files are referred to as Digital Rights Management (DRM). DRM is a controversial and still evolving area. Content providers such as record companies, broadcasting organisations and software developers see it as a necessary way of protecting their livelihood. Opponents claim that DRM is an attempt to limit genuine use of a purchased track of music.

In practical terms, all attempts to place restrictions on digital files have been overcome by determined technophiles. Concerns about competition legislation, and an acknowledgement that DRM has not had the effect of stopping piracy, have prompted a number of download platforms to move away from this practice and an increasing number of sites (for example Amazon MP3 and 7digital.com) are DRM free.

In the USA, major record labels have pursued over 20,000 lawsuits against alleged music pirates and Internet sites. Despite achieving some successes (including the closure of one of the highest-profile, early file-sharing web sites, Napster), this defensive action is not seen to have stemmed the tide of music piracy. The average number of simultaneous users on peer-to-peer file-sharing networks has moved from 4.3 million in 2003 to 9.3 million in 2007.[11]

A solution to the problem of music piracy seems some way off at the moment. While some studies imply that piracy serves to attract profile to pirated music, thereby boosting legal sales, few within the music industry see it as a positive thing. Proposals have included a voluntary collective licensing system allowing users to download and share unlimited quantities of music for a modest monthly fee. This idea, however, has yet to gain sufficient traction and any such solution will take time to develop.

11 Figures from BigChampagne Online Media Measurement.

Part 3 – Irish Context

3.1 Introduction

In this section, aspects of the current climate for recordings in Ireland are summarised. The focus is on the non-commercial sector. Policies and activities of The Arts Council, the Contemporary Music Centre, RTÉ, and a range of resource organisations are examined. Other aspects that are central to the development of music recording in Ireland, such as broadband availability and mobile phone infrastructure, are outlined.

3.2 Record Labels in Ireland

The 'big four' major global record labels, EMI, Sony BMG, Universal and Warner, all operate offices in Ireland. The Irish operations serve the dual purpose of promoting the labels' global music catalogue in Ireland and forging relationships with Irish artists and organisations. As well as these global corporations, Ireland has a number of home-grown labels, some of which have a long and distinguished track record. In the traditional music sector, Claddagh, Gael Linn and Tara are well known. The majority of independent labels, however, are small operations spearheaded by an individual artist or small collective and devoted to niche repertoire. Some independent labels have affiliations to the big four labels, but most independents across the contemporary music, traditional, jazz, electronic and rock/pop sectors, are artist-led initiatives striving to cut through the complexities of today's recording industry and get the artists' music to as wide a public as possible.

Some fifty record labels based in Ireland (including the Irish offices of the big four) are represented by the Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA).[12] Many more independent labels exist outside the membership of IRMA.

Organisations that are not primarily record labels have also issued recordings on their own labels. These include RTÉ, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, the Improvised Music Company, Na Píobairí Uilleann, the Contemporary Music Centre and others.

3.3 The Arts Council and Music Recording

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon is the government's agency for the development of the arts in Ireland. Its current policies are set out in the document *Partnership for the Arts.*[13] The first three of the five goals laid out are:

- Affirm and promote the value of the arts in society;
- Assist artists in realising their artistic ambitions;
- Make it possible for people to extend and enhance their experiences of the arts.

It is clear that an enlightened policy of support for music recordings would contribute significantly to the realisation of these goals.

12 www.irma.ie

13 Partnership for the Arts. *The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon, 2005.*

In 2006, the Arts Council published a major report into contemporary music, *Sounds New.*[14] This document surveyed and analysed current provisions for the support of contemporary music, benchmarked Irish supports against international practice and offered strategic recommendations for the development of the sector. Among the most pressing areas for development cited by the report's authors was the need for a strategic response to the area of support for recordings. The report envisaged that the Contemporary Music Centre would play an important role in future developments.

3.3.1 Arts Council interventions

The Arts Council has in the past made specific interventions to support music recording. In the 1990s, the Council funded a series of recordings by two commercial labels. These labels, Black Box and Naxos/Marco Polo, released eleven and thirteen CDs respectively of music by Irish composers, the Naxos series in cooperation with RTE. Both companies, however, were operating in the commercial market and with the downturn of overall sales since 2000, rationalisation within the recording industry contributed to a decline in the commitment to niche areas such as these.

3.3.2 Arts Council funding schemes

For some years the Arts Council operated a dedicated music recording scheme that was accessed by performers and composers in a variety of genres. The funding contributed to the costs of making the recordings, which in some cases were released by commercial record labels.

The following table outlines the statistics for this scheme in the last five years that it operated.

Fig. 1: Arts Council Music Recording Scheme 2000-2004

Year	No. of awards	Total Fund
2000	15	€39,505
2001	17	€42,920
2002	5	€11,650
2003	34	€78,153
2004	15	€80,298

In 2005, the Arts Council did not operate a music recording scheme.

In 2006, Music Network operated the music recording scheme on behalf of the Arts Council. The gap since it had last operated in 2004 had caused a high level of demand to build up. An award fund of €71,000 was available. In total, 86 applications were received, broadly definable as 37 classical/contemporary classical; 26 jazz/improvised; 19 traditional/folk, 4 pop/rock. The total amount sought by applicants to this round of the scheme was €678,868, almost ten times the total available funding. The assessment panel was of the opinion that 51 of the 86 applications were worthy of support. These 51 applications would have needed a total amount of €390,609. With a smaller award fund available, 10 applications were selected for support: 7 classical/contemporary, 2 jazz, and one traditional.

14 *Sounds New* – Review of Supports to Contemporary Music in Ireland. The Arts Council, 2006.

In 2007, Music Network again operated the scheme. There was a lower level of demand but the award fund (once again €71,500) was far short of the level that the panel viewed as adequate to support high-quality applications. In 2007, 45 applications were received, broadly definable as 17 classical/contemporary classical, 11 jazz/folk/world, 7 rock/pop, 5 traditional, 3 other. The total amount sought by applicants to this round was €324,327, 4.5 times the available funding. The panel considered 25 applications to be worth supporting, which would have needed an award fund of €205,186. The lower level of funds available meant that 10 applicants were again selected for support: 4 classical/contemporary classical, 4 jazz and 2 traditional.

Fig 2: Music Network / Arts Council Music Recording Scheme 2006-2007		
Year	No. of awards	Total Fund
2006	10	€71,500
2007	10	€71,500

From the above it can be seen that this fund has suffered from fluctuating budgets with a particularly small amount available in 2002 and no scheme in 2005. In 2006 and 2007 the total fund was less than that available in 2003 and 2004. The number of awards given has also varied from 5 in 2002 to 34 one year later.

For 2008 another round of funding is being offered with an October closing date, again administered by Music Network and open to all genres. The maximum for any single award will be €10,000 and it is expected that a similar budget will apply to that in 2007.

The overall low level of funding for this award scheme and the years of uncertainty surrounding it has diminished its potential effectiveness and makes a strong case for a new, coherent and strategic approach on the part of the Arts Council.

3.4 CMC's Role in Music Recording

3.4.1 CMC's promotional CD series

Conscious of the deficit of recordings of music by Irish composers, which hindered the promotion of their music, the Contemporary Music Centre began a series of sampler CDs in 1995. The series, which is ongoing, was designed as a promotional tool rather than any attempt to remedy the lack of full-length repertoire CDs. Seven discs in the series *Contemporary Music from Ireland* have been produced to date, each containing short works or excerpts from longer works, by up to twelve composers per disc. The music ranges from solo and ensemble pieces to works for full orchestra and the series has so far showcased the music of 60 composers.[15]

Functioning as a sort of 'musical calling card', each new release gives an overview of recent output from Irish composers and is distributed, free of charge, to composers, performers, promoters, programmers, festival directors, venue managers, journalists and libraries in some 40 countries. In Ireland, in addition to the above categories, it is sent to representatives of state agencies and government departments (local and central), to Irish embassies abroad for presentation to their clientele, and to other

15 *Contemporary Music from Ireland Volume 8* is in production in 2008.

stakeholders. Members of the general public are given access via ‘reader offers’ in a range of newspapers and magazines.

In part due to the dearth of other recordings, this series punches above its weight in terms of its reach and influence. Composers are eager to have works selected for inclusion and report positive outcomes in terms of performances, commissions, and other opportunities, as well as increased profile. Radio play is achieved internationally on foot of each release, and this again leads to further opportunities for both the composers and the performers.

3.4.2 Funding

Each release in the *Contemporary Music from Ireland* series has been produced on a project basis, with specific funding having to be sourced every time. This has limited the artistic scope of the undertaking since, without sufficient funds to make new recordings, CMC has been dependent on the willingness of third parties to license tracks – for the most part without charge – from radio broadcasts, archive recordings or existing CDs. It has also militated against long-term planning for the series.

High-level national and international performers have appeared on the discs but again budgets do not permit offering them a recording fee, so the series is dependent on their goodwill in providing what is in effect an in-kind subsidy.

Although the *Contemporary Music from Ireland* series has been a welcome boost to many composers, it has necessarily presented only a small segment of the available repertoire. Due to the promotional nature of the series it has not been appropriate to include longer works or to focus on particular composers or strands of artistic endeavour.

3.4.3 CMC as a retailer and distributor

On the sales and distribution side, CMC operates a shop which carries all commercially-available CDs of contemporary Irish music, currently some 150 discs. CDs can be bought online,[16] in person at CMC’s offices, or by mail order. Digital download facilities are not currently available. Online sales, while not large in a commercial sense, are steady enough and international enough in their origin to demonstrate a significant demand for recordings of Irish music.

Recordings carried in the CMC shop include the Naxos/Marco Polo and Black Box releases (where they are still available), and CDs from the in-house label of RTÉ. Independents include the British labels Chandos and NMC. A significant number of releases are self-published one-off CDs produced by individual artists or ensembles, often with the assistance of the Arts Council’s Music Recording Scheme.

An analysis of the CD recordings currently carried in the CMC shop[17] is illuminating. Of the 127 active composers currently represented by CMC, half (64 composers) have no works on CD at all. Of those that do, 25% (16 composers) have just one work recorded each, and some 30% (19 composers) have between 2 and 5 works each. As the chart following illustrates, only a very few composers have more than 10 works on CD, and in many cases these are small-scale works of short duration.

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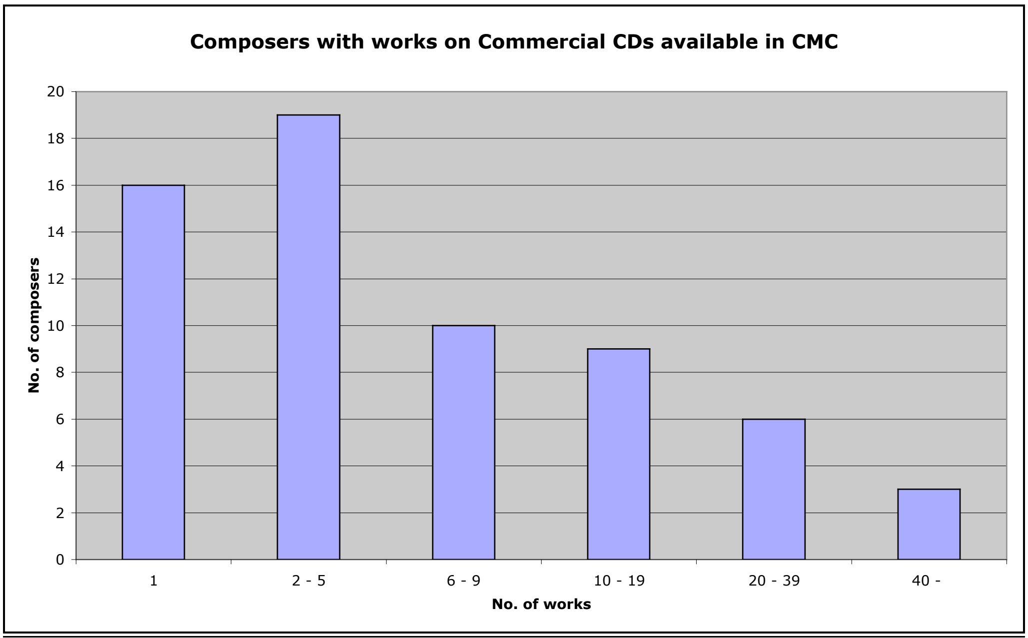
16 www.cmc.ie/shop

17 Statistics refer only to commercially-available CD recordings currently in stock. They do not include those no longer available for sale, or the CMC *Contemporary Music from Ireland* promotional series.



An awareness of the limitations of the existing situation in regard to recording and distribution, as well as the possibilities for development, has led to the commissioning of this study to examine the options for the Contemporary Music Centre in the future.

3.5 RTÉ

RTÉ, Ireland's national broadcaster, has sought to facilitate public access to Irish classical music recordings through sale or licensing agreements with third parties such as CMC, NMC, Naxos/Marco Polo, Hyperion, Metronome, Zeitklang and Capstone. In spite of the fact that the terms of these recording agreements have been designed to encourage increased outputs by third parties, commercial recording companies have shown a diminishing appetite for releasing new Irish repertoire.

In this context, RTÉ partnered with the Arts Council in 2005 on the first RTÉ label release of Irish contemporary classical music, Gerald Barry's opera, *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant.* This pilot project led to a five-year agreement between RTÉ and the Arts Council, announced in January 2008, to produce up to ten new CDs of music by Irish composers on the RTÉ label involving the RTÉ performing groups. The first of these, Raymond Deane's orchestral works *Ripieno*, *Violin Concerto* and *Samara*, has been released.

RTÉ's core business is broadcasting and it acknowledges that its capacity to promote and distribute these recordings to international niche markets has limits. The reach of its own-label recordings could be significantly enhanced by consolidation of an Irish music catalogue managed by a digital aggregator, along the lines proposed later in this report.

3.6 Resource Organisations

The Contemporary Music Centre is one of a number of valued resource organisations that currently operate in Ireland, supporting music in diverse ways and developing skills among music practitioners as well as offering services to develop careers throughout the music sector. Among the other bodies[18] are:

- Music Network – Music development agency that promotes concerts, provides information and resources, operates funding schemes, contributes to policy development and provides supports for artists and promoters.
- Improvised Music Company – Jazz and improvised music agency which promotes concerts and festivals, acts as a musicians' agency, provides information and contributes to policy development.
- First Music Contact – Development agency for young bands and pop/rock collectives, runs Hard Working Class Heroes Festival, promotes bands internationally through *Music From Ireland* initiative, provides industry information, advice and workshops, and operates innovative *Breaking Tunes* web site where bands can upload music to bring to the attention of fans and industry.
- Moving On Music – a Belfast-based non-profit promoter in the areas of jazz, blues, traditional, world and electronic music. The organisation also develops opportunities for local artists in the music industry, runs education and outreach programmes, engages in event management and consultancy and partners with many other organisations across the UK and Ireland.
- Irish Traditional Music Archive – Houses an unrivalled collection of Irish traditional music recordings, videos, books, documents and memorabilia.
- Na Píobairí Uilleann – Promotes all aspects of uilleann pipe playing including instrument loans, tuition, masterclasses, information and advice as well as operating a shop with CDs and DVDs of uilleann pipe recordings.
- Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann – Promotes many aspects of traditional music including classes, sessions and competitions, with branches nationwide as well as internationally. Also publishes recordings of traditional music.
- Irish Music Rights Organisation – As well as collecting and distributing royalties, IMRO has a role in promotion and development of music in different genres. Organises showcase tours for emerging bands, provides information and advice and operates seminars and workshops.
- IRMA Trust – Established by the Irish Recorded Music Association in 1997, the trust's main initiative is an instrument bank which provides musical instruments to young people. It partners other organisations, including Music Network and the Arts Council, in the provision of rehearsal and other facilities and runs information and industry advice events.

18 See section 8.2, Appendix II, for web site addresses.

3.7 Skills

Given the limited nature of the indigenous recording industry in Ireland, there is considered to be a skills shortage in high quality record producing, engineering and post-production. In some genres of music these shortages may be more acute than in others. While it would be desirable to increase the number of Irish-based skilled practitioners in these areas, it is also likely that Ireland will continue to access skills and expertise from the UK and elsewhere where there are much greater and longer-established traditions of music recording.

The Irish recording sector also suffers from a lack of skilled management. Performers and composers often do not have access to the type of industry advice, support and management necessary to maximise the profile of their work and to guide them through the complex world of contracts, licenses, royalties and many other areas.

3.8 Broadband Infrastructure in Ireland

The availability of a strong broadband infrastructure through which CDs can be bought online and music in digital form can be uploaded, downloaded, podcasted or streamed is critical to the success of any web-based development in music recording. Internationally, broadband penetration is strong in many countries, with considerable take-up of broadband technology in homes and with many cities, airports, hotels and other public places offering free access.

Ireland has been slow to roll out broadband provision and as a result lags behind many other developed nations. Forfás, the national policy and advisory board for enterprise, trade, science, technology and innovation, produces an annual audit of broadband services in Ireland. Their 2007 study[19] shows that strong demand for broadband in 2006 and 2007 led Ireland to move from 24th to 21st place in a benchmarking of 32 OECD countries. However Ireland still remains below average with just 15.4% market share for broadband compared with an average of 18.8% among developed nations.

By mid-2007 there were close to 700,000 broadband subscribers in Ireland including 45,000 mobile broadband subscribers. Prices for basic home and business mobile packages in Ireland equate to the norm charged in other developed countries, but higher grade broadband services are considerably more expensive here than abroad, sometimes a multiple of five or six compared to comparable figures elsewhere in Europe.

Therefore there is some way to go before the effect of broadband on music purchasing in Ireland will reach its full potential, although the government has recently[20] confirmed investment under the National Development Plan to ensure that by 2012 broadband speeds in Ireland will equal or exceed those in comparable EU regions. Increased competition among providers can also be expected to drive down prices and encourage take-up.

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19 Ireland's broadband performance and policy requirements. *Forfas 2007. www.forfas.ie/publications/show/pub286.html*

20 July 2008.

3.9 Download Platforms & Digital Aggregators

The works of Irish artists in the more commercial genres are available through various global online download sites such as iTunes. However there is no single readily identifiable web site where music from Ireland generally — whether commercial or non-commercial and whatever the genre — is accessible for digital download. Nor is there any dedicated digital aggregator[21] which could bring together a range of independent labels and interface in a coherent and collective manner with the major download sites such as iTunes or eMusic.com.

The physical location of either a digital download platform or a digital aggregator is of secondary importance as this business can be carried out from anywhere in the world. But the existence of such a dedicated download platform and a dedicated digital aggregator for music from Ireland would lead to a much higher level of visibility and accessibility for this music on the global stage.

3.10 Mobile Phone Technology

A developing feature of the Irish music market is the use of mobile phones to purchase music. The mobile phone company "3" is among the operators which is to the forefront of utilising this technology and is the fourth major mobile operator in Ireland after Vodafone, O2 and Meteor. The success of 3 in capturing a significant slice of the Irish music market is worth considering.

Central to 3's appeal is the 3MusicStore, a resource that benefits from the fastest mobile broadband speeds in Ireland, as well as an 85% 3G-network coverage. Launched in late 2006, 3Music Store currently offers some one million music tracks for download directly to mobile phones or computers. During 2007, 3 targeted over half a million music fans attending the major Irish festivals including Oxegen, Electric Picnic and others, offering a "music tent" where fans could buy music from featured festival artists. In 2007, 3MusicStore claimed to account for 13% of the sales in the Irish music charts.

The success of this endeavour was a result of the company identifying a growing but underdeveloped area of sales of music recordings, and acting quickly to deliver a high quality model that serviced this growing need. 3 has been flexible, responsive and in touch with emerging trends, all characteristics that will need to be to the forefront for other music providers operating in the years ahead. With a growing tendency, particularly among younger users, to surf the web, download music, watch TV, etc. on mobile devices, and with the release of such innovative and user-friendly technology as Apple's iPhone, we can expect music downloading in this format to increase, particularly for the more experimental genres.

21 Digital aggregator: An intermediary which distributes recordings to major online music sites on behalf of a record label or labels.

3.11 Opportunities

The cause of music recording in Ireland will best be served by bringing together a number of stakeholders and harnessing a diverse set of opportunities.

Over the course of the research undertaken for this report, various potential avenues for support, in relation both to a record label and a download platform, have been identified.

These include:

- The Arts Council, which has supported music recording over many years, albeit at levels that have not captured the full potential of the sector.
- Culture Ireland, whose aim of building the careers of Irish artists abroad would be furthered by more effective dissemination of music from Ireland.
- Industry resource organisations such as the Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO), the Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA), and others whose members would benefit from enhanced product distribution and profile.
- Enterprise Ireland and other public sector state bodies whose brief to promote digital business development aligns with the aims of this initiative.
- Existing record labels whose product would achieve greater distribution and whose expertise would make a valuable contribution.
- Private sector investors with experience working within the music industry.

Part 4 – Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

The process of research undertaken for this feasibility study was designed to access information from composers, performers, record label personnel, interest groups, other stakeholder organisations and the general public on a range of issues in connection with the potential development by the Contemporary Music Centre of a new record label and/or download platform.

It was conducted by interview and via an online survey. Full presentation of the research data is given in Appendices I to VI. The following section provides an analysis of the data and outlines the key findings of the process.

4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Background of respondents
Input was received from a broad range of respondents, providing a useful cross-section of many different areas of practice. The results of the consultation process are therefore broadly based and findings are not dominated by one particular sector over another. The range of expertise offered by interviewees and respondents to the survey demonstrates a rich resource of practical knowledge that can be brought to bear on future policy developments.

4.2.2 Need for a collective Irish record label and download platform.
An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (93%) agree or strongly agree that there is a need for a collective Irish record label drawing together a full range of specialist music types. A minority (7%) disagree with this proposal. An even greater number of survey respondents (96%) support the proposition that a digital download platform should exist that would facilitate the dissemination of a full range of specialist music types. These results represent a strong endorsement from a broad range of voices within the wider music sector for these developments to take place.

4.2.3 Genres of music
Most respondents were keen to see a number of different genres of music supported, with only some 10% opting for just one genre. Among those that are seen as most in need of support are contemporary music, early Irish classical music, electronic, folk/traditional, jazz and experimental genres.

4.2.4 Public funding
The majority of survey respondents (83%) feel that it is appropriate for public funding to be used to support a label or download platform. Respondents who support public funding come from a diverse and broad-ranging set of backgrounds within musical practice. The 16% who do not support public funding for such a development (1% had no opinion) include practitioners who already produce recordings, and also a range of respondents from other backgrounds.

4.2.5 Experience in recording Irish music

The vast majority of respondents, both survey respondents (76%) and interviewees, have practical experience in recording music in Ireland. They include composers, performers, producers, engineers and representatives of resource and support organisations.

4.2.6 Recording formats

The CD remains the most favoured format with a 66% positive and 21% negative rating from survey respondents (13% had no opinion). The digital download option received a 56% positive and 10% negative rating (34% had no opinion). Internet streaming received only a 41% positive and 11% negative response (48% no opinion). Vinyl was not rated highly, with only 13% of respondents giving it a positive rating, 25% unsatisfactory and 61% no opinion.

4.2.7 Ireland as a base for a career

Although a significant proportion of respondents (41%) either did not see any particular advantages to living in Ireland or offered no opinion, this question did raise some interesting responses. Traditional music artists see the identity and proximity to source material as an important factor. Some artists who have availed of state supports see this as an important and accessible feature of their environment. Many point to the networking possibilities of working in a close-knit sector.

On balance, a wider array of respondents perceived more disadvantages than advantages to basing a career in Ireland. These included the state of the record industry in Ireland and the state of music education, as well as overall state support for music. The geographical peripherality of Ireland did not come through as an area of concern.

4.2.8 Best practice initiatives

Respondents were asked if they knew of any 'best practice' initiatives (in Ireland or internationally) where there has been publicly funded support for the making and dissemination of recorded music. A number of interesting examples were cited (listed under Question 16 in Appendix VI). These initiatives point to the fact that state support for music recordings exists in many different forms in other countries.

4.2.9 Engagement with new technology

An overwhelming 94% of respondents to this survey engage in new and emerging technology, indicating that this sector has a high degree of technological awareness. This suggests that future developments involving a range of Internet tools is likely to be well received by the Irish music sector.

4.2.10 Training and Skills

When asked what training and skills were needed in the Irish context, many respondents placed an emphasis on the need for the development of business skills and a greater understanding of the workings of the record industry. IT and web skills are also seen as important areas for development. The poor state of music education in schools surfaced many times in comments.

4.2.11 Markets for music by Irish artists

A large number of Irish artists see Ireland as the only or the main current market for their music. Beyond this, the USA, Europe and the UK are important outlets for other artists. The degree of dependence on the home market, however, indicates that many practitioners have difficulty getting their music heard by international audiences.

Relatively few respondents have managed to get their work appreciated in areas beyond the UK, Europe and the USA.

When asked about potential markets, however, the response was strikingly different. Respondents see significant potential markets for their work in a far wider geographic spread such as Canada, Asia and Australia. Fewer practitioners see Ireland as a potential market.

4.2.12 Effect of a new record label/download platform on Irish artists

Far more positive than negative effects were foreseen in relation to the potential development of a new record label or download platform. Respondents in general see great potential in the idea. Many see it as a way of increasing profile and answering a pressing need in the development of their careers. Some hesitations were offered, principally in relation to the branding of such a label/download platform, and issues around artistic control of recordings.

4.2.13 Other issues

A wide range of issues facing the Irish music sector were raised in the final part of the survey. These are listed under Question 23 in Appendix VI. Under 'Other comments' just over half the respondents left no further comments. Of the 51 responses received, 12 were expressions of support and thanks, many complimenting CMC on the work it has undertaken to date and on the development of this initiative. The remaining comments ranged over questions of measuring quality across different genres, the positive and negative aspects of a collective presence for Irish music, and the resourcing of any future initiatives. These are listed under Question 24 in Appendix VI.

Part 5 – Case Studies

5.1 Introduction

In this section, case studies of seven different international organisations are offered, each illustrating different models within today's music recording industry. The case studies provide learning relevant to the development of new structures to support the recording of music in Ireland.

The first three are record labels in the traditional sense. Each of them derives support from and has relationships with both public and private sources in different and illuminating ways.

The next two case studies represent new-style digital download-only music labels, with different ways of working and different levels of success.

The final two studies are examples of organisations that exist to facilitate the development of independent and smaller record labels. They demonstrate structures that enable these companies to bring their music to a global audience, while offering practical supports to overcome the administrative, logistical and financial barriers that can stand in the way of their development.

The case studies are:

- 5.2 Caprice Records – Sweden's long-established and highly regarded state-funded record label.
- 5.3 Centrediscs – the record label owned and operated by the Canadian Music Centre.
- 5.4 NMC Recordings – the British label which has secured a range of public and private supports and which specialises in contemporary British music.
- 5.5 Seven Things – a pioneering digital download platform for electronic, electro-acoustic and experimental music that distributes online only.
- 5.6 Highlands and Islands Label – an early experiment in online distribution which was an initiative of Highlands and Islands Enterprise in Scotland.
- 5.7 Broad Street Digital – an online system for distribution of recordings as well as the management of the business side of online sales.
- 5.8 Merlin – an organisation that promotes and facilitates the commercial exploitation of the copyrights of independent record labels.

5.2 Caprice Records - www.caprice.rikskonserter.se

5.2.1 Profile

Caprice Records, formed in 1985 as part of the Swedish National Institute for Concerts, Rikskonserter, is the best European example of what might be termed a state-funded record label.

Caprice's parent body, Rikskonserter, is a music resource organisation whose principal focus is the promotion of concerts throughout Sweden. According to the most recently available figures (2003-4), Rikskonserter had an annual state-funded budget of 65 million Swedish Kroner (ca €7 million), with which it provides 700 concerts in 40 national tours, operates a concert hall and runs its own record label, Caprice Records. The record label accounts for over €1 million of Rikskonserter's annual budget.

Caprice sees its mandate as the production, distribution and marketing of artistically and culturally valuable sound recordings – what is described by Anders Hjelmtorp, managing director of Export Music Sweden, as 'commercially-neglected art music'. Its releases focus primarily on Swedish music performed by Swedish musicians in the fields of classical, contemporary, jazz and folk music. Caprice Records also produces CDs of music for children and has established an extensive catalogue of archival recordings, including a series documenting the history of Swedish folk music and jazz.

A key element of Caprice's distribution is its own record club, which currently has in the region of 6,000 subscribers and accounts for approximately one quarter of Caprice's sales.

5.2.2 Collaborations

Caprice has collaborated with many other public sector organisations in Sweden. The award-winning 25-CD series *Folkmusik i Sverige* (folk music in Sweden) was produced in association with Svenskt Visarkiv (The Centre for Swedish Folk Music and Jazz Research). This series involved the release of a curated selection from a vast archive of historic folk music recordings from Sweden. Caprice has also collaborated with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) on the release of folk music recordings from around the world. Other collaborations have taken place with the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation Sveriges Radio P2, and NOMUS, the Nordic Music Committee of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

5.2.3 Links to live music performance

While Caprice has a degree of autonomy from the parent body, Rikskonserter, there is a significant degree of overlap between artists featured on Caprice's releases and those who undertake Rikskonserter's concert tours. This ensures a symbiotic relationship between concert agency and record label. This holistic approach supports music creation, performance and dissemination and makes a significant contribution to the healthy environment for music in Sweden.

5.2.4 Conclusion

The Swedish model is an enlightened one where Caprice and its parent body, Rikskonserter, take a strategic approach to the provision of recordings of specialist areas of Swedish music. The model involves partnership with other agencies, significant public support and a strong subscription basis. It contributes positively to the development of the careers of Swedish composers and performing artists, particularly those working in commercially difficult areas, and it ensures that specialist music is available on record to a worldwide audience.

Caprice can present itself as more than simply a record company. It is an example of how a strategically-managed state-funded body can harness a diverse set of resources, energies and opportunities and translate these into tangible projects that affect the lives and careers of a wide range of Swedish musicians.

5.2.5 Applicability of this model to an Irish context

The success of Caprice rests on sustained high-level investment on the part of the Swedish government, a level of support that would be difficult to achieve in an Irish context.

5.3 Centrediscs - www.centrediscs.ca

5.3.1 Profile

Centrediscs is a record label and distribution platform for music by Canadian composers which is owned and operated by the Canadian Music Centre (CaMC)[22]. CaMC is Canada's music information centre which, like the Contemporary Music Centre in Ireland, is affiliated to the International Association of Music Information Centres. CaMC fulfils many of the same functions as CMC. It houses a major library of Canadian compositions, it makes facsimile music scores and parts available on request, it has a detailed web site and it provides a range of information and advice on contemporary Canadian Music. In addition to these services, it operates Centrediscs.

Centrediscs was founded in 1981 and the label has devoted itself to Canada's concert repertoire by living composers. In this regard it is an invaluable promotional tool for CaMC. Since its inception, it has become Canada's foremost independent label, releasing over 100 separate titles by more than 70 Canadian composers. The label has won several JUNO awards, Canada's prestigious music awards.

Centrediscs operates an Artists and Repertoire Committee made up of Canadian artists, radio producers, academics, music critics and representatives from the recording industry. A call for recording proposals is sent out every two to three years targeted at composers affiliated to CaMC, performing artists, and management agencies. Proposals must involve the recording of CaMC affiliated composers. The Artists and Repertoire Committee considers the applications with reference to the quality of the proposal and how it fits with other releases. Proposals should involve work that has not previously been released. Applicants are expected to provide a good quality demo recording and printed score. It is also expected that applications should involve partnership funding from another source.

In 1999, Centrediscs established the now highly successful Canadian Composers Portrait series which features the music of Canada's pioneer composers combined with audio documentaries. This flagship series has been broadcast on CBC Radio and sold on to other stations throughout the world as well as being broadcast on the Centre's own RadioCMC.

5.3.2 Funding and partnerships

22 The Canadian Music Centre is commonly known by the initials CMC, but to avoid confusion with Ireland's Contemporary Music Centre – also known as CMC – the abbreviation CaMC will be used in this report to denote the Canadian Music Centre.

Centrediscs has benefited from support from the Canada Council's recording development fund as well as a number of charitable trusts. It has sustained a beneficial partnership with CBC, the Canadian national broadcaster, which provides staff and technical facilities to make and edit recordings. CBC, does not, however, exercise editorial control over the label's output.

Centrediscs has also received grants and awards from federal, provincial and municipal governments in Canada as well as foundations, corporations and private donors. Despite the many sources of funding, finding ways of financially supporting recordings has continually been a challenge for Centrediscs.

5.3.3 Distribution

Centrediscs sells its recordings in retail shops across Canada, in CaMC's five regional offices, in CaMC's international office in Amsterdam and through international mail order via its web site. Demand for Centrediscs recordings is growing among customers in China, Japan, Europe and the USA.

A key to the success and recognition of Centrediscs was the establishment of the separately incorporated distributor and retailer, Canadian Music Centre Distribution Service (CMCDS). In addition to distributing the Centrediscs catalogue of recordings, this mail order and retail service carries recordings from other specialist Canadian labels on a consignment basis[23]. CMCDS has developed a large client base of independent labels. It has been successful in securing international distributors and to date it has distributed over 80,000 records internationally.

Centrediscs has not yet begun selling recordings by Internet download. This area is under consideration, and potential partners are currently being sought.

5.3.4 RadioIO collaboration

Although Centrediscs recordings enjoy a strong profile on Canadian broadcast media and other radio stations internationally, their relationship with RadioIO.com (pronounced Radio–Eye–Oh), a web-only radio based in Florida, USA, is worthy of consideration.

Launched in 1999, RadioIO is one of the world's largest Internet radio services. In 2005 it became the first publicly-traded Internet radio station and by early 2008 it was streaming over 50 advertisement-supported free channels. RadioIO's channels are available through iTunes, Real.com, and many other web portals, as well as on set-top and wireless digital audio receivers. In 2006 RadioIO enjoyed listenership figures of over 4 million unique listeners in 70 countries, with each listener accessing almost seven hours of content per week. These statistics place RadioIO as one of the most highly developed Internet-based radio services in existence.

Through a strategic partnership between Centrediscs and RadioIO, in the period April 2006 to April 2007, RadioIO's classical channel featured 650 broadcasts of 184 pieces by 52 Canadian composers – more new works than any broadcaster in Canada during the same time period. In keeping with the policy of this online broadcaster, every piece was played in its entirety, ranging from 10 to 65 minutes. Canadian works were often programmed alongside more familiar content.

23 Consignment distribution is similar to "sale or return" whereby artists or labels provide their discs to a distributor without payment. Payment is processed after sales have been made.

5.3.5 Conclusion
Centrediscs owes its success to a number of key elements. Its ownership by CaMC ensures that it meets a strategic need in the provision of recordings of works by composers who have been neglected by commercial operators. It has access to public and charitable funding for recording projects. It has a strong partnership with the national broadcaster, CBC, and a good understanding of the needs of broadcasters.

At the same time, the label has the independence and the entrepreneurship to build effective distribution channels and to broker partnerships with new media such as RadioIO. It uses its assets as a distributor to harness energies and revenue from other record labels and thereby create an enhanced international demand for a Canadian cultural product.

5.3.6 Applicability of this model to an Irish context
Partnerships with the national broadcasting corporation and the music information centre – in this case RTÉ and CMC - could be replicated with mutual benefit in an Irish context. The international distribution service for other independent labels could also be successful. But Ireland does not have the range of state and provincial funding sources nor, as yet, the tradition of giving through corporate sponsorship and private foundations to reach the level of subsidy which supports Centrediscs.

5.4 NMC Recordings - www.nmcrec.co.uk

5.4.1 Profile
Formed in 1988 as part of the Society for the Promotion of New Music (SPNM), New Music Cassettes (NMC) soon became an independent entity with funding from charitable trust, the Holst Foundation. In 1993 the label evolved into an independent not-for-profit record label now called NMC Recordings.

NMC scored early successes with two releases: Jonathan Harvey's *Bhakti* and a disc of contemporary piano music performed by Michael Finnissy. Since then the label has grown steadily in scope and ambition. Over the last twenty years NMC has developed a catalogue currently comprising some 140 titles and has been described by The Sunday Times as 'Britain's most important producer of CDs of interesting new or recent and neglected work from this country.'

The core values of NMC are to capture the best contemporary British music with the highest performance and technical recording standards. NMC also prides itself as being unique in keeping all released catalogue titles in print and permanently available for sale. It is these standards that draw admiration and respect from peers within the sector in Britain, Ireland and internationally.

Although the artistic focus of NMC is on releasing music by British composers, a number of Irish composers feature in its catalogue including Gerald Barry, Ed Bennett, Donnacha Dennehy, Deirdre Gribbin and Kevin Volans.

5.4.2 Funding
In addition to sales income, NMC currently receives funding from Arts Council England and the Britten-Pears Foundation. The Holst Foundation covers NMC's administrative costs. Additional project funding from other trusts and foundations is sought for specific projects. NMC has also benefited from low cost licensing deals in respect of broadcast recordings provided to them for release by third parties including the BBC and RTÉ.

5.4.3 Markets for NMC recordings
Sales projections for the majority of releases are realistically modest. Occasionally, discs 'take off' as in the case of NMC's top selling title, the recording of Anthony Payne's critically-acclaimed elaboration of the sketches of Elgar's Third Symphony. This recording has sold nearly 40,000 copies since its release in 1998.

A challenging work from the same year, Birtwistle's opera, *Mask of Orpheus*, has sold just over 6,000 copies to date. By contrast, Peter Paul Nash's *Apollinaire Choruses* released in 1999, has sold just 500 copies. These different levels of uptake are broadly in line with the public profile of each composer.

With its recent releases, NMC produces 1,000 units, of which 150 are used for promotional purposes. Within the first year of sales, recordings such as Julian Anderson's *Book of Hours*, which was nominated for a 2007 Gramophone award, achieved sales of 1,500 copies, whereas other titles without such media attention may sell between 200 and 400 copies in the first year.

In 2006/7, NMC's sales relied heavily on UK markets (52%), followed by USA (23%). Other countries in which NMC currently sells recordings include France (14%), Japan (5%), the Benelux countries (3%), and Spain, the Czech Republic and Canada (1% each). NMC has recently embarked on a new distribution deal in Germany but sales figures from this collaboration are not yet available. Plans are also in train to develop distribution in Italy and Hong Kong.

NMC recently established an affiliate club. Members of the public are invited to become a 'Friend', 'Benefactor' or 'Founder Member' for donations of Stg£50, Stg£100+ or Stg£250+ respectively. In return, they receive invitations to special events including CD launches and recording sessions, their names are listed in selected CD booklets and they are eligible for special offers. Currently there are 60 NMC Friends with numbers growing annually. All donations from UK taxpayers are eligible for tax relief, which maximises the value of the donation to NMC. This development is seen as a useful way to build loyalty, profile and a direct connection with NMC's customers.

5.4.4 Digital downloading
NMC launched its digital sales business in November 2006. This was undertaken in partnership with a third-party digital aggregator, State 51, which provides the technology behind NMC's online shop front as well as access to other digital download sites such as iTunes, Chandos and eMusic. The first month's income from digital download sales was 25% of overall sales. Since then digital sales have maintained an average 15% with signs of growth. This figure is in excess of comparable levels of digital sales through web sites in other music genres and demonstrates a strong level of demand for digital downloads.

NMC realises that digital sales in MP3 formats are technically inferior to CD recordings. However, MP3 sales incur less cost for the production company and NMC therefore operates a dual pricing system. CDs are typically sold for Stg£12.99 and MP3 downloads are offered at Stg£7.99 per album.

5.4.5 Label partnership
In an innovative method of developing new funding streams, NMC has developed its capacity to offer a full-scale label service to partner organisations. The best example of this is the current agreement with the label of the London Sinfonietta. NMC offers

services in the area of production, pressing, stock control, marketing, sales, distribution, and access to its international network of licensees and digital online sales platforms (including NMC's own digital retail facility). The London Sinfonietta label is not charged up-front fees, but a percentage of overall sales.

5.4.6 Conclusion

NMC has been cited by many contributors to this report as a model of best practice in the recording industry. It has a strong commitment to specialist contemporary music and has built a clear identity as an independent label. It produces a high quality product and has built up an enviable catalogue of releases which it distributes effectively both as physical product and as digital download. While it embraces new technology, it also remains committed to the CD.

5.4.7 Applicability of this model to an Irish context

NMC maximises the business tools it has developed over many years and operates, albeit with difficulty, on a lower level of subsidy than Caprice and Centrediscs. As such, it represents a more realistic model for any newly-developed Irish record label or download platform.

5.5 Seven Things - www.seventhings.co.uk

5.5.1 Profile

Seven Things (also known as 7hings Music) is a Scottish-based company that commissions, produces and promotes what it broadly terms 'experimental music' to a worldwide audience of subscribers solely via the Internet, podcasts and digital downloads.

Seven Things is the brainchild of John Harris, a music graduate of Oxford University and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama who, before establishing Seven Things, was artistic director of the Paragon Ensemble, Scotland's leading contemporary music group.

Central to Harris' operation of Seven Things is a strong curatorial vision. The company's offerings encompass works by a range of composers and artists active in electronic, electro-acoustic, sound art, improvisatory and experimental music genres. Since the company's launch in March 2006 it has released music by artists from the USA, Japan, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain as well as the UK.

Releases have included recordings of live and studio performances by Charlemagne Palestine (Belgium), Nmperign (USA), Koji Asano (Japan), Yannis Kyriakides with Andy Moor (Netherlands), Zoë Irvine (Scotland), Luc Ferrari (France), Max Richter (Germany) and David Fennessy (Ireland). Each Seven Things release comes with a free introductory audio track featuring interviews with artists and examples of their previous work.

Individual downloads (typically album-length) cost between Stg£3.50 and Stg£7.00 and an annual subscription costs Stg£35. Seven Things has attracted registered users in 32 countries worldwide. Total registered user numbers have grown at an average 16% per month since the company's launch.

5.5.2 Awards
Despite its relative youth, Seven Things has already picked up a number of important awards that acknowledge the company's innovation and leadership. These include a place on the Edinburgh Pre-Incubator Scheme (EPIS), a programme jointly run by Edinburgh University, Scottish Enterprise and the European Regional Development Fund. EPIS focuses on new technology-based initiatives and provides support for them to become commercially viable. The company has also received a prestigious award in the Ideasmart initiative of the Scottish Arts Council and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA). It has received Stg£30,000 from the Scottish Government's Music Futures Fund and has also received Scottish Arts Council support.

5.5.3 Business planning
Apart from the funding injections, these awards and consequent media exposure have raised the company profile of Seven Things and enabled it to approach potential investors with confidence. It has embarked on a drive to raise private equity, putting forward an ambitious business plan. Acknowledging that few companies have operated on a purely commercial level in this field before, it maintains that the advent of new technology opens up possibilities for niche but non-exclusive music. It sees the market for experimental music growing rapidly worldwide, but sees few sustainable businesses established within this area. It is seeking to raise Stg£200,000 in private equity over two years.

The company's target is to become the foremost experimental music brand worldwide, with sales of Stg£3.5 million in its first five years of operation. Its prediction, based on research it has undertaken, is that sales of digitally downloaded music are set to increase exponentially over the years ahead, triggered by increased broadband access as well as exposure in the mainstream media. In order to maximise distribution, Seven Things is seeking partnerships with other online distributors and CD-based labels worldwide. Consideration is also being given to incorporating CD releases within the activities of the company.

5.5.4 Commercial exploitation
Seven Things views the commercial exploitation of the work of its artists in the area of advertising, film and television as a key potential source of income to support its business model. It points to major brands such as Volkswagen, Mercedes, Compaq and Levi which have used experimental electronic music in advertising campaigns. Seven Things plans to develop its own role as a commissioner within the advertising and media sectors in the years ahead.

5.5.5 Marketing
As well as its web profile, Seven Things has established a presence at key contemporary music events in the UK such as the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, the Music Lovers' Field Companion at The Sage Gateshead and Instal at the Arches, Glasgow. Awareness building among key target audiences such as these is seen as an important component in the development of the company's profile.

Seven Things also places a strong emphasis on exposure in the mainstream media, curiously depending on this 'old fashioned' resource as a way of driving users to new technologies.

5.5.6 Conclusion
Seven Things has achieved a lot within a short space of time. It has set out to define a new way of working within what is often regarded as a specialist or niche area. It has secured strong backing from public sector agencies and is seeking to match this with private sector investment. It has defined a new business model and time will tell if it is sustainable in the long term.

5.5.7 Applicability of this model to an Irish context
The strong artistic vision coupled with the download-only approach is a model which could be effective in an Irish context. Business and IT-oriented funding could be explored as a source of support. Greater employment of Irish composers' music in advertising, film and television could be explored in conjunction with the relevant Irish production and support organisations. This company could offer significant learning to the Irish sector and collaboration could become possible in the future.

5.6 Highlands and Islands Label – www.hailmusic.com

5.6.1 Profile
Highlands and Islands Labels (HAIL) was an initiative of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), the economic development agency with a remit for cultural and economic development in a geographic region that covers half of Scotland, but with only 10% of the country's population.

In 2002, HAIL undertook an ambitious and pioneering project to build a digital database of music created within its area. The project also involved a platform for download sales and an avenue for promotion of artists and the creation of new networks.

HAIL's vision, ultimately unsuccessful, was to bring together a group of micro-businesses and small and medium enterprises (typical of the music industry in the Highlands and Islands) and maximise business success by increasing scale, a philosophy that has worked well for HIE in other contexts. HAIL worked with live promotions company GoEvents and other stakeholders to undertake collaborative projects within the Highlands and Islands region and to extend the profile of artists throughout the UK and internationally.

5.6.2 Difficulties
A number of key factors led to the project being unsuccessful. 2002 is considered to have been very early to attempt something that might be more viable in today's environment. The cost of bandwidth was significantly higher in 2002, and this seriously compromised the viability of the project. Understanding of how databases and downloads work was at an early stage, and there were difficulties between HAIL and its technical partners. Broadband rollout among potential customers was not well developed in 2002. The arrival of Apple's iTunes store in 2003 and similar sites subsequently, eclipsed independent operators such as HAIL. Internet payment structures were not well developed at that time.

The development of partnerships also proved difficult. Few companies had database resources to collaborate with HAIL. Not all small and medium record labels understood the potential of the concept. Many did not have the capacity or willingness to interact with an initiative like this and were slow to collaborate.

From the HIE perspective, the achievements of the process have been to support artists digitising tracks, to produce compilation albums for promotional purposes, as well as offering promotional downloads and Internet radio programmes. Individual labels have benefited to some degree, adding to the profile of the region.

5.6.3 Conclusion
In many ways, HAIL was an idea ahead of its time. Some of the factors impacting on its survival have changed in a positive direction in the years since 2002. Broadband is more widely available; bandwidth is comparatively less expensive; Internet payment channels are more developed and independent platforms are more prevalent. On the negative side, competition from major players such as iTunes and eMusic is now very hard to overcome.

HAIL's attempt to build database technology from scratch was costly. To maximise effectiveness, an equivalent company operating today would seek to develop business partnerships and distribution agreements with existing providers.

Despite the commercial failure of the project, benefits for individuals, companies and the geographic area were derived from promotional opportunities driven by combining digital assets. The web site Hailmusic.com which has emerged from this process is now devoted to a broad spectrum of musical activity from across the Highlands and Islands.

5.6.4 Applicability of this model to an Irish context
HAIL's vision of maximising success for a collective of smaller enterprises is one worth looking at in an Irish context. However it illustrates the importance of detailed business planning as well as the perils of a 'too many cooks' approach to collaboration. It suggests that the more straightforward models such as NMC and Centrediscs are more likely to succeed.

5.7 Broad Street Digital - www.rightsrouter.com

5.7.1 Profile
The digital aggregator Broad Street Digital (BSD) developed and operates Rightsrouter®, a patented license management platform for intellectual property rights and digital content distribution. This system enables rights holders – that is, performers, composers, bands or independent labels – to catalogue, transact, distribute and manage licensing of music with the world's major online retail services including iTunes, eMusic, Rhapsody, Beatport and other outlets. Over 500 record labels use BSD as a way of generating new revenue from the digital distribution of their catalogues.

5.7.2 Business model
BSD offers its clients three different layers of service: managed, standard or enhanced, each with different contracts of rights ownership. These services amount to a powerful tool for independent labels to maximise the profile of their recordings while cutting down on technical, administrative and financial overheads. BSD's services include:

- Origination – allowing clients to extract music from their own CDs or computer-based files.
- Encoding – enabling music to be easily encoded into all required formats.
- Distribution – access to a network of major online retail sites.
- Data tracking – allows clients to keep track of catalogue, sales, trends, etc.
- Rights management – facilitates clients taking control over when and to which territories music can be distributed.

- Contract Management – enables owners to create their own contracts or to opt in or out of BSD's standard contracts.
- Accountancy – a one-stop accounting solution with royalty collection and billing services, a consolidated report compatible with major accounting systems, and fast payment processing from all licensees.

One of the strengths of BSD's system is that both licensor and licensee benefit from its services. Licensors gain access to new markets while dramatically cutting down on overheads. Licensees benefit by ease of contacting music copyright owners and centralisation of a large amount of contracting, billing, technical compatibility and accompanying data, and a professional service.

While BSD manages a centralised database of music, each client has a unique portal into the Rightsrouter system allowing them to access their own music, financial details, existing and pending contracts, distribution agreements and status of digital content. BSD attaches importance to maintaining an easy-to-use interface.

BSD does not charge start-up or registration fees, but retains an agreed percentage of sales income. This percentage depends on volumes of sale and is negotiated at the outset.

5.7.3 Conclusion
The range of services provided by BSD is impressive. It facilitates access to a wide range of digital markets and provides a suite of tailored services that make the technical, administrative and financial aspects of selling music considerably easier.

5.7.4 Applicability of this model to an Irish context
While any single existing or future Irish record label could become a client of BSD, Irish labels would benefit from a collective relationship, thus maximising their impact, visibility and financial clout while at the same time minimising their administrative overheads. An approach to BSD could be made via an umbrella body such as a new, CMC-based download platform. This, because it was bringing together a critical mass of output across a spectrum of music genres, would stand a better chance of negotiating a favourable relationship in terms of the percentage income retained by BSD. Such a relationship would provide a digital distribution solution for individual independent Irish record labels while allowing each to retain control of their own rights and business.

5.8 Merlin - www.merlinnetwork.org

5.8.1 Profile
Merlin is a non-profit organisation that represents independent music labels, enabling them to enhance the commercial exploitation of their copyrights on a global basis. Its origins lie in the October 2005 Popkomm Conference in Berlin where leading independent labels from around the world decided to build a business case for a new global rights licensing organisation.

Merlin is in effect a one-stop licensing shop making it easy to access and license a wide range of music from independent labels through a single point of contact, thus replacing the need to negotiate thousands of individual deals.

Merlin focuses exclusively business opportunities for new media, representing its members collectively, particularly in deals that cannot be successfully negotiated individually or that are not adequately covered by standard arrangements.

A multi-national initiative, Merlin operates as a stand-alone non-profit company owned by its members and based in the Netherlands and London. Merlin has been ratified by Worldwide Independent Network (WIN), a global forum for the professional music industry. It is also recognised by the Independent Music Companies Association (IMPALA) and by national organisations such as the Association of Independent Music (AIM), UK; Union des Producteurs Phonographiques Français Indépendants (UPFI), France; The Canadian Independent Record Production Association (CIRPA), Canada; American Association of Independent Music (A2IM); and a host of other national representative bodies and affiliated organisations. Merlin also has strong relationships with distributors and aggregators around the world.

5.8.2 Independent labels

Independent labels consist of a broad church of small to medium sized enterprises that operate outside the 'big four' record labels, Sony/BMG, Universal, EMI and Warner. Together the independent sector is estimated to account for 30% of global sales, representing 80% of global new releases. Collectively, independent labels are larger than the biggest major label.

5.8.3 The need for Merlin

With the development of Internet-based technologies including MP3 downloads, web radio, web streaming, podcasting, social networking sites and many other developments, the opportunity for independent labels to secure new audiences is ever-increasing. Within this new technological environment, however, the existing framework of music licenses and reciprocal relationships does not provide a straightforward route for them to exercise existing intellectual property rights or access new revenue streams. Independent labels risk being left behind in royalty collection and in new business opportunities because these small to medium sized enterprises cannot hope to navigate the complex web of many international licensing jurisdictions.

Merlin is an attempt to draw the independent sector together so that these companies can no longer be overlooked in copyright and royalty enforcement. Facilitating access to their repertoire and achieving equitable recompense for the use of their copyrights is in the best interests of all who make a living from the independent sector, including artists, labels, distributors and aggregators.

5.8.4 SNOCAP Collaboration

SNOCAP was founded in 2001 as a conduit for the sale of music through digital media. It describes itself as 'the first end-to-end provider of digital licensing and copyright management services for the digital music marketplace'. In effect this enables artists, independent labels and other rights holders – small, medium and large – to register their content and manage its distribution through digital retailers, through their own web sites, or through social networking sites such as MySpace.

In 2007, Merlin announced a deal with SNOCAP. This was Merlin's first collective deal and gives all labels and distributors, irrespective of size or location, the opportunity to create revenue from MySpace. Merlin's members can sell their content through SNOCAP's MyStore on MySpace and use SNOCAP software to create their own retail outlet anywhere else on the Internet. This innovative partnership allows for increased marketing opportunities for Merlin members, as well as providing a practical and user-friendly tool for music sales.

5.8.5 Conclusion
The areas of digital rights management, networking, and marketing in new media are central to the business development of all independent labels. The issues presented in this area, and the solutions offered by the establishment of Merlin, offer important supports for music producers. Over time, the promotional aspect of Merlin's work seems set to continue to develop, and this has the potential to offer considerable benefits to affiliated organisations.

5.8.6 Applicability of this model to an Irish context
A new independent Irish record label has much to learn from the business issues and solutions identified by Merlin. Membership of this network should be considered following establishment of such a label.

5.9 Analysis of Case Studies

Music is by its nature ephemeral and recordings are therefore quite literally the only way that composers and performers can put their work 'on record'. Recordings are hugely significant in the development of their careers, allowing them to reach a local, national and global audience.

In many countries, therefore, provision of financial support for record labels and recording projects is seen as one of the normal strategic interventions that arts councils and government agencies provide to bring about a well-planned range of cultural services. Supporting music recording is regarded as being as important as the subvention of live performances. Where partnerships are established with other state-supported bodies such as concert agencies, music information centres and national broadcasters, the results lead to a cohesive approach to the national development of music.

In an environment where major record labels struggle to survive, it is clear that labels representing specialised music genres cannot hope to compete in the absence of public subsidy. But without these labels, major works of creativity will be unknown. It is clear, therefore, that supporting them fulfils many of the objectives of government departments, state agencies and local authorities.

Financial support can be channelled in a number of ways. A label can be operated by a concert agency (Caprice), a music information centre (Centrediscs) or as an independent body which accesses a range of charitable and project funding (NMC). What all these examples have in common, however, is that they make an array of high-quality recordings available to a global audience in a way and to a degree that would not be possible without funding support.

From the research around these case studies a number of points stand out:

- Financial investment is essential for the survival of an independent record label in any non-commercial area of music.
- 'Joined-up thinking' between state agencies, government and local authorities, music bodies, and other corporate and private stakeholders is highly desirable.
- Detailed research and business planning is essential.

- Harnessing existing technical, financial and organisational infrastructure avoids ‘reinventing the wheel’.
- A clear vision and strong curatorial approach contributes greatly to the success of the venture.
- Partnerships between bodies on the creative and production/administrative sides of making a recording pay dividends.
- Utilising broadcast and Internet radio channels adds profile to a recording catalogue.
- Strategic relationships between independent labels maximise their impact, visibility and financial clout.
- Joining forces with existing international label management and distribution networks, both retail and online, creates economies of scale and maximises resources.

Part 6 - Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This section provides specific recommendations through which the music of a broad range of Irish composers and performers can be brought to a wider audience in recorded format. The recommendations derive from the learning throughout this report: the analysis of the Irish and the global music sectors; the interviews and the online survey; and the case studies undertaken.

The principal proposals include the development of a new record label and, in parallel, a digital download platform. Each would have distinct identities, but they would structurally form part of the CMC organisation.

Different artistic policies are recommended for both the label and the download platform. The platform will focus on making available as broad a church of music of from Ireland as possible, focussing initially on increasing access to existing recorded music. It should establish partnerships with labels and artists throughout all areas of music making. It should become a portal for Irish music of all genres, and in time be seen as a one-stop-shop for every type of music by Irish artists.

The record label, however, is recommended to take a more limited artistic focus. Notwithstanding the majority of survey respondents welcoming a label with a broad artistic focus, it is recommended that at least in the early stages, CMC's label should concentrate on areas of its core activity – contemporary works by Irish composers. There are a number of reasons behind this recommendation. Firstly, it can be seen from international examples that labels with a strong artistic focus are likely to be more successful. Attempting to do too much with too broad a remit risks losing artistic focus and diluting the label's effectiveness. In many areas, particularly traditional music, existing labels are operating and it would be unwise to attempt to cover the same ground as established companies. This policy can be kept under review. Once established, the proposed label will develop in organic ways in response to the changing environment.

6.2 Redressing the lack of recordings

All of the findings in this report point to a fundamental problem which goes to the heart of the issues raised. This is that a very small proportion of the existing repertoire of Irish music has been recorded at all, irrespective of format. Regardless of the method of delivery – i.e. whether in physical form as a CD or in digital form as a download, or both – the critical issue is that the lack of recordings themselves must be redressed.

The major part of this task lies in developing a clear artistic policy to select the music and the performers, and then in bringing those artists together in a recording studio to produce a high-quality recording. In considering the recommendations below concerning delivery of the resulting output to the public, it is important to be aware that the *modus operandi* may need to be adjusted in response to changing consumer patterns across the next three to five years. What is not in doubt is the need for music in recorded form – the content itself, as has been seen, can be delivered in a variety of ways.

Once the core principal of increasing the number, range and quality of recordings of Irish works is accepted, and a clear set of artistic/curatorial guidelines established, the options for releasing the end product should be kept under review during the business planning phase.

6.3 Record Label

CMC is advised to seek funding and partners to develop a record label to specialise initially in areas of core activity for the organisation: contemporary music by Irish composers. In time an assessment can be made of the need to expand beyond this area into other music genres.

- CMC would be a parent body for the record label, but the label itself should enjoy a significant degree of autonomy, along the lines of the Canadian Music Centre and Centrediscs models.
- The label would develop a brand and a name of its own.
- The label would adopt a clear curatorial approach to ensure both a quality product and appropriate coverage of repertoire, instrumentation and composers.
- Music would be released both as CDs and in digital form. This policy should remain in place at least as long as CDs are the choice of the majority of consumers. It should continue to be reviewed in the years ahead.
- It is recommended that in the region of four to six releases per year be offered initially. This production rate should be kept under review.
- The label should create occasional free promotional or taster albums, continuing the promotional CD series currently operated by CMC.
- CD releases could be distributed directly to major Internet sites such as Amazon and CD Baby. Distribution to the retail sector would be best undertaken by a strategic alliance with an existing record label such as NMC or Centrediscs.
- In digital form, the releases could be downloaded through CMC's own digital download platform *(see below)* and through a network of digital aggregators. A dual pricing policy could be considered with downloads offered at a lower price than CDs.
- Strategic alliances should be explored with eg Culture Ireland, Music Network, Moving On Music, major festivals and others, to identify shared objectives in promoting the musical output of Ireland both nationally and internationally. Not only would this maximise their delivery, it would add to the visibility and credibility of the label.
- Synergies with live music provision in Ireland should be explored. Opportunities for collaboration with the RTÉ performing groups, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the Ulster Orchestra, Music Network and contemporary music ensembles should be investigated, eg to link releases with performances/tours.
- The label should also seek strategic collaborations with RTÉ and BBC Northern Ireland on the provision of recording facilities, equipment and/or expertise.
- A subscribers' club with benefits could be considered.
- Distribution would be maximised by examining the feasibility of making recordings available to schools and libraries.
- Where possible the label could seek to develop the Irish skills base in the areas of recording, engineering, production and post-production.

- The label would not seek to compete with or challenge existing operations, but would seek to develop new areas of recordings.

6.4 Digital Download Platform

CMC is advised to develop a digital download platform to maximise access to existing recorded Irish music. This would draw together the recordings of a broad coalition of Irish record labels and resource organisations across a range of specialist music types, and thereby create a critical mass which would be more visible in the international market.

- CMC would be a parent body for the download platform but it would establish a clear identity and brand of its own.
- It would be accessed independently on the Internet and also linked to CMC's existing web presence and that of other relevant music organisations.
- The download platform would seek to become a digital hub of music from Ireland, building a strong catalogue of recordings in several genres including contemporary/classical, jazz, traditional, and non-commercial pop/rock.
- The download platform would adopt a clear curatorial policy to ensure that its material was of good quality, thus building trust with its audience.
- The download platform would seek to digitise and offer for sale (via download) existing CD recordings from the CMC online shop and from the new CMC record label. This would be of particular benefit in disseminating 'own-label' CDs of individual composers and performers, often produced with Arts Council funding.
- Partnerships with existing record labels could be brokered over a period of time whereby catalogues of existing Irish labels could be available for sale through this download platform. As broad a church as possible could be sought.
- Promotional recordings such as those issued by CMC and other agencies could be offered for free download, once again subject to agreement with the producers.
- The download platform would proactively market music from Ireland in domestic and international markets. Marketing should be undertaken in traditional media, digital media and at major venues, events and festivals.
- Full advantage of Web 2.0 capabilities would be exploited, with a dedicated presence for the download platform on a range of music-related and social networking sites.
- The download platform could seek to collaborate with existing Internet radio stations, or in time it could seek to establish a new in-house Internet radio channel with looped streams of music recordings.
- At every step of development, the download platform should seek to build on existing digital infrastructure and avoid unnecessary duplication of resources. It should be technologically flexible so that it can be added to in a modular way as other partners come on board.

6.5 Digital Aggregation & Commercial Exploitation

The proposed digital platform would act as both a digital aggregator and as a client of other digital aggregators. Partnerships built with Irish labels would result in a collective of aggregated music from Ireland. In turn, this complete catalogue should be submitted to a range of bigger global digital aggregators, ensuring that music from Ireland is constantly available in the web's most important music sites. The new digital download platform should:

- Establish links with global digital aggregators to ensure music from Ireland is available on a range of major Internet download sites such as iTunes, eMusic, etc.
- Seek to negotiate a favourable deal with digital aggregators such as Broad Street Digital. The critical mass achieved by establishing partnerships with existing Irish record labels will facilitate a favourable bargaining position with major aggregators.

6.6 Business Plan

An essential next step for CMC in progressing any proposals contained within this document is to draw up a comprehensive business plan to research more closely the resource and operational implications of the project. This would:

- Identify the steps involved in setting up a record label and download platform.
- Outline the costs involved, including staffing, resourcing, ICT capital investment, and end-product marketing.
- Make proposals for the synergies between CMC, the record label and the download platform, including any degree to which staff might operate as a single unit.
- Identify potential sources of income and investment.
- Draw up a detailed start-up plan.

6.7 Arts Council Recording Policy

CMC should urge the Arts Council, as key stakeholder, to make a strategic response to the full range of needs for recording in the music sector. This response should include:

- Provide revenue funding to CMC for the core costs of operating the record label and download platform, subject to agreement on a business plan.
- Provide initial capital funds to invest in the startup phase (web site development, e-commerce setup, etc).
- Develop the recording fund to a realistic level that would meet the sort of high quality applications that have been received from across the whole music sector in recent years.
- Set aside a portion of the overall annual budget to enable CMC's new label to issue 4-6 releases of new music per year, while still accepting direct applications for other, unrelated recording projects.
- Set aside a further, smaller portion of the annual recordings budget to enable composers/performers, particularly in the genres of jazz, electronic, traditional, etc, to record tracks only for the download platform.
- Stipulate that all recordings made with financial assistance from the Arts Council should be made available to the new download platform for consideration under the curatorial policies established for it.

6.8 Funding & Partnerships

As has been demonstrated in the case studies, operation of a record label and download platform outside the 'mass market' sectors of the music industry requires both capital investment and, to a degree at least, ongoing funding subsidy. While it would be important to maximise income from sales, on the experience of existing CD labels in the non-commercial sector, such income is not likely to be completely cost-covering. CMC could seek additional funding from a range of sources. These include:

- Culture Ireland which promotes Irish arts overseas and whose international partnerships would be enhanced by the development of this label and download platform.
- The Arts Council of Northern Ireland which could offer support to this project if the label and platform featured composers and artists from Northern Ireland.
- Local Authorities who could provide funding for projects having relevance in their regions, or ensure distribution for music within their areas.
- Enterprise Ireland which could provide funds, for example through the Business Expansion Scheme. Other supports for new digital businesses should also be examined.
- The Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO) and the Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA) whose involvement in the securing of resources and partners for the proposed initiatives could be sought.
- Other resource organisations and state agencies that can contribute in numerous ways to the success of these initiatives.

6.9 CMC's Role in Implementing Recommendations

The Contemporary Music Centre is Ireland's national archive and resource centre for new music, supporting the work of composers throughout the Republic and Northern Ireland. The Centre is known and respected nationally and internationally, and is used by performers, composers, promoters and members of the public interested in finding out more about music in Ireland. It has the only comprehensive collection worldwide of music scores, recordings and reference materials relating to Irish composition from the 20th and 21st centuries. It operates as a promotion agency and *de facto* music publisher for Irish composers.

The Contemporary Music Centre occupies a highly respected position in the Irish arts world. It is uniquely well placed to implement the recommendations contained within this report for the following reasons:

- CMC is a mature, stable and well-run arts organisation that has demonstrated its capacity to expand and develop its operations on many occasions in the past.
- CMC has completed a two-year strategic planning process resulting in a new *Strategic Plan 2009-2011*. This proposes an expanded remit for the Centre which ties in with and supports the recommendations in the present report in relation to recordings.
- CMC has experience in designing, licensing, producing, promoting and selling CDs. Its *Contemporary Music from Ireland* series is an established brand with

national and international recognition, distributed successfully to radio stations, festivals, concert promoters, performers and libraries in some 40 countries.

- CMC is technologically advanced. It was one of the first Irish arts organisations to operate a web site and its current site is considered not only one of the leading arts web sites in the country, but one of the most advanced within the International Association of Music Information Centres (IAMIC).
- CMC is to the fore in exploiting new technologies to disseminate information on Irish composition. It operates a fully searchable online database and was the first Irish arts organisations to offer podcasting. It is also among the few to take advantage of social networking sites such as YouTube, MySpace, FaceBook, etc.
- CMC has substantial experience in e-commerce through operating an online shop on its web site.
- CMC's status as a non-profit organisation ensures that it will give a level of long-term commitment to the area of music recording that commercial bodies simply cannot match.
- CMC has, over more than twenty years, developed expertise and knowledge of the work of every Irish composer.
- CMC has a strong network of contacts within the arts infrastructure in Ireland. Through its membership of the International Association of Music Information Centres (IAMIC) it has access to a significant pool of expertise and knowledge in sister organisations throughout the world.
- CMC enjoys strong relationships with funding bodies and other stakeholders throughout the arts sector in Ireland.
- CMC has demonstrated its ability to lead on many issues, and to work in tandem with the policy objectives of its principal funder, the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Part 7 – Appendices

These appendices present the terms of reference, the research data, and a range of useful background information collected during the preparation of the report.

7.1 Appendix I – Terms of Reference

Recording Label Study

Research Aims:

- Examine the feasibility of setting up an Irish recording label and/or download platform to draw together a range of specialist/non-commercial musics (contemporary, early Irish classical, jazz, electronic etc) on one identifiable label and/or download platform
- Provide recommendations for the strategic development of such a label and/or download platform
- Examine effective ways in which existing recordings of Irish music can be best distributed.

Research objectives:

- Analyse current activity in recordings of non-commercial music in Ireland at present and look at existing distribution outlets for such recordings.
- Research International models of best practice in recording non-commercial music and make recommendations on how some of these models could be implemented in an Irish context.
- Examine online solutions for distributing recordings and evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of such systems over CD publishing.
- Conduct a market analysis for recordings of non-commercial Irish music and make recommendations on how these audiences can be reached.

Research outputs

- Production of report to high publication standards to include the main findings and recommendations from the study as well as a summary of all the research conducted.
- Research will be supported by an advisory group with representation from the Arts Council, RTÉ and CMC.

Timeframe

- Preliminary research and findings to be completed by September 2007.
- Final report to be published in 2008.

Advisory steering group

Gareth Costello, RTÉ; Dr Clíona Doris, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama and CMC Board; Fergus Sheil; Eve O'Kelly, CMC Director; Jonathan Grimes, CMC General Manager.

7.2 Appendix II - Web sites

The following are the principal web sites accessed in the course of this research.

3 Mobile Network	www.three.ie
7things Music	www.seventhings.co.uk
American Music Centre	www.amc.net
BayTSP	www.baytsp.com
Bebo	www.bebo.com
BigChampagne Online Media Measurement	www.bigchampagne.com
Broad Street Digital	www.rightsrouter.com
Canadian Music Centre	www.musiccentre.ca
Caprice	www.caprice.rikskonserter.se
CD Baby	www.cdbaby.com
Centrediscs	www.centrediscs.ca
Claddagh Records	www.claddaghrecords.com
Cló Iar-Chonnachta	www.cic.ie
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann	http://www.comhaltas.ie/
Contemporary Music Centre	www.cmc.ie
Counterstream Radio	www.counterstreamradio.org
Digital Media Awards	www.digitalmedia.ie
Electronic Frontier Foundation	www.eff.org
eMusic	www.emusic.com
Enders Analysis	www.endersanalysis.com
Enterprise Ireland	www.enterprise-ireland.com
Facebook	www.facebook.com
First Music Contact	www.firstmusiccontact.com
Forfás	www.forfas.ie
Gael Linn	www.gael-linn.ie
Hail Music	http://www.hailmusic.com/
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	www.hie.co.uk
Improvised Music Company	www.improvisedmusic.ie
Independent Music Companies Association	www.impalasite.org
Instal	www.instal.org.uk
International Association of Music Information Centres	www.iamic.net
Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO)	www.imro.ie
Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA)	www.irma.ie
Irish Traditional Music Archive	http://www.itma.ie/
iTunes	www.apple.com/itunes
JUNO – Canada's music awards	www.junoawards.ca
Mechanical-Copyright Protection Society	www.mcps.ie
Merlin	www.merlinnetwork.org
Moving On Music	http://www.movingonmusic.co.uk/
Music Lovers' Field Companion	www.musicloversfieldcompanion.org
Music Network	www.musicnetwork.ie
MySpace	www.myspace.com
Na Píobairí Uilleann	www.pipers.ie
National Endowment for Sports Technology & the Arts	www.nesta.org.uk
Naxos	www.naxos.com
NMC	www.nmcrec.co.uk
RadioIO	www.radioio.com
Recorded Artists And Performers (RAAP)	www.raap.ie
Rikskonserter	www.rikskonserter.se
Scottish Arts Council	www.scottisharts.org.uk

SOUND – North East Scotland's Festival of New Music	www.sound-scotland.co.uk
Svenskt Vasarkiv - The Centre for Swedish Folk Music and Jazz Research	www.visarkiv.se
Sveriges Radio P2	www.sr.se/p2
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	www.sida.se
Tara Music Company	www.taramusic.com
The Arts Council	www.artscouncil.ie
The Sage Gateshead	www.thesagegateshead.org
V2 Co-operative Music	www.v2music.com
Wikipedia	www.wikipedia.org
Worldwide Independent Network	www.worldwideindependentnetwork.com
YouTube	www.youtube.com

7.3 Appendix III – Interviews

Thirty-two meetings/interviews took place in the course of research on this report.

Name	Position	Company	Country
Michael Alcorn	Composer and Head of School of Music and Sonic Arts	Queen's University Belfast	Northern Ireland
Beth Appleton	New Media Director	V2 Records	Great Britain
Arne Brodd	Director	Caprice	Sweden
David Byers	Chief Executive Officer	Ulster Orchestra	Northern Ireland
Charles Caldas	Chief Executive Officer	Merlin	Netherlands
Gareth Costello	Project Manager	RTÉ Performing Groups	Ireland
David Darcy	Education Officer/Chorus Master	National Chamber Choir	Ireland
Michael Dervan	Music Critic	The Irish Times	Ireland
Angela Dorgan	Chief Executive Officer	First Music Contact	Ireland
Eugene Downes	Chief Executive Officer	Culture Ireland	Ireland
Gerry Godley	Chief Executive Officer	Improvised Music Company	Ireland
Iain Hamilton	Director of Creative Industries	Highland and Island Enterprise	Scotland
Anders Hjelmtorp	Managing Director	Export Music Sweden	Sweden
Una Hunt	Pianist		Ireland
Brian Irvine	Composer		Northern Ireland
Keith Johnson	Director of Marketing and Membership	Irish Music Rights Organisation	Ireland
John Kinsella	Composer		Ireland
Pauline McAuley	Regional Development Officer	RTÉ Performing Groups	Ireland
Deirdre McCrea	Chief Executive Officer	Music Network	Ireland
Frances Mitchell	Manager and Chief Executive Officer	Crash Ensemble	Ireland
Darragh Morgan	Violinist		Northern Ireland
Jane O'Leary	Director	Concorde	Ireland
Brian O'Rourke	General Manager	RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland	Ireland
Michael Quinn	Journalist and writer		Northern Ireland
Gavin Robertson	Chief Executive Officer	Broad Street Digital (UK)	Great Britain
Paul Roe	Clarinetist and Lecturer	Dundalk Institute of Technology	Ireland
Anne Rushton	Business and Development Executive	NMC Recordings	Great Britain
Hugh Tinney	Pianist		Ireland
Richard Truhlar	Managing Director	Centrediscs	Canada
Alison Wenham	President	World Independent Network	Great Britain
Eleanor Wilson	Sales and Marketing Manager	NMC Recordings	Great Britain
Nicholas Winter	General Manager	Irish Chamber Orchestra	Ireland

7.4 Appendix IV – Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was designed in consultation with the report's steering group. It was emailed to Irish-based stakeholders and made available publicly on CMC's web site over a six-week period in August/September 2007. A total of 109 individual responses were received *(see Appendix V)*. The following questions were asked:

1	Name, organisation, email and postal address
2	What best describes your position within Irish music? (Tick boxes: Composer, Song Writer, Solo Performer, Ensemble/Group Member, Record Label/Production Company, Broadcaster, Studio Engineer/Producer, Public Sector Organisations, Other)
3	Other (please specify)
4	Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised collective Irish record label which would draw together a full range of specialist Irish music?
5	Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised collective Irish digital download platform which would draw together a full range of specialist Irish music?
6	Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised collective Irish record label which would offer one or more of the following musical genres? (Tick boxes: Contemporary Irish Classical, Early Irish Classical, Electronic, Folk/Traditional, Jazz, Rock and Pop, Other)
7	Other (please specify)
8	Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised Irish digital download platform which would offer one or more of the following musical genres? (Tick boxes: Contemporary Irish Classical, Early Irish Classical, Electronic, Folk/Traditional, Jazz, Rock and Pop, Other)
9	Other (please specify)
10	Do you feel that it is appropriate for such a label or platform to be publicly subsidised?
11	Have you been involved, in any capacity, in the recording of Irish music?
12	Please rate how effective each of the following distribution methods were in relation to the recordings that you have been involved with: Vinyl, CD, Digital Downloading, Digital Streaming
13	What are the advantages of working in your sector and operating from Ireland?
14	What are the disadvantages of working in your sector and operating from Ireland?
15	In today's music sector does it matter where you are geographically located?
16	Do you know of any 'best practice' initiatives (in Ireland or internationally) where there has been publicly funded support for the making and dissemination of recorded music - please detail
17	In your creative and business practices how much do you engage with new and emerging technology?
18	What training and skills do you believe are lacking in the current Irish Music Sector?
19	Geographically, what are the most important current markets for your music?
20	Geographically, what are the most important potential markets for your music?
21	If new routes to market became available to you via the suggested collective label / download platform what positive and negative effect do you think this may have on you? An example of this may be increased recording output.
22	In summary, what are the major issues facing the Irish music sector collectively and you individually?
23	If you have any other comments then please add them below.

7.5 Appendix V – Respondents to Survey

The following contributors responded to the online survey.[24] A total of 109 responses were received.

Anonymous	Evan Rothstein	Padhraic O Cuinneagain
A. Carey Zuniga	Fergus Johnston	Pat Jackman
Ailis Ni Riain	Frances Mitchell	Patricia Flynn
Alan Connolly	Gareth McCarthy	Patrick Zuk
Allen Smith	Gerald Barry	Paul Hickey
Andrew Ferris	Gerard McChrystal	Paul Lally
Aoife Downey	Giles Packham	Paul Martin
Axel Klein	Grainne Millar	Paul McGough
Barry John Maher	Greg Caffrey	Paul Mulligan
Benedict Schlepper-Connolly	Hannah Vlcek	Paul O'Reilly
Bob Gilmore	Ivan Ilic	Peter Murphy
Breandán Ó Ruaidh	Jane O'Leary	Philip Morrow
Brendan O'Byrne	Jennifer Walshe	Ramon Ferguson
Brian Smith	John Boyden	Ray Heffernan
Brian Solon	Jonathan Nangle	Robert Kimberley
Caitríona Ní Dhubhghaill	Ken Laval	Ronan O'Callaghan
Cameron Zywina	Kerry Dexter	Rosaleen Molloy
Cathal Gaffney	Kevin O Connell	Roy Johnston
Charlie McGettigan	Larry de Cleir	Ruby Moore
Christophe Le Dantec	Lester Weil	Scott Klein
Cian Furlong	Lisa Flavelle	Scott mc Laughlin
Cristian Nitu	Malcolm Gullis	Sean Brophy
Daniel Abioye	Maria Cleary	Sean Clancy
Daniel Jacobson	Marian Bradfield	Sean Og
Dave Conway	Mark Keane	Shane Power
Dean Regan	Martin Adams	Shane Supple
Derek Ball	Martin Ryan	Shay Hennessy
Derek Gleeson	Matthew Jacobson	Siobhan Cleary
Donal Hurley	Melvin Rickarby	Steve Wickham
Donal J. Byrne	Michael Alcorn	Tara Connaghan
Donal Sarsfield	Michael McGlynn	Tarkan Songur
Dr Ruth Fleischmann	Micheal O Suilleabhain	Thomas Doyle
Dr. S. Mawhinney	Mick Broderick	Toner Quinn
Eamonn De Barra	Neil O Connor	Tony Furnell
Emily Magner	Niall Turner	Tony Sheehan
Emma Kate Tobia	Nick Roth	Young European Strings
Enda Bates		

[24] Please note: spelling of individuals' names is reproduced here as it was entered on the survey. No attempt has been made to standardise use of initials, accents, titles etc.

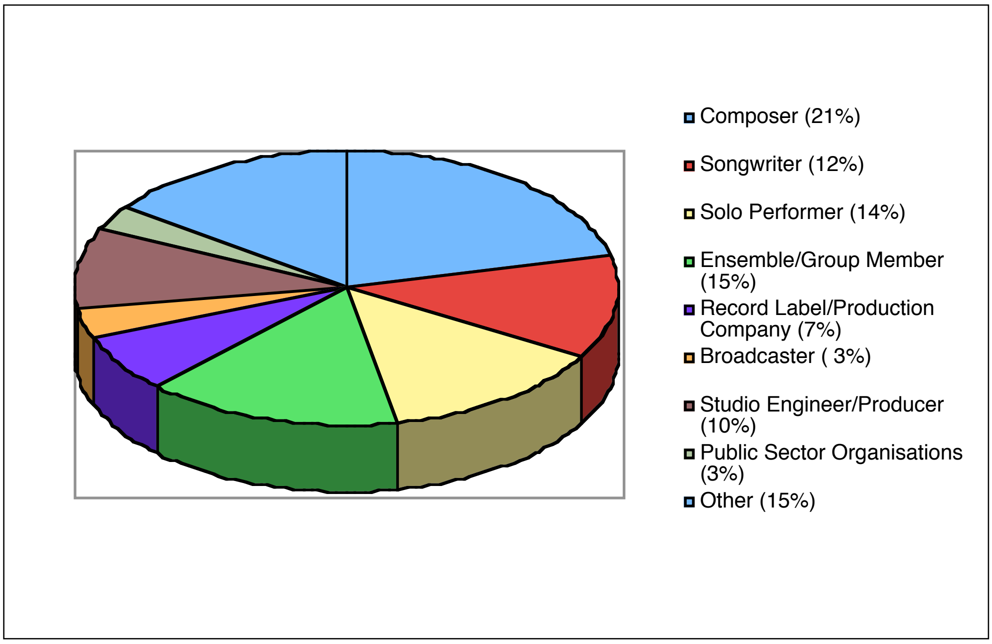
7.6 Appendix VI – Analysis of Survey

<u>Question 1</u>
Asked the respondent's name, organisation, email and postal address.

<u>Question 2</u>
What best describes your position within Irish music?

The 109 respondents were free to tick more than one box. On average 2.4 boxes were ticked per respondent (262 boxes ticked in total). The results are presented in figure 1.

Figure 1



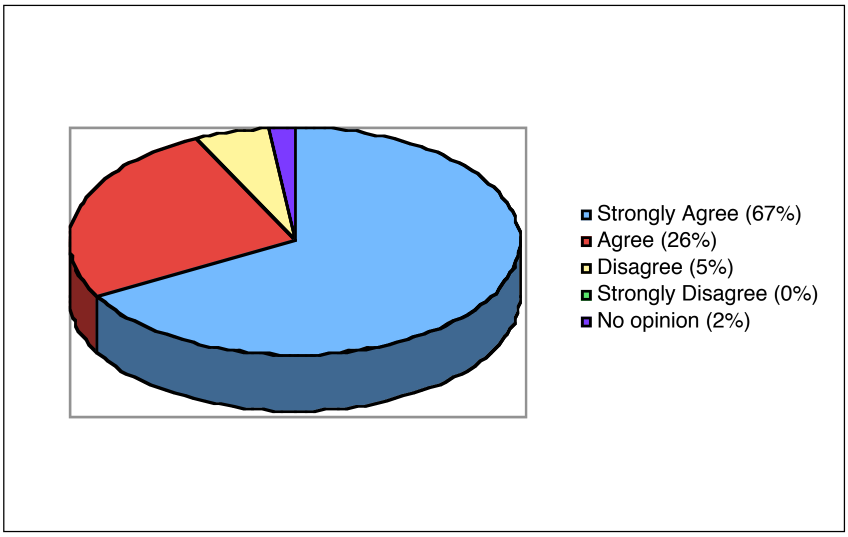
<u>Question 3</u>
This question was addressed to those who ticked the box "Others" in question 2 (above). It asked respondents to specify their role in music. Answers included:

- Academics and writers
- Artists managers
- Concert and event promoters
- Conductors
- Consumers
- Designers
- Lyricists
- Marketing professionals
- Music arrangers
- Publishers
- Sound artists and sound designers
- Teachers
- Video designers

Question 4
Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised collective Irish record label that would draw together a full range of specialist Irish music?

The results of this question are demonstrated in figure 2:

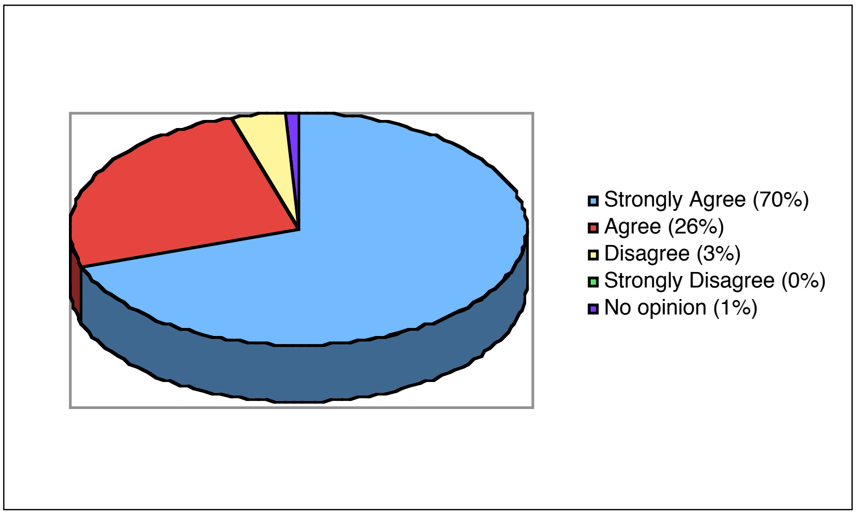
Figure 2



Question 5
Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised collective Irish digital download platform that would draw together a full range of specialist Irish music?

The results of this question are demonstrated in figure 3:

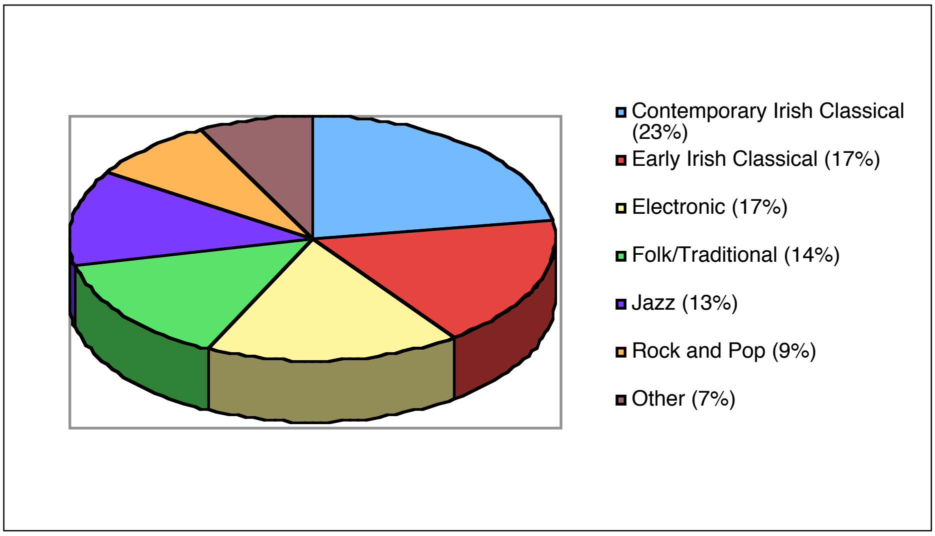
Figure 3



<u>Question 6</u>
Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised collective Irish record label which would offer one or more of the following musical genres?

The respondents were free to select more than one genre that they felt was in need of support. On average 3.7 boxes were ticked per respondent (407 boxes ticked in total). Figure 4 shows the relative weight of which genres were seen as in particular need of support as indicated by respondents to this survey.

Figure 4



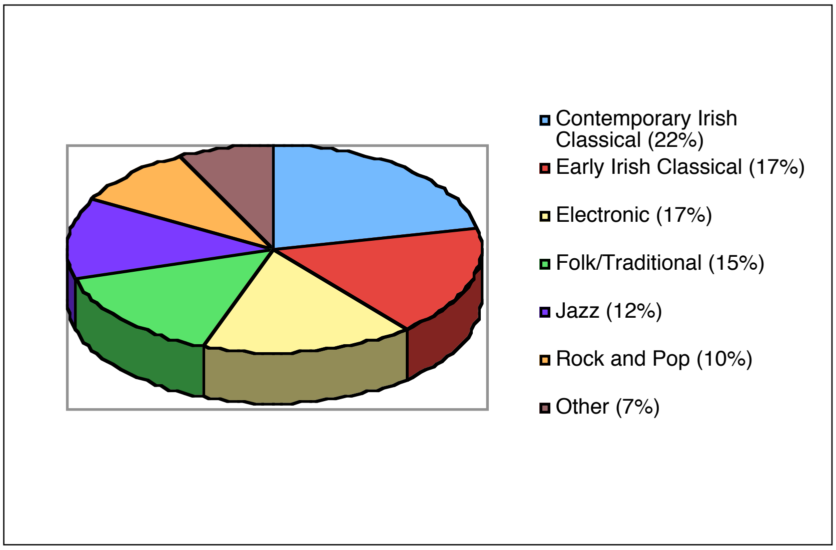
<u>Question 7</u>
This question was addressed to those who ticked the box “Others” in question 6 (above). It asked respondents to specify what other genres should be included on a centralised collective Irish record. Answers included:

- Experimental
- Classical music (non-Irish but involving Irish performers)
- Film Music/Soundtracks
- Gospel/Soul
- Hip/hop and dance
- Improvised music
- Independent songwriters
- Multimedia
- Sound Art
- World

Question 8
Do you feel that there is a need for a centralised Irish digital download platform which would offer one or more of the following musical genres?

Again, the respondents were free to select more than one genre that they felt was in need of support. On average 3.9 boxes were ticked per respondent (427 boxes ticked in total). Figure 5 shows the relative weight of which genres were seen as in particular need of support as indicated by respondents to this survey.

Figure 5



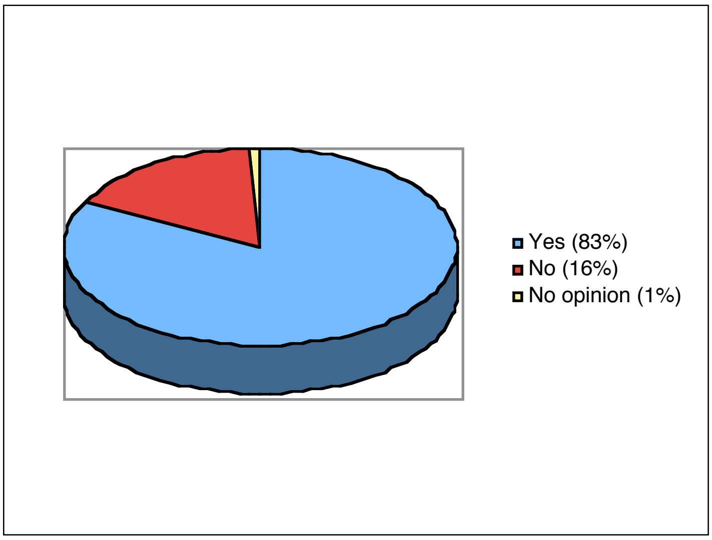
Question 9
This question was addressed to those who ticked the box ‘Others’ in question 8 (above). It asked respondents to specify what other genres should be included on a centralised Irish digital download platform. Answers were almost identical to question 7 (above). They included:

- Experimental
- Classical music (non-Irish but involving Irish performers)
- Film Music/Soundtracks
- Gospel/Soul
- Hip/hop and dance
- Improvised music
- Independent songwriters
- Multimedia
- Sound Art
- World

Question 10

Do you feel that it is appropriate for such a label or platform to be publicly subsidised?

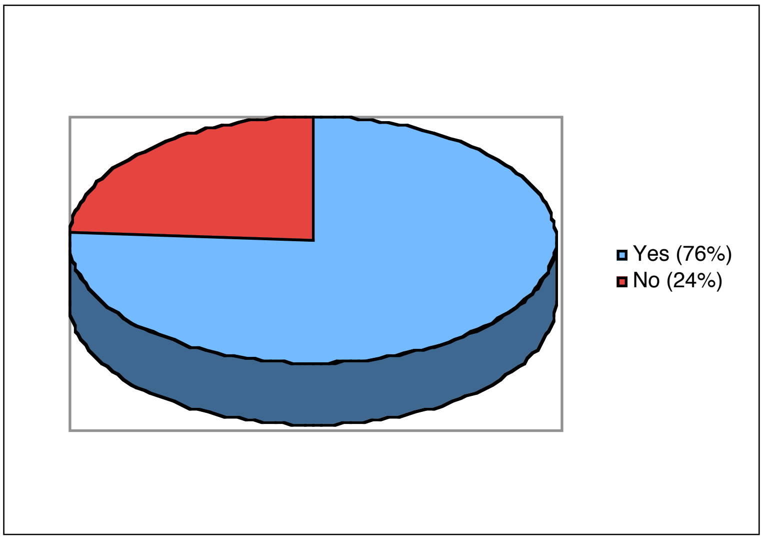
Figure 6



Question 11

Have you been involved, in any capacity, in the recording of Irish music?

Figure 7



Question 12

Respondents were asked to rate four different recording media for effectiveness; Vinyl, CD, Digital Download and Digital Streaming

Figure 8a (Vinyl)

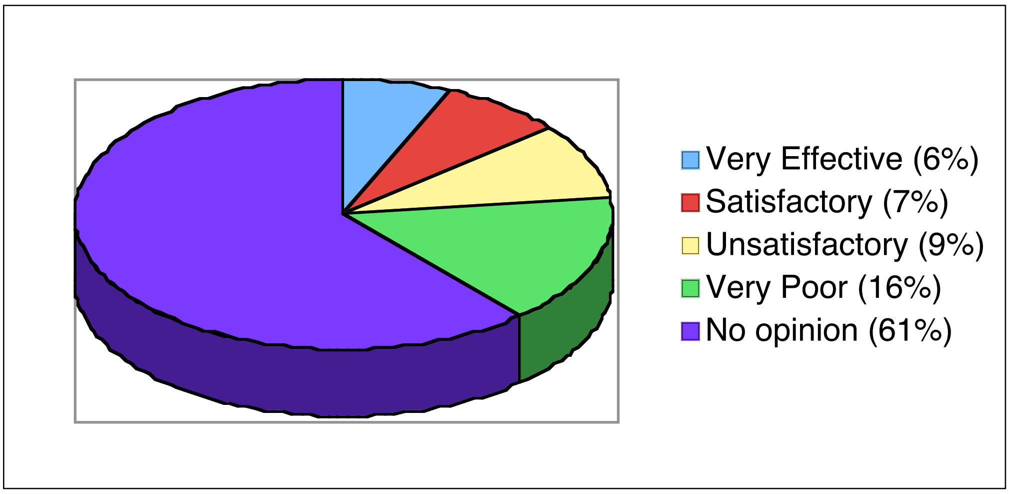


Figure 8b (CD)

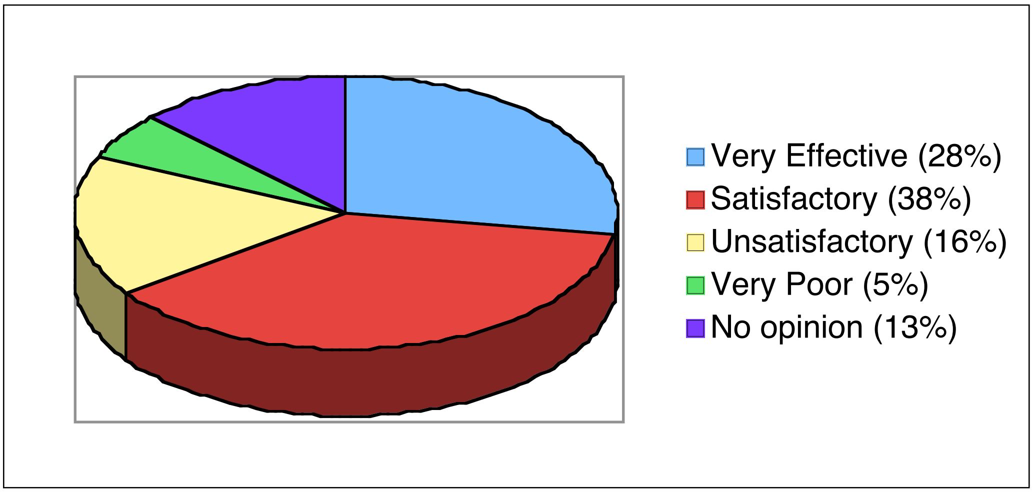


Figure 8c (Digital Download)

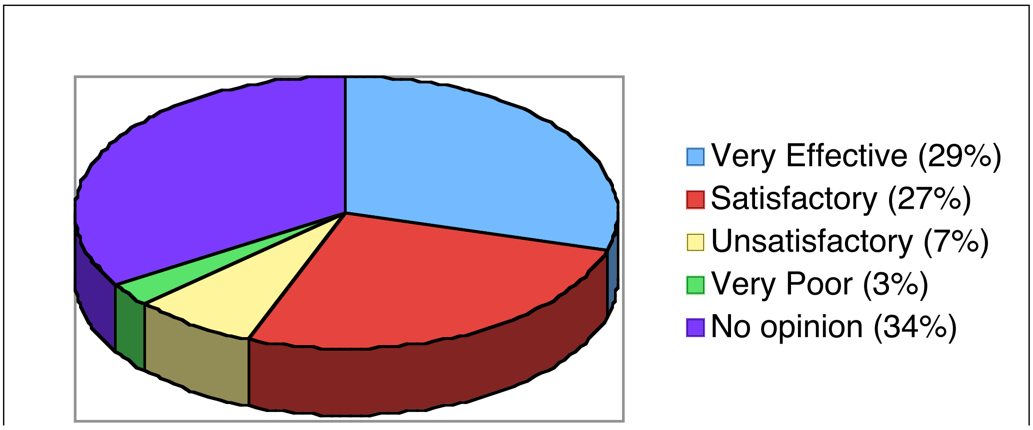
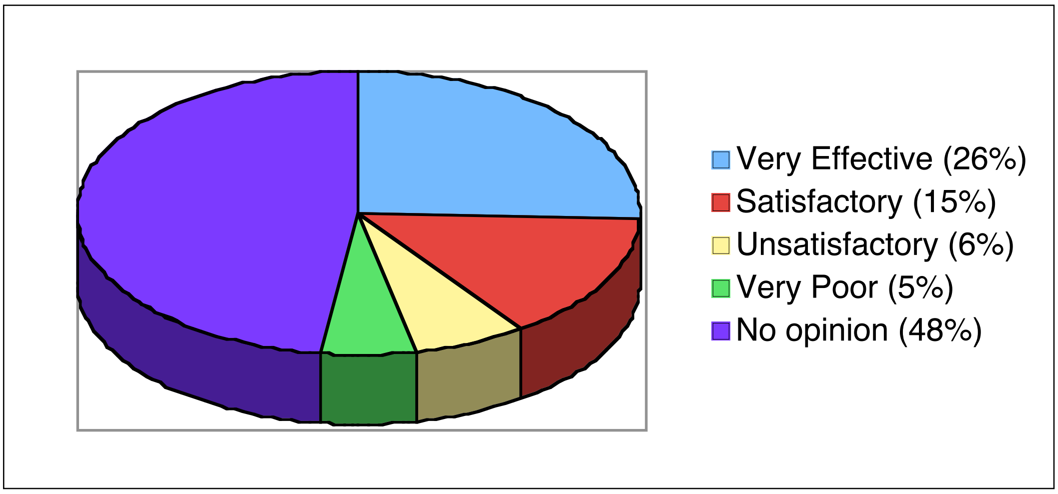


Figure 8d (Digital Streaming)



Question 13
In this question respondents were asked what are the advantages of working in their sector and operating from Ireland. A range of responses were received including:

- Close to source material for traditional Irish music
- Energy and enthusiasm of Irish scene
- Favourable tax system
- Increased performance opportunities at festivals, venues etc
- Inspiration and creativity
- Irish music seen as a successful brand
- Possibilities for expansion of music sector
- Quality of life
- Small community makes networking easy
- State supports available

Close to half of the respondents (45 of 109) left this question blank or indicated that there were no advantages to operating in Ireland.

Question 14

In this question respondents were asked what are the disadvantages of working in their sector and operating from Ireland. A range of responses were received including:

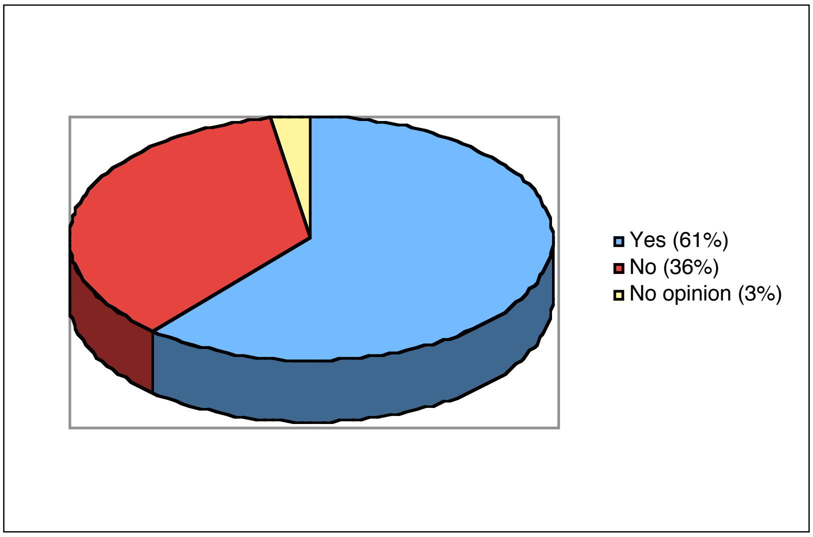
- Absence of adequate government support for recording and distribution of music by Irish artists
- Closure of many independent record stores
- Conservative audiences with limited understanding of contemporary music
- Difficulties in navigating industry, A&R community inadequate, industry does not encourage home-grown talent
- High cost economy
- Isolation from major international centres
- Lack of support of Irish artists on radio, limited media outlets and poor music criticism
- Limited opportunities for touring and performing, with too few venues of good quality for music performance
- No dedicated full-time contemporary music ensemble and not enough specialist performers based in Ireland
- Overall music sector and recordings market very small
- Poor music education system in schools

31 of 109 respondents offered no comment in response to this question or indicated that in their opinion there were no disadvantages to working in their sector and operating from Ireland.

Question 15

In today's music sector does it matter where you are geographically located?

Figure 9



<u>Question 16</u>
Do you know of any 'best practice' initiatives (in Ireland or internationally) where there has been publicly funded support for the making and dissemination of recorded music - please detail.

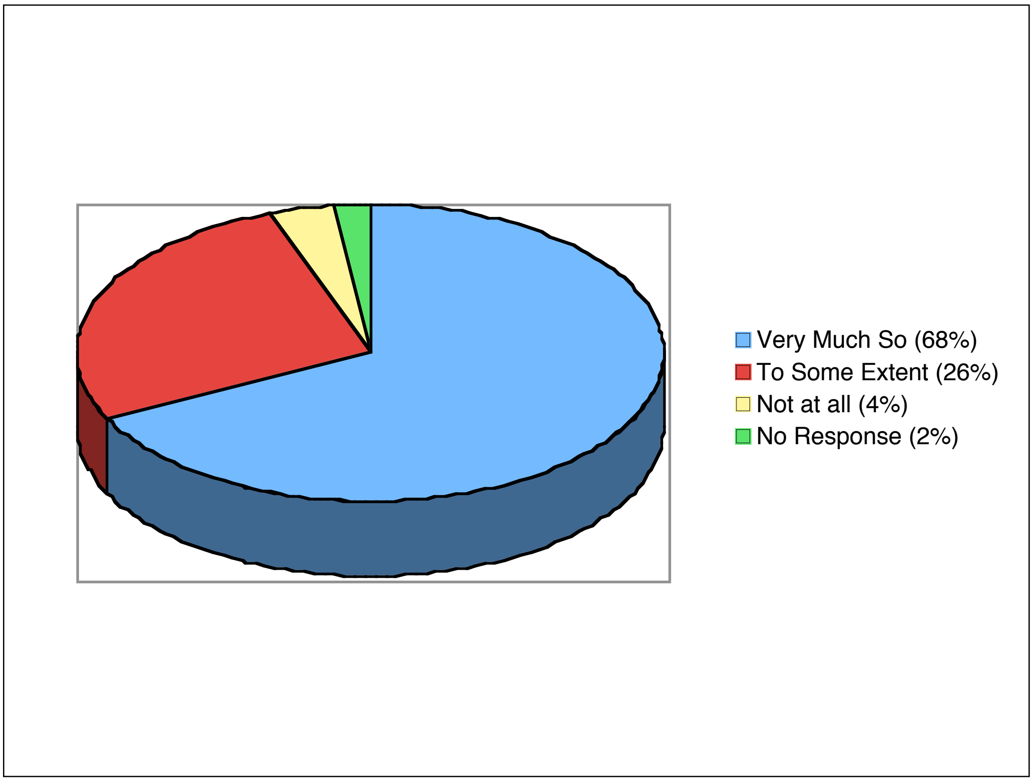
Answers to this question included the following suggestions:

- Canada: CBC (Canadian Radio) music podcasts
- Canada: The Canadian government collaboration with the music industry; Canadian Music Fund which takes a multi-faceted approach to supporting the creation, development and recording of a diverse range of Canadian music.
- Catalonia: Music magazine Enderrock has issued several CDs with support from the Catalan government
- Cuba: Egrem is a record label owned by the government.
- Denmark: Dacapo is a record label supported by the Danish Arts Council that produces recordings across a broad spectrum of historic and contemporary Danish music
- Denmark: Promotional CDs from Danish Jazz Federation
- France: leading contemporary music institution IRCAM (Institute for Music/Acoustic Research and Coordination) publishes an ongoing series of Contemporary Music CDs
- Ireland: Arts Council/Music Network Recording Scheme
- Ireland: Arts Council Deis scheme for traditional arts has been used by many artists to access financial support for recording projects
- Ireland: CMC's ongoing series of promotional CDs
- Netherlands: Donemus is an information centre and publisher of contemporary Dutch music. It has produced many CDs on various labels and also offers Internet radio.
- Northern Ireland: The web portal, CD production and MP3 Jukebox of the Northern Ireland Music Industry Commission (NIMIC)
- Sweden: The Swedish concert agency, Rikskonserter, runs its own record label, Caprice, focusing on classical, contemporary, jazz and folk music
- UK: British Music Information Centre's *Critical Notice* featuring CDs and downloads of 30 British composers.
- USA: American Music Center Internet Radio station with audio streaming of American music 24 hours a day.
- USA: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is a non-profit record label, a subsidiary of the National Museum of the US. It offers recordings, podcasts and Internet radio.

A small number of respondents registered opinions against the idea of public funds being used to support one area of the recording industry which was seen as offering unfair advantage over others. Some others instanced projects that do not appear to involve public funding.

Question 17
In your creative and business practices how much do you engage with new and emerging technology?

Figure 10



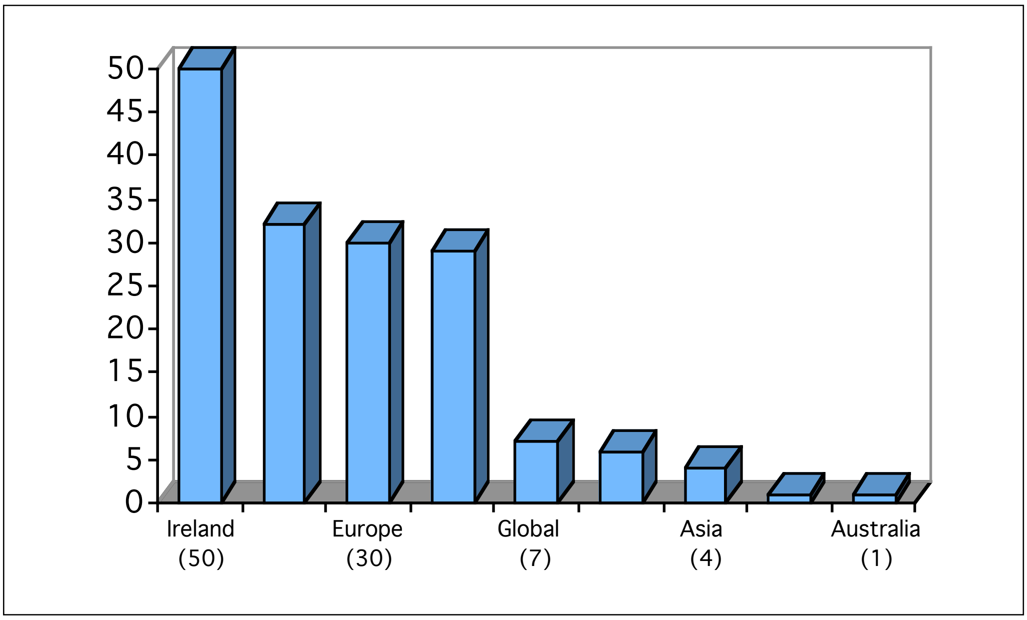
Question 18
What training and skills do you believe are lacking in the current Irish Music Sector?

- Academic scholarship on Irish music
- Advanced training for musicians and composers
- Advocacy, lobbying, political activism, championing of music
- Artist management
- Business and entrepreneurial skills
- Effective and wide reaching PR professionals
- High-level IT and web skills
- International Business Development and Marketing skills
- Knowledge of global music industry
- Marketing and promotion
- Music criticism, journalism, contextualisation and discussion
- Music education at primary and post-primary level
- Music specific accountancy and tax skills
- Ongoing professional development in use of technology
- Radio and store pluggers
- Recording production, engineering, audio mastering and post-production
- Self-managerial skills
- Specialist legal advice
- Touring agencies
- Understanding of royalties and copyright issues

<u>Question 19</u>
Geographically, what are the most important current markets for your music?

Respondents typically indicated more than one market – in total 160 responses were offered, the results of which are outlined in figure 11:

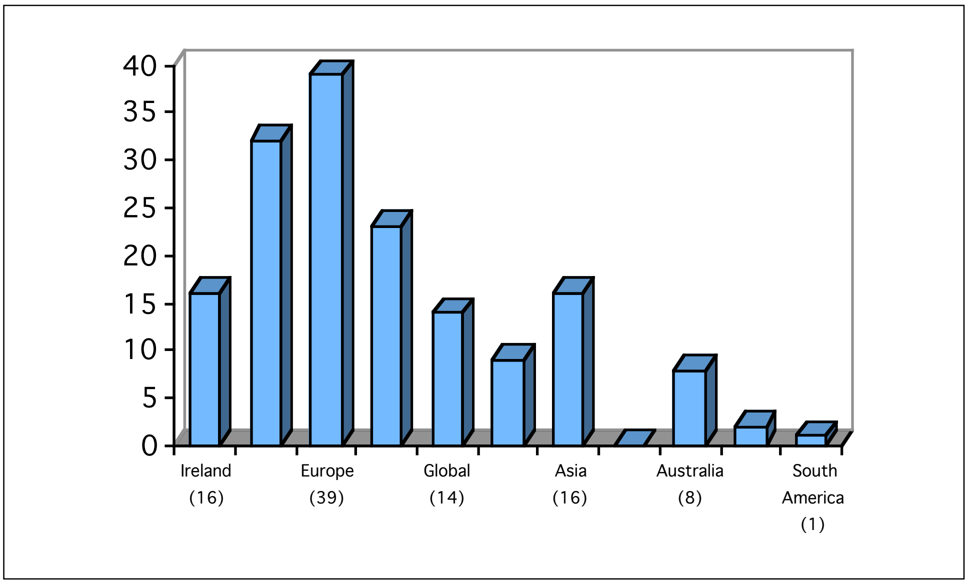
Figure 11



<u>Question 20</u>
Geographically, what are the most important potential markets for your music?

Respondents typically indicated more than one market – once again, in total 160 responses were offered, the results of which are outlined in figure 12:

Figure 12



Question 21
If new routes to market became available to you via the suggested collective label / download platform what positive and negative effect do you think this may have on you? An example of this may be increased recording output.

Positive Effects:

- Exposure to new markets
- Establishment of a high quality brand
- Increased recording output
- Possibility of increased sales and audiences
- Overcoming geographic barriers to audiences and markets
- Higher profile and exposure of Irish artists
- Freeing up energy and time to concentrate on artistic endeavour
- Establishment of common ground with other artists
- Networking opportunities
- Possibility of increased live performances abroad
- Increased commission and performance opportunities for composers
- Possibility of joint distribution arrangements with other labels/organisations
- More recordings available for radio broadcast
- Greater earning capacity for artists
- Opportunity to sell existing CDs
- Motivation for new projects
- Opportunity to express artistic ideas without economic constraints

Negative Effects:

- Concerns over branding of music
- Less control over how music is distributed and marketed
- Damaging for existing record companies and shops
- Some resistance to idea of download-only releases
- Increased competition
- Most respondents replied that there would be no negative effects

Question 22
In summary, what are the major issues facing the Irish music sector collectively and you individually?

Answers included issues relating to recording as well as more general issues affecting music in Ireland. The following section outlines a range of these responses:

- Costs involved in recording music
- Provision of high-quality recording studios
- Availability of technical, production, mastering and post production expertise
- Lack of a range of indigenous record labels
- Closure of many independent music stores
- Over-commercialisation of recording industry
- Difficulties in navigation of the recording industry
- Need for more avenues for distribution of recordings
- Promotion of Irish artists nationally and internationally
- Small size of Irish music world
- Weak sense of community
- Need for development of national and international networking
- Geographic and cultural isolation

- Over centralisation of Irish musical life
- Engagement with audiences
- Lack of exposure to music in formal education sector
- Professional training of artists
- Low profile of Irish artists on radio, television and the printed media
- Level of public interest and knowledge
- Perceived low public funding for music
- Lack of sufficient recording grants
- Securing of performances for new works
- Lack of a world-class contemporary music ensemble
- Unsuitability of many venues for performance
- Need for supportive avenues into the profession
- Lack of a cohesive existing recorded body of work
- Underdevelopment of Internet resources
- Weakness of national broadband infrastructure
- Protection of intellectual property on the Internet
- Lack of awareness of the business side of music
- Difficulty of finding business sponsorship
- Financial hardship in sustaining a career in music
- Uncertain economic climate

Question 23
If you have any other comments then please add them below:

Just over half the respondents left no further comments. Of the 51 comments received in response to this question, 12 were expressions of support and thanks, many warmly complimenting CMC on the work it has undertaken to date and on the development of this initiative.

The remaining 39 comments ranged over the following areas:

- Some respondents suggested that too many different musical genres could dilute the overall concept of a record label / download platform.
- Questions were raised about how quality will be measured across different musical genres.
- Concern was raised over the term “centralised collective Irish record label”. Relationship between different genres needs to be teased out
- Some respondents felt that different music genres could benefit greatly from working collectively
- A lack of confidence was expressed in current “rulers” of the record industry
- Some questions were raised about whether public funding should support minority musical genres
- Some respondents were of the opinion that the label/download platform should aim to be financially self-sustaining in the long run
- It is seen as important that existing resources be harnessed, existing companies be worked with, and that existing structures should not be duplicated.
- A record label/download platform is seen as only one of a number of developments needed to support Irish musical practice
- Support is needed for artists to spend sufficient time in recording studios
- A non-commercially based label would allow artists opportunities to experiment and develop
- The existence of a label/download platform was seen by some as a great way of empowering musicians
- CDs should central to a new label, not downloads which is an inferior alternative

- Recording developments should be coupled with incentives for media to provide airtime
- Specific resources are needed for Irish music of different genres to have a strong presence in the formal education sector
- Assessment should be made of works by Irish composers who are no longer living. Works that are of particular interest should be recorded.

7.7 Appendix VII – Life Cycle of a Recording

This section attempts to explain the many steps involved in making a music recording and seeks to demystify technical and industry jargon. It provides a glossary of terms, presented in a step-by-step way, helping the reader navigate and understand the many areas covered by this report. While occasionally commentators may differ in their interpretation of certain terms, this section offers what is understood by those terms for the purposes of the present document.

8.7.1 – Background and raw materials

Artist – an individual or an ensemble that performs the music on the recording. The artist may also be the composer, or the artist may be performing the works of another composer.

Genre – The area of music in which artists operate. There are an almost infinite number of musical genres and sub-genres, and many artists resist being placed within any 'genre', seeing it as a limiting factor on the parameters of their expression. Genres, however, are terms which are in common currency, so an attempt is made to offer some for the purposes of this report the following are considered to be the principal genres and sub-genres:

- Classical (including early, baroque, classical, romantic, impressionist, twentieth century)
- Contemporary classical (also referred to as contemporary art music, including atonal, avant-garde, concrete, electro-acoustic, electronic, experimental, improvised, minimalist, post-minimalist, serialism [serialist?], spectral)
- Traditional (including folk – and world?)
- Jazz (including bebop, blues, contemporary jazz, dixieland, free jazz, improvised, ragtime)
- Popular (including ambient, dance, disco, drum and bass, electro, electronica, garage, heavy metal, house, hip hop, indie, pop, punk, rave, rap, reggae, rhythm and blues, rock, techno)

Music Industry – this term applies principally to the music recording industry but also includes associated activities such as broadcasting, royalty collection and trade agencies. It does not include non-recording activities such as the work of many non-profit and educational organisations within music. In everyday speech, "Music Industry" is often used to denote the pop and rock sectors of music, differentiating from classical, contemporary, traditional, jazz and other formats.

Non-Commercial Music
This term is not in common currency in the music industry but it is used in this report to denote music of a more specialised, less 'mass appeal' nature which would not be regarded by major record labels as likely to generate sufficient volume of sales to be released.

Record Label – a company that makes recordings of artists and presents them to market normally under their brand name. Artists usually have an exclusive relationship with one label at any one time.

Major Record Labels / Big Four – following many years of amalgamation, take-overs and buy-outs, there are currently four major record labels in operation globally: Sony BMG, EMI, Universal and Warner. Each consists of many smaller companies and labels serving different regions and markets. Together these four companies represent 70% of global sales.

Independents / Indies – Any record label aside from the 'Big Four', or one of their constituent companies, is referred to as an 'Independent' record label (also called 'indies'). This sector represents in the region of 30% of global sales. Independent labels range from large corporate businesses to cottage industries representing one or two artists.

Artists and Repertoire / A&R – the division of a record label that is responsible for finding or scouting for artists, and for being the principal link between the artist and the label. The A&R department helps both the artistic and the commercial development of the artist and the label.

8.7.2 Making the recording

Recording Studio – this is the traditional location for making a recording. Professional recording studios consist of at least two distinct parts, often separated by a glass partition. The first and generally larger part accommodates the recording artist(s) and has specific acoustic properties which can be either fixed or variable. The second is a sound control room in which the physical sound recording is made under the supervision of the producer and engineer.

Engineer – the person who has primary responsibility for the technical management of the recording.

Producer – the person with ultimate responsibility for the editorial and technical management of the recording. The Producer directs the artist(s) and engineer(s) during the recording session and manages the post-production process to maximise the artistic and technical quality of the recording. The producer may also be responsible for organising the entire recording project including scheduling, contracting and administration, but in many instances this is done by an Executive Producer to whom he or she reports.

Mixing – is the process of balancing different channels of a recording against one another in terms of volume, frequency and other characteristics.

Mastering - this involves the final processing and transferring of the mixed sound source to a data storage device (the master) from which source all copies will be produced.

Booklet / Sleeve Compilation – in tandem with making a recording, the content of the record/CD sleeve notes must be compiled, written and edited. This can range from a small amount of information to a detailed and lengthy publication

Design – Graphic designers provide an overall design for the recording usually in conjunction with the artist, producer or executive producer and are engaged by the record label. Their work may include cover design, imprint on CD and layout of text in the booklet.

Manufacture – duplication of physical discs (CDs or vinyl) and associated printed material.

8.7.3 Releasing the recording

Release – this refers to the publication for sale of a recording. A release can be offered in one or several different recording formats. A release can be a "single" (usually one song extracted from an upcoming album), an "EP" (Extended Play – which refers to a release that may contain a number of tracks of total duration usually between 10 and 20 minutes), an "Album" (normally a full vinyl or CD of between 40 to 80 minutes in duration), or a digital format such as those described below.

Demo is a recording that is not for sale or for release, but designed to "demonstrate" the music of a particular composer or performer so that he or she can gain the attention of fellow artists, recording labels or any other relevant agency in the music sector. A Demo recording could be an unfinished product – equivalent to an artist's "sketch". It could be of any length from one track to a full release length.

Recording Format – In today's recording environment there are currently two principal ways of providing music recordings to audiences – either by physical product (usually a CD) or by electronic means (often a digital download of a music file).

Compact Disc / CD – having recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, the compact disc is still, in spite of competition, the market leader in terms of sales of music recordings.

Vinyl / LPs – Vinyl Long Playing discs were among the dominant form of music recording formats before the arrival of CDs in the early 1980s. Vinyl has been largely displaced by CDs, but it retains a toe-hold among a tiny minority of music fans who view the sound quality as superior, and who are attracted to the larger sleeve space with correspondingly better opportunities for arresting graphic design.

Digital Download – a method through which a recording can be downloaded on demand from an Internet site to be played back on a computer, personal MP3 player or burned onto an audio CD. Digital downloads are normally offered in MP3 format, an audio encryption format that is lower in sound quality than CD.

MP3 – short for MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 – has become the industry standard as the technical format for music downloads on the Internet. This system is designed to significantly reduce the size of the audio file whilst maintaining a sound quality that is satisfactory for the majority of non-specialist listeners. MP3 files typically take up about 10% of the space of a CD audio file. Serious audiophiles do not accept MP3 as an adequate replacement to the CD. MP3 music downloads offer considerably lower sound quality than CDs. Files are typically compressed to be about 10% of the file size of a CD track. Yet MP3 supporters maintain that the difference is not detectible by the average music consumer, and the smaller file size makes the entire system more functional. MP3's offer considerably more flexibility than CDs, as a consumer can browse an enormous range of music recordings in online shops and store a vast collection of tracks on one small portable device.

MP3 Players – are personal audio devices which are generally small and highly portable with which listeners can listen to MP3 files that have been downloaded from the Internet or extracted from a CD. The iPod is a leading brand of MP3 player.

Webstreaming – is a system whereby listeners can rapidly access music from a web source without the ability to download it onto a computer or personal MP3 player to listen to in other contexts. The sound quality of streamed audio is, by its nature, lower and more volatile than that of MP3.

Podcasts – are music or other audio files typically offered free of charge on a regular basis by web sites to listeners who subscribe to the web site's podcast service. Once a new episode is available this will be automatically downloaded to a subscriber's computer or MP3 player without the subscriber having to take any action.

Web 2.0 – this term reflects the second generation of web sites and Internet usage with a move from "receptive" use of the Internet to a more "interactive" age. The advent of sites such as YouTube and MySpace have allowed users to upload as well as download content with ease, offering significant new opportunities for music dissemination.

8.7.4 – Making the recording visible

Distributor – a company that interfaces between record labels and record stores, warehousing stock and offering catalogues of records to shops in a variety of territories.

Digital Aggregator – fulfils a similar role to a traditional distributor but in the digital domain. A digital aggregator will typically have relationships with many labels or artists and offer content on a variety of download platforms on the Internet, thereby facilitating wide availability of their content.

Download Platform – is essentially an online music shop where music files can be downloaded in return for payment. ITunes, launched in 2003, is a leading example of a download platform, but many other such sites exist, both large and small.

Record Store – a physical shop where recordings are sold. Over many years independent record stores have largely died out, leaving a handful of chains, which in recent years are also fighting for survival.

Broadcast – playing of a recorded piece of music by a radio station. This is traditionally a highly important method of promoting sales of albums and raising profile of artists.

Record Pluggers/Store Pluggers – these are people who work on promoting a recording to a radio station or a music store. They work like PR agents, often relying on a network of contacts and interpersonal relationships in order to advance the cause of a particular recording

8.7.5 Who owns what?

Copyright – literally 'the right to copy' – is the legal right that a creative artist has to protect his/her work from copying by others. The range of legal rights that those whose work is contained on a recording have to protect their work from unauthorised copying by others. Copyright holders in a music recording can include composers, authors, arrangers, performers, editors, publishers and record labels.

Digital Rights Management (DRM) – a technological response designed to counteract unauthorised copying of digitally downloaded music. Downloaded tracks from many major outlets include DRM which limits the number of devices that the track can be copied to. Once the track has been copied a set number of times, the ability to further copy through normal means is disabled.

Publisher – the owner of copyright on a piece of music. This is often the composer, but a composer can sell all or a part of his/her copyright to a publishing company.

Licence – this is the right granted by a copyright holder to give a person or body the permission to broadcast, perform, recreate or listen to a piece of their copyrighted music.

Royalty – is a payment based on the level of usage paid by a licensee to a licensor in return for the performance or broadcast of a piece of music

Performing Rights Organisation – is an organisation that is responsible for keeping track of all performances and broadcasts of licensed works, and to collect and remit royalty payments to the licensor. In Ireland, the Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO) is the main performing rights organisations. IMRO has links to other performing rights organisations in other countries.

Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS) – this is the organisation that licenses record labels to create and sell mechanical and/or electronic copies of copyright music and distributes the royalties collected under these licenses on behalf of composers and their publishers.

Phonographic Performance Ireland (PPI) – an agency that collects payments on behalf of both record companies and performers whenever their recordings are played in public or on radio or television. Payments are collected through an annual licence fee and distributed to record companies and to performers.

Industry Organisations – many different strands of the music industry have formed representative organisations to further the interest of their members. Among these organisations in the Irish context are; The Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA) an association of record companies and Recorded Artists And Performers (RAAP) an association representing the interests of performing artists.