

Sustaining local live music in Germany

Reflections for Australia

Australian German Association - Goethe Fellowship

Patrick J. Kilmartin

March 2024



Contents

<i>Acknowledgement of Country</i>	3
<i>Fellowship and participant acknowledgements</i>	3
1 Introduction	4
1.1 <i>Research aim</i>	4
1.2 <i>Policy alignment</i>	4
1.3 <i>Project rationale: Social value of local live music</i>	4
1.4 <i>Animating issue: Challenges for live music</i>	5
1.5 <i>Framing definitions</i>	7
2 Methodology	8
2.1 <i>Research approach</i>	8
2.2 <i>Participants</i>	8
2.3 <i>Limitations and disclaimer</i>	9
3 Locations	10
3.1 <i>Munich</i>	10
3.2 <i>Freiburg</i>	11
3.3 <i>Wiesbaden</i>	12
3.4 <i>Hamburg</i>	14
3.5 <i>Berlin</i>	15
3.6 <i>Leipzig</i>	17
4 Solutions	19
4.1 <i>Collective voice, data, and collaboration</i>	19
4.2 <i>Supporting live music venues</i>	27
4.3 <i>Supporting musicians</i>	34
4.4 <i>Music beyond borders</i>	45
5 Reflections for Australia	52
5.1 <i>Collective voice, data and collaboration</i>	52
5.2 <i>Supporting musicians and venues</i>	55
5.3 <i>Music beyond borders</i>	61

Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which I live and work, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. I would like to pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging, and their ongoing connection to and custodianship of Country. I would also like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation, whose lands I was a guest on during this fellowship.

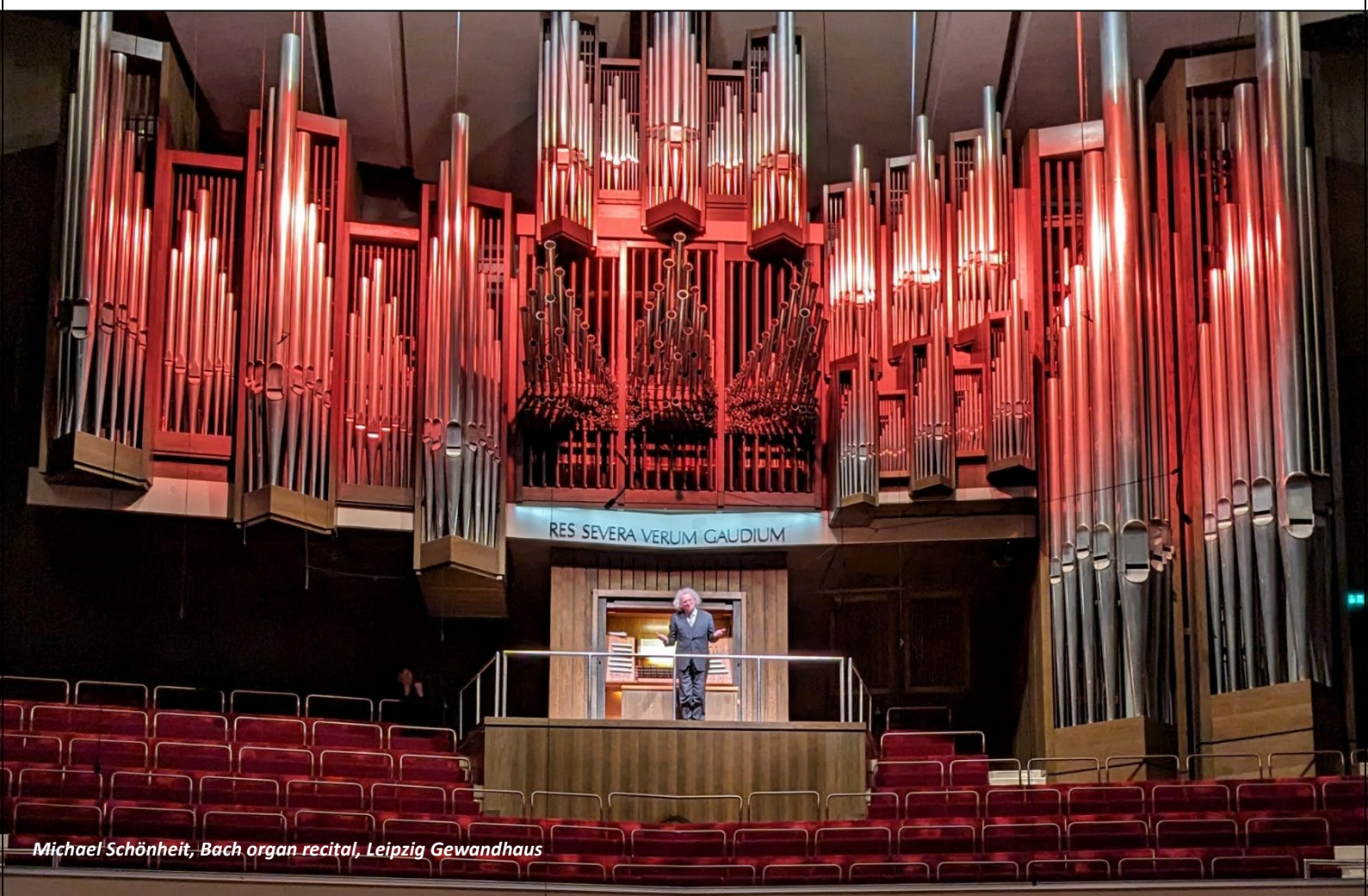
Fellowship and participant acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Australian German Association (AGA) and the Goethe-Institut for their support in allowing me to undertake this fellowship. I would also like to thank the staff of the Goethe-Institut Freiburg, where I undertook an intensive German language course in November 2023 as part of this fellowship.

I am also extremely thankful to the people that generously lent their time and insight to this report both in Germany and in Australia. It was a privilege to learn from people who are so passionately committed to a collaborative, community-focused approach to keep our cities and regions full of live music.

I would finally like to thank the many more people who gave me their impressions, helped and supported in various ways, provided me references, or simply permitted me to take several months off work to undertake this project. I want to give a special mention to my partner, Sid, without whose support this report would not have been possible. To each of these contributions, large and small, friends, family, colleagues, and strangers, I remain very grateful.

Photos are by the author unless otherwise indicated.



Michael Schönheit, Bach organ recital, Leipzig Gewandhaus

1 Introduction

1.1 Research aim

To support the growth of Australia's local live music culture by examining insights and practices from Germany that might be adapted to sustain thriving local music scenes or used to build cross-national relationships to the same end.

1.2 Policy alignment

Working as a Cabinet Advisor within NSW Government, I was inspired to pursue this research topic by the NSW Government's new focus in 2023 on supporting more live music and general night-life vibrancy across the state and to consider any thriving live music culture as one that supports the objectives of fair access to culture and a sustainable cultural production model.¹ This is being actioned principally by Sound NSW, Hospitality and Racing NSW, and NSW's Office of the 24-hour Economy Commissioner in collaboration with other industry bodies such as Sounds Australia. It is a crucial part of a broader series of commitments to the arts and cultural sector in NSW and in line with *Revive*, the Federal Government's National Cultural Policy, to renew and revive the arts in Australia.^{2,3}

The benefits being pursued for NSW in this endeavor include: using live music and fair access to culture to build more healthy, connected and resilient communities; supporting local and state-level economies; supporting performance opportunities and sustainable musical practices for professional and amateur musicians; and boosting Australia's profile as an arts and culture destination.⁴ Since I commenced my research, further commitments to support local live music have been made under the NSW Government's *NSW Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy 2024-2033* released in December 2023.⁵ While my research is in line with the aims of the NSW policy, learnings have been designed to be applicable to the broader Australian live-music ecosystem.



1.3 Project rationale: Social value of local live music

Local live music creates unique social value within communities. It convenes the community and provides cultural leadership. It is an art that generally unifies experience, rather than seeking to distinguish and define, as is the tendency of more figurative and literary arts. Of all the arts, a healthy live music scene can bring people together through a shared experience in a non-polemic, non-divisive way. A healthy musical community can convene people across socio-economic brackets, cultures, nations, and languages. They can be places where individuals confront and learn about other individuals, and about the other in general, providing for a socio-political education in ideas, identities, dynamics, values and the contours of their society.

Musicians are cultural leaders, and their music helps us engage with, process, and articulate who we are, what the state of our society is, and how we would like those two things to be. This is especially true when considering local musicians playing in local venues and, in communion with their audience, reacting to their local environment. To deny this is to ignore the massive, perhaps pre-eminent, social, sexual, and political changemaking, activism and protest that occurred through music and in music venues throughout modernity, both in Australia and worldwide.

More locally-based live music in accessible spaces helps the communities it creates and serves to process, articulate, celebrate and navigate their way through the 21st century's vicissitudes. In this sense a live music community is also a living one. In a world filled with political, social and ideological divisions, and barriers to peoples coming together, live music may be the best medium to continue to engage in the mutual creation of the shape of our societies.

1.4 Animating issue: Challenges for live music

So, then: why can't live music be left to support itself? Why circumnavigate Germany to talk to people invested in supporting their live music scenes, instead of just going to concerts and gigs?

Live music as an ecosystem does not occur in a ring-fenced arena. It faces impacts and threats from the political, economic, environmental, and socio-cultural contexts in which it operates. Germany, as a country whose musical reputation precedes it, is an interesting case study for Australia. Naturally, Germany is a very different country to Australia, with a different history, and musical culture. However, the two countries suffer many of the same challenges. Germany offers many examples of productive approaches that, with local adaptation, are certainly of interest for Australia, addressing challenges that in almost all cases I heard reflected as topics in discussions I had here before leaving for my fellowship, occurring for broadly similar reasons. These include:

Competing interests and access to funds

While many people could not imagine a world without music, the challenges and needs of the live music ecosystem seldom make it to the top of political or funding agendas. A Leipzig-based night-time governance and vibrancy consultant spoke to me of how it was not sustainable for governments and communities to take advantage of the cultural vibrancy of a city's music/arts scene and the branding possibilities it affords, such as Leipzig branding itself a cultural "Hypezig",⁶ without properly supporting the scene to develop or sustain itself to survive.

More than ever, with disruptive budget crunches affecting large parts of the German economy,⁷ governments and other bodies are reluctant to see local live music venues, or 'clubs' as they are usually referred to in Germany, as worth funding, protecting, and valuing as much as they might otherwise – with many of the pandemic initiatives now set to expire, like Kulturpass, used by 200,000 people, generating 8 million euro, much of that going toward live music,⁸ or Initiative Musik's Neustart package, a major source of funding for the live music sector now being replaced by the admirable but smaller scale Live 500.⁹

Many participants interviewed spoke about the high/low cultural distinction in Germany and how live music clubs are often viewed by German cultural policy as being in the bottom drawer of considerations, below major institutions like opera, classical, and theatre despite studies suggesting rock and pop are the most popular music styles by a high margin.¹⁰ As a result of this respectability cleavage the venue/club scene often does not benefit from the cultural provision already enacted in German legislation at local, state, and national levels. Opera and classical music, while intrinsically German and of huge boon to German's reputation and associated benefits as a country of world-renowned cultural activity and a leader in classical music education, are nevertheless minority interests in terms of audience profile, and the audience is older, and financially wealthier than average. Among younger generations there are more customers for other genres of live music, notably Hip Hop and EDM, and although the young are a minority due to



Germany's aging demographics, they are more engaged in an absolute sense with cultural outings.^{11,12} These young audiences are less affluent, and more exposed to prevailing cost of living issues, and in general, the culture they consume is not funded as robustly as opera and classical music. As one participant pointed out: the problem is, young people aren't organised as voters, or in institutions. Nobody speaks for them and their wishes. Nevertheless, there is plenty of public funding for music in Germany,¹³ the issue is directing that money in a fairer way.

Venues under threat

Leipzig's [LiveKommbinat](#) (see section 4.1) has described the current operating environment for live music clubs as an oncoming "club death".¹⁴ Their *Lost Clubs* video shows the rate of attrition based on 30 years of historical context and data.¹⁵ Venues are difficult to sustain and even more difficult to open. A member of [LiveKomm](#) spoke of a strong live music economy among clubs alone in Germany of 1.1bn per year.¹⁶ Despite this, clubs only see around €8,000 annual profit, on average – much of which goes into simple survival (see [Clubstudie](#)). This is compounded by a dwindling post-COVID-19 audience and a younger generation less engaged with music in physical space than online. Add to this inflation, supply chain price disruption, rising rents, and other expenses, noise and zoning regulations, as well as the fight for real estate in the bigger cities. A local concert organiser in Hamburg told me the venues he usually works with are under pressure to stay open, and agencies that once sought twenty shows for their artists a year are suddenly not doing so. These small case by case decisions add up to a worrying picture, where the state of the world resounds right down to the smallest venue and show. A former spokesperson of Berlin's [Clubcommission](#) told me the operating situation in a big city like Berlin is healthier, but there is a new era that puts lifestyle and residential property first, a big preventer of equal access to neighbourhoods for clubs/venues, even in one of the world's most famous nightlife cities (see section 4.1).

A participant from [Bundesstiftung Livekultur](#) (see section 4.2) pointed out that Germany has more live music venues, more geographically dispersed, than any of its neighbours, and an average of 500 concerts per day. This vibrancy is not a given though, as the club model is not resilient. The average club in Germany is a 400-500 capacity venue, with a turnover of about €240,000 euro and a 3-4 per cent return on sales based on a low wage, high performance frequency model (with an average of about 10 per cent of revenue from public subsidies).¹⁷ In other words: clubs are not a profitable enterprise. Especially in the wake of an increasingly sluggish audience return, clubs have been looking for more government funding. However, it appears from my interviewees that government does not prioritise them against the more culturally prestigious programs it underwrites.

An added issue is that the many clubs with their own premises are owned by a fairly unified demographic of white, male, 60+ year-olds whose time left in the industry and investing in the club are limited. Selling the club at market value to maximise retirement finances means that any given premises is likely to be lost to apartment developments in Germany's current housing crisis, and even where it is not, the knowledge necessary to maintain a venue's smooth and continued running is not assured. Without space for live music, musicians lose their live training grounds and access to performance income, the pipeline of acts dwindles, and the audience lose opportunities to come together and build themselves as a community in physical space.

Musical careers

No one I spoke to seemed concerned that the human urge to express itself through music was going to dry up, but the ability to sustain this expression in the face of statistically low financial remuneration and stability, lack of affordable living or practice space in cities, and lack of respect for the profession means being a musician can be the proverbial tough gig. Venues under threat and dwindling audiences do nothing to help achieve a sustainable livelihood and fulfilled creative practice.

As one musician, pointed out, in most other disciplines attaining a Master's level degree entitles one to certain minimum career expectations and respect, but not so for musicians. They remembered with retrospective understanding the tragic wisdom of one of their early teachers who said, "if you can do something other than become

a musician, then do it”, and were very frank about their reluctance to become a professional musician because of the pain of trying and failing at something they love so much.

Outside of the classical and operatic spheres musicians can experience uneven distribution of financial support and education for their genres, and lack of public respect, and within them there is a scarcity of stable contracts providing long term security and protection against overwork, and jobs can be under threat from periodic changes in the artistic direction of companies. There is also the much less on the job career support and guidance compared to many other professions (beyond advice related to developing as a commercial interest that might be provided by a label or management company), and organisations that advocate for the interests of musicians do not have high visibility.

Dwindling audience

Musicians and venues are not helped by the difficulty in finding and maintaining audience presence. It is unknown what the future of live music is in a world where music is increasingly digitally made, performed, and shared. The fact is, according to one governance and vibrancy consultant, most younger people define themselves less in subcultural relationships to music than older generations. They are more interested in aesthetic/lifestyle subcultures taking place audio-visually. Where they are engaged with music, it is globally, through their use of the internet, and there is less need to express themselves in local community spaces. This compounds with the fact that post-pandemic audiences in general seem less outgoing than before. Without showing these young people the benefits and excitements of real space (as this consultant pointed out: you can’t kiss through a computer screen), then there is a risk that teens and younger audiences will simply drop off, creating precipitous declines in the future of clubs in the community and a satisfying and diverse nightlife. This means that there is even more need for funding for youth-oriented events culture, as without creating that ongoing generational demand, local culture of all kinds may die out.

This is seconded by the participant from Bundesstiftung Livekultur (see section 4.1). As someone operating in the industry for many years, they believed the community shaping aspects of live music clubs – where people have experiences, develop their identities and those of their community, and ultimately shape the contours of the public sphere in an interactive and vital way, it is an important social good, and needs to be protected and gifted to the next generations.

The challenges clubs face also make audience accessibility and inclusivity a harder concern, as owners focus on immediate survival, with less time for investment in inclusivity initiatives that could remove barriers for audiences that might otherwise participate.

1.5 Framing definitions

I have borrowed the concepts of fair access and sustainable production from the discourse around the development of live music and vibrancy policies in NSW. In this report **fair access to culture** means everyone can access and enjoy live music, regardless of socio-economic or demographic factors. **A sustainable cultural production model** means a live music culture that can thrive and equitably distribute cultural, social and economic benefits to its community, musicians, and people that work within it. These working definitions are particularly important to note for a German audience, as in Germany the term ‘sustainable’ seems to primarily refer to environmental sustainability (a difference that became quickly apparent during my discussions). For an Australian audience: **Clubs** is used in this report as it would be in Germany, not as in ‘nightclubs’ as we may think of them in Australia, but as venues where live music is played, ‘live clubs’, if you will, or more specifically, as defined by LiveKomm (see section 4.1) as a place of musical character, maximum 2,000 capacity, and billing at least 24 events per year.

2 Methodology

2.1 Research approach

I visited a series of cities in Germany and spoke with a diverse array of participants to understand how they were supporting their local (and in some cases national, and international) live music scenes. I then synthesised these insights, as well as my experiences in these cities, to build the reflections that comprise this report.

The decision to pursue a more subjective and journalistic approach occurred early on, after background preparation and initial conversations convinced me that while there was already excellent empirical research out there, statistics and surveys do not reveal the complex personal experiences behind them, especially given so many of the people involved in local live music are driven by passion and belief. I considered this approach a valuable opportunity to get on the ground insights that might be leveraged and adapted for any context where local community success is based on relationships, dialogue, and personal investment. For Australia, and its myriad communities, as a country that is relatively geographically isolated, these face-to-face international opportunities and on the ground observations are not always readily available. Visiting places and meeting people in person offered me opportunities to absorb the nuance of the physical, social, cultural, and political context of what I heard, and allowed me to better understand the dynamics of the broader live music ecosystem in which they took place.

This may seem like a simplistic approach when compared to an academically rigorous study. But as I observed: any thriving concern, from culture, to democracy, to economics, is based on the momentum of belief and investment it can generate in its participants. Let's not forget that credit, for example, literally comes from the Latin 'credo' (I believe). This is to say that cultural flourishing ultimately doesn't derive from statistical understanding, nor any top-down policy, although can be aided by both. Rather it takes place in specific moments, within specific communities, leveraging both specific relationships and specific beliefs. It is this that my report aims to capture: where people are and how they are dealing with the here and now, in the hope these can act as reflections that prompt us to take stock of the same in Australia.

For this, I aimed to speak with a broad selection of participants: musicians, venue owners, policy makers, advocacy groups, promoters, funding bodies. To choose my locations, I focused on self-described 'music cities', or cities with a strong reputation for their live musical cultures and communities, and where I was able to make connections in the scene.

The principles of my approach were:

- Local live music culture is part of an ecosystem; everyone has a part to play.
- Everyone is an expert in their own experience and context, and has a valuable perspective.
- Everyone can equitably share in the benefits of a thriving live music scene.
- Building relationships and capacity is a key strategy to support a thriving live music culture.

2.2 Participants

I was fortunate to speak with many interesting individuals and members of organisations. The following represent those whose insights and reflections were used in this report (affiliations correct at time of fieldwork):

Anna Mavrommatis-Karaaslan: musician and music teacher

Bundesstiftung Livekultur: <https://www.bundesstiftung-livekultur.org/>

Bundesverband der Konzert und Veranstaltungswirtschaft (BDKV):
<https://bdkv.de/verbandsgruendung/>

Clubkombinat, Hamburg: <https://clubkombinat.de/>

Clubcommission, Berlin: <https://www.clubcommission.de/>

The Danjoband: <https://www.thedanjoband.com/>

City of Sydney, Cultural policy team:
<https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/culture-creativity>

City of Freiburg, Cultural Office:
<https://www.freiburg.de/pb/229672.html>

Ghazaleh Ebrahimi, Goethe Institut, Munich - Music Division member, and musician

Hamburg's Ministry of Culture and Media:
<https://www.hamburg.de/bkm/englisch/>

Hans Henkell, opera philanthropist:
<http://www.henkellwines.com.au/opera/calendar>

[Initiative Musik](https://www.initiative-musik.de/en/) <https://www.initiative-musik.de/en/>

Jerry Tilitz, jazz musician: <https://www.jerrytilitz.com/>
<https://www.jerrytilitz.com/jazz-galerie/>

Kontor Records <https://kontorrecords.de/>

Kordula Kunert, night time economy and governance consultant:
<https://livekombinat.de/mitglieder/>

LiveKomm: <https://www.livemusikkommission.de/>

LiveKombinat Leipzig: <https://livekombinat.de/>

Mary Ocher, musician, co-founder of Underground Institute:
<https://www.maryocher.com/>
<http://www.underground-institute.com/about.html>

Music Cities Network: <https://www.musiccitiesnetwork.com/>

Sharon Kempton, opera singer and coach: <https://sharonkempton.de/>
<https://sharonkempton-coach.com/>

Sound NSW: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/sound-nsw>

Sounds Australia: <https://soundsaustralia.com.au/welcome-2/>

STP Hamburg Konzerte: <https://hamburgkonzerte.de/>

Tix for Gigs: <https://www.tixforgigs.com/en-gb>

WIMU: <https://wimu-ev.de/>

VibeLab: <https://vibe-lab.org/>

2.3 Limitations and disclaimer

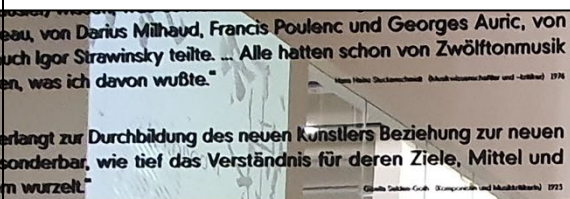
This is a snapshot, not a representative resume of the live music ecosystem in Germany. While it was my preference to speak to at least one musician, venue owner, advocate, policy maker, and other roles in each location, the final selection of subject matter experts I spoke with were based on opportunity, willingness and availability.

The locations I visited are not an exhaustive list of cities with a strong live music culture in Germany, and there is much scope for additional research, in locations like Mannheim, Chemnitz, Wuppertal, Cologne, and many others.

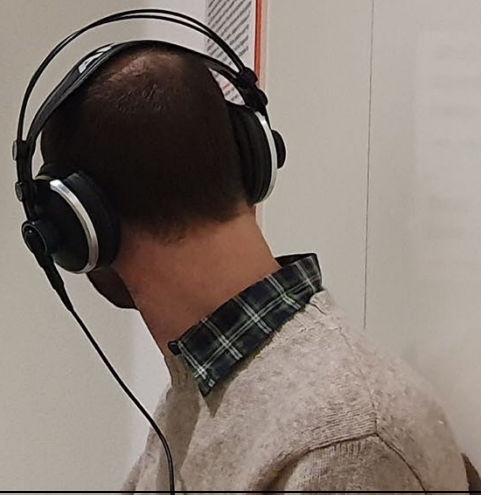
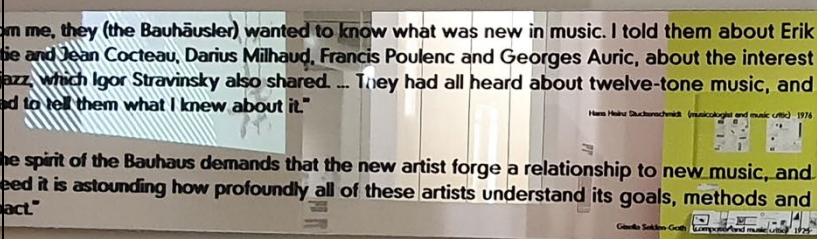
The focus of the report is also on cities, rather than smaller regional towns, as visiting cities allowed me maximum opportunity to speak with a concentrated number of participants during my research period in Germany.

The findings of the report are filtered through my own experiences and perspectives – like anyone, I am not immune to blind spots or biases of attention.

The participants featured in this report are also individuals, and not all of their opinions necessarily reflect the position of their organisation, unless explicitly stated. I have done my best to represent my discussions, and not to have misinterpreted any point of view. However, any mistakes are my own, as are any non-attributed opinions, and do not reflect the views of the AGA, the Goethe-Institut, or any other organisation I am associated with.



The author enjoying an exhibition on the Bauhaus school's relationship to contemporary music of the time



3 Locations

While music can transcend contexts, the creation of music is contextual and influenced by specific economic, material, cultural, social, and political conditions. For this reason, I offer a brief overview of what I observed or heard in the locations I visited. These are naturally framed and limited by exposure and perspective, but I have highlighted a few topics that are relevant to the overall health of the live music scene in those places and which converge with themes raised by my interview participants.

3.1 Munich

Gentrification and fertility

A city of statistical and visible wealth, whose gentrification seems to be as formidable for cultural enterprises as in Sydney. However, unlike Sydney, there is a strong churn of musical venues – going, but also coming. Munich may not score highly on measurements of long-term venue operation for its more underground/ad hoc venues, but at the same time, venues pop up to replace closed ones as neighborhoods and the city’s bohemian hotspots change. So resilient is this churn, that in spite of gentrification, Munich has the highest density of music venues of any city in Germany.¹⁸ The [In Munchen](#) magazine and website is a critical and instructive directory of everything cultural that is on in Munich. Munich is an interesting city to study particularly for bigger cities like Sydney and Melbourne in how to encourage the fertility of venue operations in the face of a similarly overheated property market.

Money for risk taking

It seems clear from discussions that funding for new, risk-taking initiatives is available. It is possible that this start-up focus may well be a key to Munich’s success as a cultural hub. The charitable foundations attached to businesses (e.g. [Siemens Stiftung](#)) also have a big part to play in the progression from small, local government funding towards business investment-grade funding that more established artists can use. This ensures a mix of funding, and a progressive model that does not leave it just to the government/taxpayer. A mix of local, regional, and federal funding, as well as not-for-profit foundations can help ensure funding goes to a mix of areas all doing different things, rather than satisfying one donor’s agenda.

Available, affordable space to play and practice

Munich offers accessible publicly funded musical rehearsal spaces (at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich for example) as well as privately funded music rehearsal spaces (the majority) all of which are central, well-equipped, and affordable for all budgets.^{19,20,21} It seems to be one of the main places musicians hear each other, meet, and jam, outside of open mics and local gigs. The availability of these spaces is talked about with admiration in Munich, and even came up in discussions with interviewees in Freiburg.

Different forms of accessibility

Munich has a number of venues and initiatives that seek to give all the community access to culture. This is true in relation to the likes of longer-running community focused venues like Kafe Kult²² (among other venues and festivals in Munich), which straddles the line between commercial venue and one true to its grass-roots (which includes the support of non-commercial bands and projects.). It is also true of the city’s administration, who run a ticket donation project and aggregator site promoting events under the right to culture.^{23,24} When it comes to physical accessibility needs, the City of Munich runs a website called [Kultur Barrierefrei München](#) to support access to culture for members of the community with disabilities.^{25,26}

Concerns about the Far-right

A drawback for Munich seems to be the reasonably widespread fear in the city about far-right activity. This is seen

by some as a threat to the cultural diversity and progressivism that a cosmopolitan and open arts scene of daring and innovation embodies.²⁷ This is not helped by what some see as a heavy approach to policing, which, by my own experience, seems to include stopping people merely for being on the street at night. Nevertheless, another opinion I heard was that Munich is culturally diverse and fertile precisely because there is so much to oppose and rebel against. The domineering view of the police is also not shared by all, with others reporting a force that was generally tolerant and reasonable regarding the live music scene at night.

3.2 Freiburg

Balancing Retirees and Student Vibrancy

Freiburg is a university city. Of 236,000 residents, just over 30,000 are university students in one of the town's tertiary academic institutions.²⁸ However, with the average age of its inhabitants hovering at over forty years old, the city is not just one for the young. The record sunshine, progressive politics, and relative wealth that exists in Freiburg means that it is a very popular city for retirees to move to, making Freiburg one of the fastest growing cities in the region. This makes it a good study for a place that balances lifestyle-friendly ease, safety, and convenience, with nightlife.

It is worth looking first at the city's layout and distribution of institutions and activities. While the central city does have some residential property, it mostly operates as a service centre for its surroundings. It is dense with shops, services, institutions, and venues and can be traversed in half an hour. The musical venues and nightlife centre mostly around the university. On a five minute walk between the university and the Goethe-Institut, there were several rock bars, two Irish pubs, a jazz club, and other music friendly venues. These intermingle with student cafes, eateries, and accommodation, creating a self-contained vibrant area close to, but separate from, the more touristed shopping streets a block to the north. The bars open early in the afternoon and present recorded music and some live performance, which varies according to the night and the predominant community who attend. The area feels very much for this purpose, but where it rubs up against potential noise complaints, the habit of operators keeping people inside well-insulated venues after 10pm mostly solves this.

Policing

Policing occurs with a more laissez-faire attitude than Munich. The city itself is a massive hub for cycling. This infrastructure also interacts/shares space with tramways, roads, as well as the sizable pedestrian space afforded to the city's university buildings and population. Despite this multimodal complexity there are not many traffic lights in the central city, and traffic policing is light, where visible at all. The same seems true in relation to nightlife. Overall, there is a sense of self responsibility and self-policing in the city, allowing a relatively liberal atmosphere, which can be contrasted with Munich and its more visible policing culture, and also Sydney with its police saturation, mounted patrols, and high visibility.

The Mix Continues

The liberal atmosphere and sharing of space continues in the arts sector itself. Freiburg has a density of interdisciplinary connections. The Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg performs 600 shows a year,²⁹ often in other cultural venues like the Goethe-Institut or Alliance Française. From what I saw, many of the museums and even banks in the city also double as venues for music fairly regularly.

Not only the concert hall and established venues, but a very large range of clubs, cultural institutions, churches, and other spaces provide stages for many different types of artists and audiences – with many venues priding themselves on a diverse variety of offerings, or on being a place of encounter.³⁰ There are also many venues for specific audiences from Jazz to DIY Punk.^{31,32}

As such, musical mixing is part of the DNA of the city, and the City of Freiburg's administration seems to promote it in tis same vein, with a calendar of events, as well as a general promotional website, referring to itself as Music City

Freiburg.^{33,34} The innovative mixing continues into the academic sphere with an institute for music and medicine which looks at medical issues related to musical life, including performance injury and the study of musical physiology.³⁵

The Hochschule für Musik does not have a monopoly on musical education either, with numerous educational institutions approaching a diverse specialisation of genres.³⁶ This seems in line with the broader state of Baden-Württemberg, as the [Pop Akademie](#) in Mannheim³⁷ is the first school of its type catering for specifically contemporary musical education in performance and management. The City also has an interesting and progressive policy strategy for the arts in the form of a cultural laboratory, whose results have just been released and can be considered a best practice in the field of local government facilitation.³⁸ The City also supports the mixing of business/economic activity and music in the designation of spaces seen with one of my interview subjects – [The Danjoband's](#) (see section 4.3) – cooperative occupation of the basement of a shared working office space.³⁹ Freiburg is also host to the [Internationale Kulturbörse Freiburg](#), the largest trade fair in the German-speaking world for stage productions, music, and events. Every year in January the city takes pride in the cultural industry looking to Freiburg as international artists and ensembles from the fields of performing arts, music and street theatre show live excerpts to the professional audience.⁴⁰

Music in the air

There is also strong pride in the city's busking culture/street performance scene which feeds in an integrated way off of the city's other activities, from the roster of weekly/daily markets to Saturday shopping. Freiburg's pride in its music culture is also represented in many public artworks around the city.

3.3 Wiesbaden

Spa(B) Town

Wiesbaden is a spa town. It's historical design and a large part of its current economic model is geared towards tourists, or being a satellite of Frankfurt (even though Wiesbaden is the state capital). Present nearby is also the US Army command for Europe, meaning there is reliable temporary spending occurring in the city. The tourist demand for entertainment allows for fulsome live music programming, a major part of the town's identity and economic success – definitely more than would be supported by its roughly 280,000 permanent residents alone. This means that there are always operas, oratorios, organ recitals, choir singing, and other musical activity happening in the city, and that these events are financially secure.

As the state capital of Hesse, Wiesbaden houses buildings like the Hesse State Theatre which operates as a fully functioning state opera house. It also has the Kurhaus Theatre. Both put on well attended, high-prestige productions regularly. The city is also home to several churches, which augment this cultural sophistication with oratorios, symphonies, organ, and chamber music. All of this music comes at a price which is not unaffordable (around €45 for opera and €20 for church recitals).

The city hosts several festivals every year, including a nationally renowned Bach festival,⁴¹ which pools the resources of the church, classical and academic communities across the Wiesbaden and Frankfurt area (with the Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt providing much programming for Wiesbaden's shows and festivals).

Under the Hood

Despite this healthy programming, it seems that the diversity of offerings in the city could be better. What is geared for the tourist dollar is not necessarily geared for the community. While there is some family friendly programming in the city, including excellent mapping of church music and programming, there are small communities pushed outside the city that do not seem as prominent or important. The Jazz scene is captured mainly through a historical website,⁴² while actual contemporary jazz takes place in an art gallery on the very outskirts of the city, with little

promotion of it.⁴³

And while there is a healthy community of teachers⁴⁴ and schools⁴⁵ encouraging young musicians, and the city administration is looking at inclusive initiatives, for example, providing subsidised electronic music production workshops for the FLINTA (Frauen, Lesben, Intergeschlechtliche, nichtbinäre, trans and agender) community,⁴⁶ there also seems to be some dissatisfaction within the contemporary music community, with a large lobby/protest group lamenting the current funding and support network for their craft.⁴⁷

Music presence in the streets: clockwise from top Munich, Leipzig and Wiesbaden



3.4 Hamburg

A tight knit community

Hamburg's live music community opened itself to me so generously, that I didn't see much of the city beyond my discussions (also compounded by copious snowfalls). Beyond the overwhelming impression of willingness to share and engage, my impression of the city in late 2023 was largely seen through the eyes of others.

One participant emphasised the openness of Hamburg, its variety of artists and shows, and willingness to share knowledge amongst the local community and its public and private organisations. He also noted Hamburg's ability to support newcomers and small venues and that this collaborative approach between agencies and artists and organisations, as well as the broader community is vanishing in the increasingly profit-driven, status-hungry, and competitive environment of Berlin's scene.

Evolving musical history

Another participant told me Hamburg is culturally dense and diverse for a city its size. It has thriving music scenes from classical music through rock and jazz to metal and hip hop. It can also leverage a rich history of continual musical renewal. Starting with Brahms in the romantic period, the city has been a major musical centre for Rock and Roll in the 1960s, Power Metal in the 1980s and Hip Hop and Alternative with the 'Hamburger Schule' of the 1990s. Having this history, in addition to the world famous Reeperbahn, means that the city's musical identity is valuable to both its residents and tourists. Combined with its Hanseatic history as a cosmopolitan harbour city, always keen to reach out into the world, Hamburg maintains a high level of cultural interplay. More recently, the presence of many independent and alternative labels and clubs embracing the digital progresses of the 21st century, many clustered around the Altona area (like Kontor Records, see section 4.4) and operating in clubs like [Moondoo](#), mean there is also a thriving alt/dance scene, often under the radar of the main policy and cultural discussions. More popularly, since the 1980s, major investments by [Stage Entertainment](#) has also resulted in Hamburg being the leading German city for Stage Musicals.

Interviewees in Hamburg opined that having such a famed, even mythical nightlife precinct was generally a strength. The Reeperbahn's density of nightlife activity, historical fame, and current success with the Reeperbahn Festival keeps Hamburg on the map for live music culture – something that even conservative politicians must recognize and support as an important part of the city's identity.⁴⁸ This visibility is helpful for continued funding efforts to support live music in the city. However, despite this, and unlike Berlin (where it is seen by all levels of government and industry as a key industry), it was suggested that the argument still needs to be made that the continuing support of live music, particularly in relation to live music clubs, is an important part of the city's identity, economy, and quality of life, and that a self-mythologising Reeperbahn can lead to complacency that all is well, and that there is no need to plan, strategise, or otherwise support the city's continued cultural development either in that precinct or more broadly across the city.

Venues being pushed out

Many participants were concerned about the Hamburg Sternbrücke precinct. Here a major redevelopment is occurring, resulting in the loss of venue space for five clubs and their communities. These clubs are important breeding grounds for talent, allowing artists to go to them directly, without agencies or promoters, at the very starting steps of a career. The change to this iconic area represents a major blow to the Hamburg music and nightlife scene, though through the lobbying of [Clubkombinat](#), (see section 4.1) and various filmmakers and their iconic use of them,⁴⁹ the city's government has intervened to look into providing these businesses with new venues. This is an example of how lobbying changes the conversation to include concern from politicians, whether motivated by public interest or the avoidance of bad press.

3.5 Berlin

Berlin is never what it used to be

Berlin is a sprawling metropolis whose reputation for lifestyle, history, and culture is mythical, and ever evolving (albeit in some periods not always due to its own autonomy). However, in more recent times people have started to say its latest evolution may be a threat to this legendary dynamism. One interviewee moved to the city in 2007, when rents were still cheap, and squatting/spaces to appropriate were many (see section 4.3). Consequently, there were a lot of pop up spaces with informal happenings. This participant recounted that the results were often messy, but community-built and unrestrictive. The scene was run on passion rather than on payment.

An ossifying scene?

This is not the city that was always portrayed to me in the present. Many interviewees suggested that the approach has hardened from informal enthusiasm to official and gain-driven. Events are more organised and take place in private spaces. There is more concern about official/legal/financial viability. Most of this seems to have been caused by the increased development, rental prices, and general rising expense of the city. Putting on any show now involves tighter regulatory consideration (insurance/noise control/licensing), the necessity of funding and payment (nothing can afford to be free and ad hoc now, I'm told), as well as rental costs to book space. These hard-headed considerations have led to fewer artists going to see other artists, more discerning audience participation and spending, and less DIY risk-taking. Despite this, many suggested that the more discerning and curated landscape has made things more controlled and safer.

The changes perhaps aren't all lamentable then. Certainly, while funding and official license is needed to put on shows, especially if ticket prices are to be kept low enough to be affordable for the community, there is, at least, more absolute funding amounts available to musicians than in the more informal and more impoverished past. Based on interviews with Clubcommission and others, it's clear that the city's government is generally sympathetic to the value of Berlin's live music culture. Nevertheless, with rents continuing to increase and affordability of living space in particular rising, Berlin may not continue to be the low-risk hot spot for young artists to establish themselves for much longer. This fact used to be its principal strength as a scene – a place of hope. However, the people I spoke to seem to feel it is increasingly a scene of precarity for those starting their careers, and even for those who are more established.

One experimental musician lamented that there were far fewer independent/experimental music booking agents and associated venues to work with in a market very much controlled by larger players and agencies. The interviewee admires the city's culture in spite of all this, and its continuing diversity of venues, but thinks that the loss of what the city had is worth considering in a world where creative industry policy is increasingly seeking value – i.e. how can we protect healthy cultural dynamism? For example, when pressed to advise on where a young rock band might wish to start out playing their shows (a position I might have been in once upon a time), there was no obvious answer. I came to understand that venues like Bassy and White Trash, reputedly two of best and last-standing grassroots rock and roll bars, are now increasingly going out of business.⁵⁰

Combined with this is the move of Berlin towards a more corporately controlled environment in general – the financialisation of rental property, the influx of tech jobs, the knock-on effect that that has had on politics in Berlin (perennially a left-wing city, but now with its first Christian Democratic Union mayor in two decades) all of this has been well documented in local and international news. All in all, it seems to have created an environment unsupportive of a properly exploratory artistic life in general and has focused booking agents and venues on an overly commercial outlook that is not sustaining of the openness and diversity that made Berlin.

But Berlin is still Berlin

On the other hand, the core elements of what facilitate Berlin becoming Berlin have not changed. As another participant described it to me: Berlin's becoming was as the perfect coming together of the community, content, spaces, and infrastructure. In the first instance, Berlin's 24-hour transportation, decentralised area, funding accessibility, lack of curfews, less dense concentration of population, and looser administrative and legal rigour allowed for a certain foundation, which was aided by its community – since the 1980s, Berlin has attracted misfits from all over the world, especially those avoiding military service and other conformist roles in society. This non-conformist community already had a strong identity in the 1980s, and became its own magnet by the 1990s, as the city became known for its diversity, openness, and strangeness. From this community and its openness, lots of content was created. This was greatly aided by the multitude of affordable or free music spaces in the city and cheap rents. This allowed for the risk-taking which created incredible vibrancy and became attractive as a place for other businesses and overlapping lifestyle preferences as a result. Dimitri Hegemann's legendary FischBüro and its Dada Experiments is perhaps the perfect encapsulation of all of the above.⁵¹

I was under no illusions while in Berlin that the spirit of these foundational times still exists, if only in the mind of the denizens who wish for its continuation/resurgence. Berlin overall is strongly defined by its slightly anarchic creative culture. It has been the defining identity (other than its national capital status) of the city, and the principal reason why people have been attracted to it. My first-hand experience is that the night-time scene is still very vibrant, and that locally-made live music is still plentiful. Though affordability has affected the city's character, the creative draw of Berlin as a cultural hub continues to grow, and it at least appears that the transformative and emancipatory sub-culturalism of Berlin's neighbourhoods and scenes have continued to support a liberal politics and new creative output.

In general, Berlin, because of the power of this idea of the city has more or less successfully made the case for the above culture being critical to the city's identity and appeal – both to its own local government and to the world. This is something that other cities (perhaps not principally known for such activity) still have to work on. The popular recognition of cultural expression and experimentation in the city as an intrinsic good-in-itself, and the sense that the city and its culture are unfinished is Berlin's most exciting characteristic, and something worth reflecting on for the cultural self-understandings of our own communities and places.

Admittedly, there are challenges ahead. Housing and affordability are major issues sapping people's disposable income, and the fact that commercial properties (which are less regulated in terms of price and use than elsewhere in Germany) are being converted into housing means that there are less opportunities for new venues, and if prospective club owners do find a space, they are victims of politics, bureaucracy, and regulations – all of which grow ever more onerous.

The musical is the political

Indeed, changing politics, bureaucracy and regulations in Berlin have been a key driver of change in the live music scene. The general approach of the Berlin local government has also become much less laissez-faire than it used to be according to those I spoke with. This includes a combination of right-wing reaction in politics, post-COVID conservatism in neighbourhood administration, and a general discourse shifting towards law and order, safety, stability, and protection (in time of wars), as opposed to openness, risk-taking, and the optimism of peace. This has made the spontaneity of the night-life scene of which live music plays so much a part in Berlin much less possible.

Though Berlin now has a conservative mayor, politics are not as much the problem as administration, I am told. Since the 1980s, Berlin has traditionally had strong politicians, but weak administration. This means personality and preference mattered over 'the rules'. This is how Berlin was able to be so famously informal, as politics could decide what was working for the city, even if it was not technically within the letter of the law. To those still present, this flexibility is disappearing from Berlin now, as administrative order strengthens.⁵² Not wanting to be like Munich,

which has the popular reputation of being a place law and order prevail even over politics at times, a number of interview subjects directly or indirectly expressed concern with this development.

I quickly understood that Berlin's early administrative fragmentation meant playing politics was a big part of how clubs in local districts were able to get things done. At the district mayoralty and deputy district mayoralty level, things were much more parochial, and so more up for debate (although certainly this could come with its own issues). Nevertheless, several interviewees were clear that overall, hardening rules and processes increasingly disconnected from human judgement are always more likely to be brick walls in terms of flexibility, persuasion, and common-sense recognition. From the furious debate about the *Schuldenbremse* down to my own personal experience in the nationwide investment in the rectitude of various petty administrative pageantries (often to an absurd degree), it seems hard to disagree with this basic point.

In terms of broader politics, recent events in Israel and Palestine have also been a major socio-political disruptor of the scene in ways that has seldom been seen before. The Berlin music scene has always been famously diverse and cosmopolitan. Due to the city's history, Berlin obviously has a keen understanding of division, mistreatment, and oppression which is present in the methodology of most of its museums and architectural use, for example. Onto this complexity has been laid a uniquely polarising matter of historical and national identity (not only for Germany in a broad sense, but also for Berlin, for obvious reasons). Naturally, this is inflaming existing racial, economic, and historically semitic-sensitive sentiments in the public and in government. I heard plenty of anecdotes of artists being cancelled, funding being withdrawn, clubs and festivals purging audiences for having one or the other position. One academic researcher looking at corporate positioning on this issue in the broader German business landscape described it in as a muddled scramble of defensive public relations where complex histories, academic semantics, and personal, corporate, and national definition of identity have unhelpfully collided.

At the start of 2024, a new national minimum wage has also been introduced.⁵³ This has been a big win for employees, but not necessarily for clubs themselves, who will have to adapt to this, but without relief from rising prices, not-yet-curbed inflation, Germany's uniquely difficult energy price situation, and the fact that corresponding public funding/subsidy has not risen accordingly.

Everyone I spoke to invests in some way in Berlin's reputation for having a rich subcultural nightlife. As a former Clubcommission interview subject expressed to me: the night is a place where things get a little bit blurrier (see section 4.1). Clubs are a place where this attitude meets collective activity – communities can encounter themselves, or the other – they can use this to reflect on contingency, on transformations, and often by participating in their subcultural gatherings are participating in transformations in that community. With such possibilities lives can be changed in single night or across many.

3.6 Leipzig

It doesn't take a big city to be a big cultural capital

A trade hub from ancient times, Leipzig has long found itself as something of a cultural capital in the arts as well as socio-politically. In terms of local live music, the city had Bach in the 1700s. It established itself as a world-renowned musical capital with the work and scholarship of Mendelssohn and Schumann in the early romantic period, later it was Wagner's birthplace, while even later, Mahler came to maturity there as a composer.

It remained a cultural capital in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), perhaps the country's only true cultural capital (Berlin being its own thing). An industrial city in those days, its ugly visage meant a strong drive in the community towards self-articulation and creativity. It is for this reason the city had a strong punk scene – which with the community around the St. Nicholas Church and its Monday Demonstrations became the principal force behind the events of October 1989 that contributed to the fall of the GDR.

In the aftermath of reunification, the city lost a lot of its industry, but retained much of its cultural investment, with an anything-goes techno scene growing up in many of the abandoned industrial spaces. Though the city has gentrified rapidly since then, and many of the spaces have come under a more formal control or disappeared, the city still has a rich mix of musical events with a similarly world renowned recognition.

For classical music, it retains its capital status. The Hochschule für Musik is one of Germany's best, with an international reputation that sees as many as one third of its intake every year coming from outside Germany.⁵⁴ The city is also one of the world's major Bach Capitals, still performing his music in the church where he was musical director. The Gewandhaus and Opera are also internationally renowned – and so well attended as to have subtitles in several languages for their operas, as I experienced. Many of these temples of 'high culture' also have options where performances can be accessed for free, or at minimum cost.

The rock and pop scene is also still strong, with many bands happy to play or even relocate here due to rising rents in Berlin and other cities, leading to its nickname as 'Hypezig' with its 600,000 population having grown around 5 per cent since before the pandemic, making it one of the fastest growing cities in Germany.⁵⁵ According to one denizen who relocated there during the pandemic after deciding Berlin rent without Berlin activities wasn't worth the money, there is also still a thriving underground in Leipzig, with many informal shows, raves occurring by word of mouth, or on Telegram/other messaging apps. Leipzig is also known for its cabaret, and annually hosts [Wave-Gotik-Treffen](#), perhaps the world's largest and most well-known Goth music and culture festival.

Berlin, but cheaper?

It was commonly pointed out to me in Leipzig that its main appeal is that it has everything that Berlin has, but cheaper, more convenient, and with a smaller, more centralised and walkable footprint. Leipzig's continued sense of relaxed, sometimes rebellious approach (even in the face of hardening regulation and political processes, as in Berlin) means the city remains culturally vibrant in ways where Berlin is becoming ossified in some people's eyes. Another participant told me such activity (even if semi-legal) also creates jobs and income, which Leipzig needs, as sustainable jobs beyond that of supporting student lifestyles are still scarcer than they should be for a city gentrifying at the rate Leipzig is.

Now Leipzig must save its culture

For all its upsides, there was concern among some about the need of the city administration to support Leipzig's culture, rather than ride on the tails of 'Hypezig', while not actually doing enough to retain the conditions that made it. For a city like Leipzig, there is no alternative. Berlin is a national capital, Hamburg has a harbour, both of which will always draw in people and influence. Without the arts though, Leipzig's alternative for everyone except its music and university students is less local culture, a smaller cultural economy, and a return to being a more grey industrial town akin to some other cities in the eastern region. As one Leipzig-based night-time governance and vibrancy consultant said to me: culture saved Leipzig, now Leipzig must save its culture.



4 Solutions

So, what are some of the solutions and existing conditions supporting live music culture in these cities.

4.1 Collective voice, data, and collaboration

Music is integral to communities and communities are integral to music. My first day in Hamburg made it instantly apparent this is also true at the level of live music advocacy, where I was invited to a Clubkombinat meeting in action. I was welcomed in by an absorbing cross-section of this dedicated community and given connections to others across the country, giving me a direct demonstration of the value of developing a collaborative network of relationships to support a common goal: sustainable and thriving live music scenes.

Germany is very advanced in bringing together organisations at a city, state, and national level to support players in the live music scene, and in particular live music venues, articulating their collective needs to influence policy and other areas. These groups are highly organised, unified in their key demands, they are democratic, data-driven, and they are collaborative. In many cases, the disparity of sizes and abilities of members is used to inform solutions. This approach is integral to take responsibility and ownership of musical culture in cities so that its interests can be articulated and defended. Being able to develop these relationships and develop trust between groups and with government takes time, so it is important to invest in it as soon as possible in order to see the returned benefits for live music scenes. In this section we meet a few of the people and organisations working to drive this investment.

A national voice

Christian Ordon has been the managing director of LiveKomm since May 2023. LiveKomm (or in English: The Live Music Commission) is a nationally-focused, member-based umbrella organisation that promotes and develops music venues and their shows – basically a Federal Association of Music Venues. LiveKomm's role is as a communicator, clarifier, and aggregate voice for live music culture. It represents the interests of members in politics and business and provides an overarching communication and lobbying role to improve political and community attitudes towards



Clubkombinat meeting, November 2023, hosted at Moondoo club, Hamburg

live music culture through campaigns backed by extensive data compilation and survey work. LiveKomm has 743 members. These include city and state unions – such as Clubkombinat in Hamburg, Berlin’s Clubcommission and Leipzig’s LiveKommbinat. It also has individual members such as venues, especially from places with no city or state representation, and festivals. LiveKomm provides a platform for information exchange, expertise with legislation and funding requirements from local to European Union level, advice, coaching, supporting bids for funding and conflict resolution with third parties. LiveKomm uses the following definitions for live music and clubs, as definitions can matter a lot for funding, recognition, and permissions:⁵⁶

Live music is music played with intent, by bands mainly playing their own songs, or artistic DJ’s who produce songs and/or operate labels.

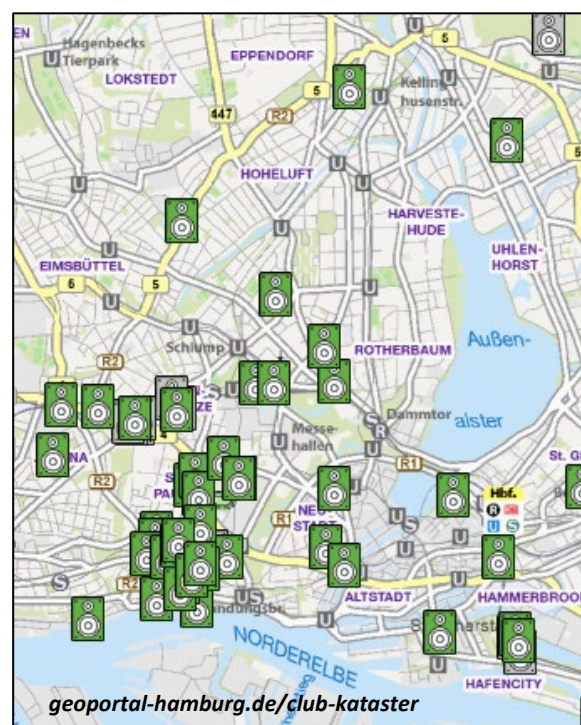
Music clubs (which in this sense are not predominately nightclubs as we might think of ‘clubs’ in Australia, but all venues where live music is played): a place of musical character, maximum 2,000 capacity, and billing at least 24 events per year (As per the [GEMA](#) music licensing U-K tariff).⁵⁷

To understand the composition and needs of its members, LiveKomm is a principal partner in two flagship surveys: The Clubstudie,⁵⁸ undertaken with Initiative Musik; and Musik Wirtschaft in Deutschland,⁵⁹ undertaken with the [Bundesverband Musikindustrie](#) (or, in English: Federal Association of the Music Industry).⁶⁰ These studies provide hard data on the national outlook for clubs, festivals, and the live music ecosystem. They are crucial to LiveKomm’s lobbying as the first question politicians always ask is “what are your needs?”, and the second is “do you have supporting data?” It is LiveKomm’s job to present the argument in these terms. Another important part of LiveKomm’s work is to track political activity very closely, noting party promises and manifestos, so LiveKomm can hold parties accountable for these.⁶¹

After nearly 10 years of prioritising this data-backed approach, LiveKomm has the infrastructure to do this, and also conducts flash surveys to make their case in real time to maintain relevance in politics and media cycles.⁶²

To support its members in meeting their identified needs LiveKomm is the principal driver of several national initiatives like:

The Clubs ARE Culture campaign⁶³ pushing national traction to legislate the 2021 Bundestag resolution that recognised clubs as cultural institutions under the law. These changes will greatly aid LiveKomm’s members to make the case for equal funding,



recognition, and value in political discourse and policy, as well as the fair and reasonable appeal to constitutional and legal provision. This relates to such things as the right to culture and effective protection of cultural institutions enshrined in the basic law. It can also be as simple as the reduced VAT rate on drinks that theatres and other cultural institutions receive, and as weighty as access to the more advanced cultural funding only accessible to those same institutions. Christian stressed it is also important in the *Anerkennung* (roughly translated as appreciation, respect, prestige, value – we spent some time with a translation engine on this word), given to locally produced live music in society, rather than just being considered a popular activity, noise, something in the shadow of opera, classical and other “high” culture.

Promotion of “cultural ordinance reform”⁶⁴ essentially new sound regulation reforms.⁶⁵ It would class noise produced by cultural institutions and activities as different than noise pollution and weigh the social benefits of such noise in consideration with privacy and neighbourhood disturbance (also a problem for other cultural and sporting organisations). After years of COVID silence, the tolerance for noise shifted among a homebound population. Without these reforms we could see more instances like when the Frankfurt local government cancelled a proposed professionally operated techno festival in a suburban park, seeking to operate between 5 – 9pm, for fear of noise complaints and lack of “local social benefit” (Frankfurt is one of Germany’s former techno capitals).⁶⁶ Christian sees campaigns like these, as well as relief from some of the strictures of the Federal Building Ordinance through recognition of cultural status,⁶⁷ as crucial to the survival of the live music scene. Several aspects of LiveKomm’s noise regulation reform demands have since been recognised in new policy through the federal budget of 2024.⁶⁸

While data-backed advocacy is crucial in the constant fight to explain to politicians the requirements and demands of musical performance, as well as its benefits, this case also needs to be made to homebound and cost-conscious audiences, often unaware that their €15 tickets to see three bands also must cover the venue overheads, staff, and audio personnel. At the time of research, LiveKomm’s forthcoming ‘us and you’ survey aimed to analyse the needs, expectations, and social benefits of live music for its audience and the groups/identities within that audience. In combination with the Clubs ARE Culture campaign politically, Christian hopes to make strides into civic and social awareness and community ownership, and engagement with locally produced culture, in a time where hype is increasingly centred on big budget, imported productions.

A local voice – Hamburg

These sentiments are echoed by Thore Debor, LiveKomm’s former spokesperson, and managing director of Clubkombinat Hamburg since 2012. Clubkombinat Hamburg is a strong example of a city-level organisation that has been supporting live music in Hamburg for nearly 20 years. It’s vision statement: “we believe in the creative energy of homemade live music and the essential added value of real encounters – Our work is idealistic and based on the idea of a community in which real encounters enable lively exchange and tolerant coexistence.”⁶⁹ In its early days Clubkombinat and LiveKomm were operating from the same office, overlapping in personnel and aims. As a lobbyist for the club operators, promoters, booking agents from the city-state of Hamburg, Clubkombinat’s main aim is to shift the dialogue in politics and society around the value of these spaces. As Thore says: it is Clubkombinat’s job to make their demands as clear as possible and put politicians/decision-makers in a position to say yes or no – and in those cases where they say no, to be seen to say no, with whatever public consequences that might bring.

Clubkombinat’s key initiatives for Hamburg are:

A mapping of clubs and shows, with a collective calendar available online and via an app.⁷⁰

Geo-mapping clubs (or clubkataster in German) in relation to planning permission and city ordinance to allow for early intervention and discussion with developers regarding potential new development that might otherwise cause noise wars and other conflicts.⁷¹

Campaigning on planning and noise regulation reform, which would give substance to the German Bundestag’s

2021 recognition of clubs as cultural sites, but which has not yet been fully complied with in local legislation in relation to noise or licencing allowances.⁷²

A campaign on the protection of accessible creative spaces. The best in class manifesto and updates on the campaign can be read on Clubkombinat's website.⁷³ This is a principal concern of Clubkombinat for sustaining the live music cultural pipeline. After much lobbying the matter is now at state and national consultation, and hopefully, with the national work of LiveKomm members around the country (including Clubkombinat), on track for national ratification in 2024 at time of writing.

A campaign on awareness of inclusion (gender, race, disability).⁷⁴

Beyond awareness and reform, Clubkombinat has a Live Concert Account which pays member clubs by way of quota for the amount of live music they stage.⁷⁵ The more live music, the higher the funding amount. The common pot is supplemented by a Fair Tickets initiative, a campaign for the fair and sustainable pricing of tickets for audiences as well as venues which will be discussed more in section 4.2.⁷⁶

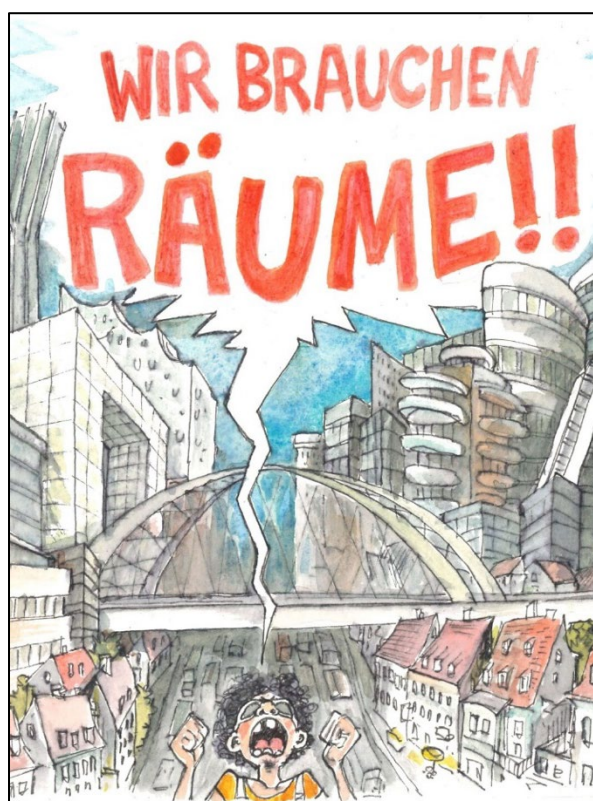
When it comes to making their case to government, Thore's main concern is not against politics or any specific party, but the administrative bureaucracy itself. Change is hard and the system is geared toward the status quo. Even when progressive politicians are in government they often have to fight the system they head. Many of the regulations Clubkombinat wishes to change are from the 1960s, nearly 80 years old.

In reference to the Clubs ARE Culture campaign, Thore suggests that how we talk about live music and creative culture has a big effect on its success and support. He is wary of the burgeoning rubric of 'creative economy', with its focus on monetary activity. This can hide or even suppress the idea of what is happening on the ground. He sees the real value being created for communities by having free (as in freedom), risk-taking spaces, that allow ideas to develop and germinate – the value of which may not be immediately apparent, but after a long period of time can be huge. These spaces are valuable in and of themselves, allowing people to come together in a democratic way for encounter and conversation, all crucial for a free society and the development of the city's unique character – not just its replication of cultural/social ideas from elsewhere.



clubs ARE culture möchte

- ...am etablierten Kulturbegriff rütteln.
- ...aufklären, was Clubkultur ist.
- ...aufzeigen, dass es Unterschiede zwischen Musikclubs und Diskos gibt.
- ...aufzeigen dass es viele Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Clubs und anderen Kultureinrichtungen gibt, wie bspw das kuratierte Programm.
- ...erreichen, dass Clubkultur als wertige, schützenswerte und förderungswürdige Kultur angesehen wird.
- ...unterstützt die Novellierung der Baunutzungsverordnung, die Musikclubs als Kulturstätten anerkennt.



Clubs ARE culture mission taken from <https://www.clubsareculture.de/mission/>. Wir brauchen räume (We need rooms) illustration taken from <https://clubkombinat.de/manifest-wirbrauchenraeume/>

A portable approach to advocacy

Kordula Kunert is a night-time vibrancy consultant, working with cities to set up governance and lobbying structures. She also acts on behalf of client clubs to navigate funding bureaucracy. A Leipzig local, Kordula studied cultural management, specialising in how to structure a night mayor's office for cities in need of night-time vibrancy management and conflict resolution. She has used this knowledge in former roles at Leipzig's LiveKommbinat, and in the early days of Hamburg's Clubkombinat, to advise cities on their night-time economy governance. She is now supporting cities like Jena, Erfurt, and Dresden with her expertise.

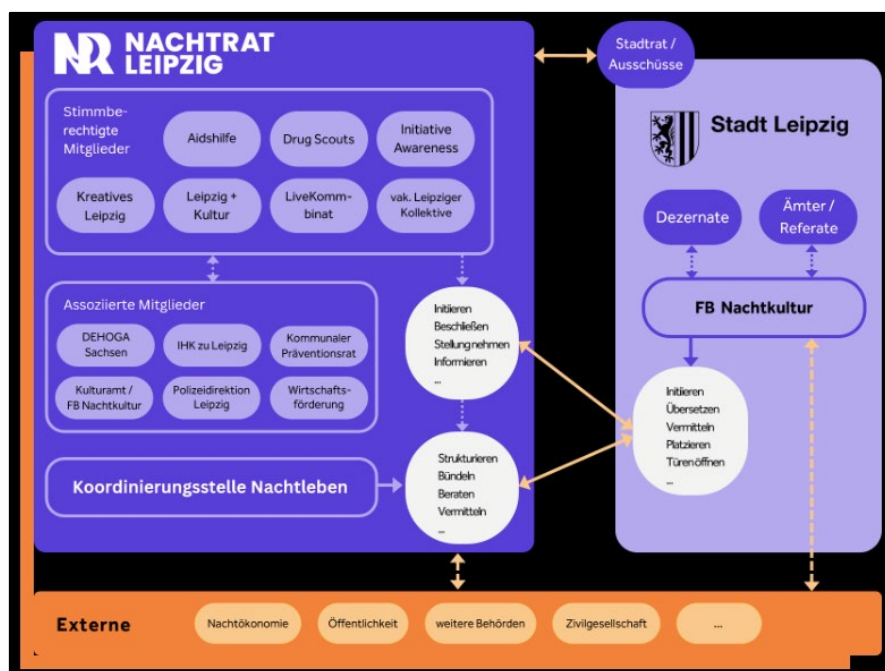
Kordula's work shows the portability of the data-driven collective advocacy approach. Over my conversations I saw this model replicated from a local to a transnational scale. At LiveKommbinat, Kordula worked to set-up Leipzig's night mayor and night council. She was involved in data and mapping efforts to aid Leipzig's understanding of itself as a night-time and music capital like the lost clubs video as well as the City's Kataster (modelled on the Hamburg clubkataster) allowing for visibility and dialogue when it comes to the geography and creative footprint of the city. As well as supporting cities to have data in place, her next question to them is: 'who have you organised to articulate the most urgent needs of the scene to decision makers?' Kordula emphasises that private associations like LiveKommbinat have been key to foregrounding the interests of the collective live music scene in Leipzig.

Corule – the importance of dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders

Once needs have been understood, measured, and articulated, the modes for dialogue and cooperation come in to play. For Kordula, Leipzig has been especially successful in convening all night-time stakeholders. LiveKommbinat has worked with the City government of Leipzig, police, sex workers, City planners, transport officials, and even the aforementioned illegal ravers (who also have their own representative organization of sorts⁷⁷). This broad and inclusive dialogue allowed Leipzig to successfully set up their night mayor model which is currently unique (save for Hannover who have adopted this model) in that it is a duumvirate corule between the Kulturaumt (City culture office) and LiveKommbinat – in other words someone from the live music scene and someone from the City government. Kordula also facilitated the establishment of its night council or 'Nachtrat'⁷⁸, a committee of all interested stakeholders with expertise in night-time vibrancy, to promote best practice solutions through internal and external dialogue. Kordula explains it is often misprision and prejudice that prevents best practice policy, so wide dialogue is

essential to create mutual understanding amongst all parties. This dialogue should not only tell but show. This means taking politicians club-hopping to meet venue owners; having police come to illegal raves or talking face-to-face with bouncers; having City planners doing night walks or using late night public transport. This way, each group understands the needs of the other and receives the vital feedback they need to manage expectations while preventing conflict and supporting harm reduction.

Kordula's hope for her hometown is that the value of its live music and night-time economy is properly recognised before the enthusiasm and



Nachtrat Leipzig (Leipzig night council) taken from <https://www.nachtratleipzig.de/nachtrat/struktur/>

organic vibe/curiosity is replaced with something more artificial. For the creative soul of the city to endure and to be affordable to attend and live amidst for the average artist and audience member is Kordula's greatest hope for Leipzig for the next ten years. Her wider ambitions include every city having adequate night governance and a night mayor connected to the scene, ideally with a shared authority in a corule model. The growing power of the association and communication between local night mayors around the country and internationally (see recent NEON conference in Sydney) also offers opportunities for the future.⁷⁹

We can also see the importance of wide interdisciplinary dialogue at the national and international level with [Stadt Nach Acht](#)⁸⁰, an interdisciplinary conference and platform for night culture where interest groups, stakeholders, representatives of politics and administration and other groups can work together on urban night culture. There is also the [Music Cities Network](#) (see section 4.4), which demonstrates the benefits of transnational dialogue at a city expertise level.

Beyond this, both Kordula and Christian spoke about a future in which all 'cultural institutions/bodies' can unite to fight for their interests and articulate these to the government and public. Kordula hopes to invite in all creative industries to lobby for Leipzig's cultural needs. Her work on not just a clubkataster, but a whole of culture kataster (mapping) is symbolic of this ambition for all creative industry to unite and articulate its needs in the face of an often instrumentalist policy landscape.

Balancing distribution of power and resources

Another consideration in lobbying and dialogue is how uneven distributions of power and resources can easily skew a conversation where the smallest operators are the most vulnerable. The recently created [Bundesverband der Konzert und Veranstaltungswirtschaft](#) (BDKV) (the German Association of the Concert and Event Industry) has worked to address this. Johannes Everke is the Managing Director and leads the advocacy, representation, and promotion of the live music sector in Germany for its 500 members who put on 300,000 concerts a year and sell upwards of 90 million tickets. Originally a law student, Johannes then went to a Hochschule für Musik to study the management of cultural institutions. He is passionate about the intersection between lawmaking and cultural management. BDKV is committed to optimising the legal conditions framing the economic sector to the benefit of the industry, as well as supporting the initiatives discussed by LiveKomm. Johannes is also actively involved in initiatives that empower music venues, artists, and professionals, such as the Hamburg Music Club Foundation⁸¹ and the Music Cities Network, again demonstrating the importance of wide collaboration and dialogue.

At BDKV, Johannes sees his role as initiating dialogue between members and using collective action in to address problems for the entire industry. BDKV finds ways to for members big and small to collaborate and for the big companies to back the concerns facing the smaller. This cross-level support is a positive aspect of the German music scene. For BDKV, it means that [CTS Eventim](#), the second biggest promoter and ticket seller worldwide, which owns nearly 70 per cent of the German market, is part of the same conversations as boutique agencies or promoters in a town like Aachen with 250,000 inhabitants.

Interestingly, this appears to be a model borrowed from its implementation at the very highest levels of German musical association, the [Deutscher Musikrat](#) (the German Music Council – of which BDKV is a member), which also maintains the ethos of its earliest foundations in amateur and church choir music– as 'the world's largest national umbrella organization for music culture'⁸², the Musikrat being the only structure in the country where every musical body/organisation/actor/activist can meet on equal terms.

The board of BDKV is as representative of its membership as possible. Genres, size, and geography are all present. BDKV is also not about forcing less resourced members to sign up to charters that they won't be able to fulfil. As someone who lives and networks in Hamburg, Johannes points to a the deeply connected and mutually sympathetic music scenes there, with great cross-cultural support for all things musical in the community, and a merchant history and hanseatic mentality that focuses on solutions rather than problems.

As a result, issues that might be seen as intractable results of capitalist rivalry and agency monopolies can be worked out using BDKV as a platform. It is here that a group like Eventim can support what Johannes calls the “circle of live” – developing a pipeline (see below) of smaller artists and clubs so that there is a talent pool and an audience feeding the entire live music ecosystem. BDKV is also where bigger members were convinced to support the streamlining of the Kuenstlersozialkasse (KSK)⁸³, the German social insurance fund for artists which a percentage of artist fees are paid into to support out of work artists, often a complicated and bureaucratic add on to business as usual. While the bigger players had no trouble with this extra work, they accepted that it was a burden on smaller members, and good for the whole industry, resulting in them both supporting and paying a proportionate share for the lawyers and campaign. Johannes would like to see more of this mentality and solidarity across the music ecosystem and is happy to see more activism groups emerging. Being open to all points of view and different ways of working in these uncertain times is the only way forward.

Relatedly, Lutz Leichsenring sees a vital local live music culture as part of an emancipatory project of self-autonomy, and transformation for people. Lutz is a co-founder of [VibeLab](#), a data-driven research and consultancy agency for the night-time economy which uses a wholistic creative footprint report to measure activity, vibrancy, identify growth opportunities, and develop strategies to support a thriving nightlife industry. At the time of writing, Lutz was also the outgoing spokesperson for the Berlin Clubcommission, an organisation of over 320 members committed to lobby for Berlin club culture. He is also a serving member of Berlin’s [Musicboard](#) and [Chamber of Commerce](#). Lutz’s role as the spokesperson for the Clubcommission involved advocating for the night-time economy and its interests. As well as working on the key issues noted by LiveKomm and Clubkombinat, Hamburg of articulating needs to governments, promoting communication and the cultural importance and value of clubs, the Clubcommission also convenes working groups to address topics like:

Rooms/Venues – the need for space in an oversubscribed city.

Festivals – a round table for Festival organisers from all over the country.

Free Open Airs – which supports the non-commercially oriented part of the open-air scene.

Club Mapping – mapping Berlin clubs and music venues in order that they be secured.

Awareness/Mental Health in Clubs – looking at solutions to sexism, mental health issues etc.

Targeted working groups are an important part of consolidating the very diverse voices of ClubCommission’s membership, as large scale round-tables often favoured by government, where all people sit around and discuss all things, is a recipe for participant fatigue and attrition. Giving stakeholders access to groups where they can discuss targeted concerns is the best way to maintain a focused and consolidated approach. As with the other advocacy groups, surveys are used to augment this information with hard data.

A caution of the embrace of the ‘capitalist moment’ in the arts

It is this emphasis on focused vitality which leads Lutz to prioritise community-focused organisation in Clubcommission with direct impact and autonomy. It is partly for this reason the Clubcommission is a not-for-profit company. The office is paid, but not Lutz or the board. He notes creative culture works best when it is organic, working with the city as a whole, and facilitating other goods and investments. As with Thore, Lutz does not think that the right discourse occurs under the rubric of ‘creative industry/creative economy’ which encourages people to think of live music as product and economic output, not an intrinsically good ‘unfinished innovation’ as Lutz see it. It suggests that people involved in live music are workers, customers, or tourists, rather than community members, embedded in their communities and engaged and motivated as such. Reduced to this economic view, clubs and live music will always be unfavourably compared with more profitable and economically rational market players. Reframing is necessary so the focus is on art, local community and social value, and connection, rather than vibrancy in service of money making.

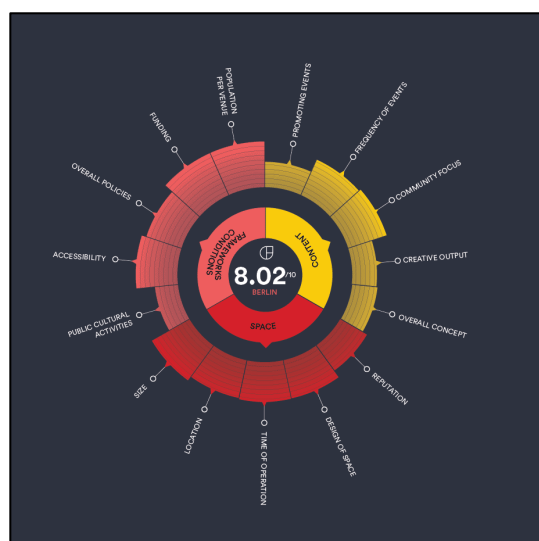
The above may seem obvious, at first glance, but it is worth teasing out somewhat, especially considering the tectonic shifts taking place in the broader artistic landscape. With aggressive consolidation taking place in film production, publishing, art fairs, and record labels, to name but a few obvious areas, we are living in an acutely ‘capitalist moment in the arts’ and best supporting local, up-and-coming, and organic live music for the community (i.e. not simply for a ‘market’ or ‘consumers’) requires a proper orientation to this issue.

In terms of the arts themselves, there has long been discussion that allowing too much of a money motive to drive what motivates the production of what should also be culturally nourishing and edifying to a community or society, risks making the cultural output a ‘product’, sold to an audience of ‘consumers’. And while ‘selling out’ is a contested idea, depending on one’s perspective, ideally, it is the job of the arts to help us articulate our being, to push us to appreciate its modalities within a contingent present and potential but unrealised future. In this way, the market-friendly product, selling itself in a competitive market reliant on a sense of popular tends to placate tastes by delivering a known or expected profit outcome. It is thus static, less organic, less autonomously generated, and nominally averse to bold, dissenting challenge.

What Lutz is indirectly asking us here is: shouldn’t this also be true of the administration and support of such culture? In the same way that it is important that not every instance of appreciation or production should be reduced to an economic cost/profit analysis, so too should the support and administrative engagement with that production, that is to say not simply in the aggregate, or taking an overall policy-making approach.

Having support which keep the emphasis on community-focused organisation, even if less efficient and less profitable for those involved, is nevertheless crucial to avoid slipping into the kind of ‘market realities’ thinking that loses sight of the fullest possible pursuit of socio-cultural value for individual communities.

An international approach



VibeLab Creative Footprint Studies Berlin 2017 (right) and Sydney 2023 (left): taken from <https://www.creative-footprint.org/>

Not focusing simply on the hyper-local though, Lutz is also a founder of VibeLab, which has both an international footprint and focus in its city analysis. It has conducted reports in cities as diverse as Berlin, New York, Tokyo, Stockholm, Montreal, and Sydney, using data-driven studies that measure the presence and activity of creative spaces and communities to form a picture of the cultural value and impact of music and nightlife in the city. I was lucky enough to also speak about VibeLabs’s work with Jane Sligo, the Asia-Pacific director of VibeLab in Sydney and Board member of Sound NSW. Jane noted the approach the *VibeLab Creative Footprint Study* employs also moves away from merely supporting footfall and profit maximisation to pivot to a data-driven interdisciplinary, multi-metric methodology to measure community vitality in a more complex way as per the above reflections. Beyond economic impact, it looks at the production of original content, and the presence of interdisciplinary connections, and cross-

functional spaces for thriving local scenes. Other helpful metrics can include things like: intellectual property – how much intellectual innovation is being produced for sale (Labels, Radio Stations, Records, Song Rights); Exports – how much cultural and economic value is being pushed out of the country (Festival spots, TV spots, Tours); Venues – how much infrastructure is there and how much is it thriving/who is visiting it, and; Imports: how much is being brought into the country and how attractive is the draw (Bands, Festivals). It is important to drill down into what communities, genres, and other discrete identities are doing. Is there funding, models, space, and culture allowing for experimentation and risk-taking? What is the infrastructure, gateways, and supports for this like? How path dependent are they – or are they open-ended? What is the capacity for development, and how can there be more development? The footprint is not necessarily comparable across cities, but can, as I understand it, compare a city across time and assess capacity growth using an index score out of 10. It also creates a comparative cultural vibrancy network and framework for discussion between cities – important for comparing and contrasting what each place can learn from the other.

4.2 Supporting live music venues

Securing and preserving venues for live music

Karsten Schölermann is the head of the board of the Bundesstiftung Livekultur or Federal Foundation for Live Culture, which sits under LiveKomm, its parent organisation. The goals of the foundation are specifically the securing of significant cultural venues and areas, as well as the broader aims of LiveKomm itself, supporting live culture as a valuable cultural asset for its community, city, and country. The foundation does this in many ways.

Mapping: The foundation needs to know where clubs are, who owns them, and in particular, how long they are going to own them for. If a club is coming up for sale there is significant work to ensure it will continue to be a club when it is sold, so the sooner this is known, the better.

Coordination: When a club comes up for sale the foundation finds a structure/group to takeover and retain its function. Every instance is different, but for example, in order to defend against a club being bought by developers, a consortium is put together which includes a project manager and a fundraising team. The foundation can secure funding partners and knowledge partners. It also offers letters of guarantee for purchases and assesses contracts.

Funding: The foundation has a small funding capacity to lend money to partially fund venue purchases. It draws on community organisations to help with purchases when necessary. It promotes the message that security can come with club ownership, and that people from the community can own their clubs, even through grassroots donation.

How to run a club: the five pillars

Karsten explained the five pillars which he regarded as crucial knowledge for the club operators they assist. He wishes this club specific education was more prevalent. Karsten himself owns Knust, a rock venue in Sternchance, Hamburg, and has practical experience running a club. He therefore appreciates that for those new to the endeavor of running a music club, the learning curve can be steep, even ruinous, without a smart and resilient approach.

- 1. Economics:** There is very little room for economic mistakes when margins are slim and audience presence fragile. Operators need to immediately know how to balance their books. They need to know intimately: their footfall, food and beverage, rentals, door entry, overheads, agency fees and wages. This is because something in this mix is always subsidising something else – whether upping the price of beer or the door charge, to siphoning 20% of food sales into the live music account or maximising rental fees by booking high-priced weekend rental/agency gigs while promoting their own shows and local music on weekdays. Crunching every number matters.
- 2. Demographics and aesthetics:** Who comes is as important as what they spend. If your audience is 40 years old, they may be wealthier, and more reliable, but likely not as regular or enduring as a younger more energetic crowd. Similarly, a younger crowd spends less, can be more fickle, but they represent the future. Without some

youth penetration, the civic and cultural justification of any club is lost once the current generation moves on, so supporting a younger audience and younger artists is key to continuity.

3. **Cultural values:** Owners should ask themselves: why get into local live music in the first place? I.e. how does the presence of local live music make us and our communities feel or be better in some way. Without a sense of this, any live music risks being instrumentalised and reduced to background decoration, like in many bars and cafes.
4. **Ecological values:** Heating, electricity, and other overheads have become acute economic and political considerations in recent years. How to navigate this terrain and plan for the future can't be ignored.
5. **Social values:** Considerations of what the audience gets for the money they pay, who feels welcomed, and who is able to participate, and whether or not costs are affordable to everyone. This matters as the audience a venue draws from the community is not always the same as the audience it could draw from the community with some understanding of these matters.

Karsten is particularly complimentary of the famous club owner Dimitri Hegemann's [Academy for Sub-Cultural Understanding](#) which mentors people in 'how to run a club', teaching the knowledge and activism needed to preserve clubs to the next generation.⁸⁴ This is based on Dimitri's experience of running everything from the Fischbüro to Tressor.⁸⁵

LiveKomm also holds working groups for festival building, personnel management, sustainability, and digital improvement, the latter is especially important, as it also covers the matter of technology in a space where club owners can just as easily be also older in age and sometimes unversed in new project management software and latest digital practice.

Karsten closed our interview with a simple question: in a world where the youngest generation has grown up with digital music, listening, sharing, and performing – where are the bands that are going to play locally for them coming from, where is this generation going to have their first drink, their first kiss? What is going to make that place the place that one of the operators that he helps are running? These are the things that every established club owner should be thinking about in terms of keeping local live music culture alive.

Grassroots approaches

As seen above, the stakes can be high for the preservation of individual concerns, but a healthy musical climate should also be mindful and encouraging of the impact small-scale, local interventions and innovative approaches to finding place for local live music. Emblematic of this is Jerry Tilitz, an expatriate American who has combined his wife Nancy's artistic interests with his own to create a live jazz show every Friday night in her art gallery, located in Dammtorbahnhof train station. Entrance is by donation and the program is varied and welcoming. Jerry has had a long career as a solo artist and in ensembles, has taught jazz theory and analysis, hosted his own radio program called *An American In Hamburg* and written for publications like the *Jazz Journal International*. [Jazz in the Galerie](#) is a way of "giving back to the city". Jerry believes playing and listening to live music in such an intimate community setting fosters all the best aspects of civilizational merit – communication, listening, teamwork, and empathy. Nancy and Jerry have their space in a train station archway with a subsidised rent from Deutsche Bahn, the national German railway, though they are currently being relocated to another part of the station with a renewed contract. Other station archways in the city are part of the conversation regarding the relocation of the closed Sternbrücke clubs (see section. 1.4) and seen to be symbolic of the broader effort to recognise and support local live music.



Unlike his hometown of New York, Jerry believes that people don't immediately think of Hamburg having much convening power as a jazz city, but there is an active scene. He credits the long cosmopolitan history of Hamburg's outward looking port for this. Despite comings and goings of clubs, Jerry sees young musicians rebuilding the jazz scene afresh, with jazz considered exciting amongst graduating music students. He's especially pleased to see bodies like the [Jazzbüro Hamburg](#) represents the interests of the jazz community and take an interest in this younger generation. The relative wealth of the Hamburg population also means events and initiatives can be funded by patrons who are willing to pay more than a ticket price to support the arts.

The Jazz in the Galerie night also hosts international musicians. While I was in town, the special guest was a Ukrainian talk show band leader, currently seeking refuge in Germany. Jerry notes that Jazz is international and that the more it assimilates influences from around the community, and around the world the more vital and valuable it become in its locality in creating community. Having a place for foreign musicians to be welcomed in Hamburg is important. Jerry hopes that the trend toward homebound self-containment will not continue and that more people will remember that space to listen to each other and create art together is an important part of any society.

Government intervention

I also spoke to an advisor for live music clubs and venues for Hamburg's Ministry for Culture and Media (Hamburg is a city-state in the German federal structure, so the city and state government are one and the same). The Ministry supports the development of culture and creative industries, promote theatres, museums, concert halls, orchestras, libraries, and memorials, as well as institutions and projects in art, music, theatre, literature, film, children's and youth culture.

Hamburg has the second highest density of music venues in Germany after Munich.⁸⁶ It is rivalled only by Berlin in terms of overall vibrancy. The factors that contribute to this include its famous reputation as a music city fostering artists from Brahms to the Beatles; its famous nightlife precincts – Reeperbahn (St Pauli) being the most concentrated and reputed, but also the nearby Sternchance neighbourhood; its relatively young population; and its liberal approach to policing, which was portrayed to me by several participants as being focused on big crimes and safety from public threats, as opposed to more corrective approaches involving heavy presences and interventionist pursuit of personal/petty crime.

That Hamburg's live music should be treated as seriously as the Harbour economy or major manufacturers in the city – for example, both are allowed noise exemptions from the city government, while live music is usually not – was a point made several times to me in Hamburg. It is a recognition that the Ministry clearly has sympathy with. In my interview, I was told that the government certainly recognizes its role in investigating what sustains a cultural scene and how to support it, as well as leveraging the wealth of cultural depth and history to further boost the city's profile as a place to live, work and invest. The government agrees that local live music culture is not accessible if it is overly expensive to get there, to buy a ticket, or to hear about, so it runs a kind of synergistic campaign for this purpose.⁸⁷ It aims to get audiences excited about their city again, traversing its transport links and inhabiting its cultural assets and programming by promoting the rich mix of culture available. Hence the name: Mixing is possible (see image below).

The principal challenge to a more specific recognition and support for local live music, especially in the form of



concrete support for live music clubs, however, remains more systemic. General cultural recognition and willingness to help is a sentiment, and it can be present in the Ministry and among the elected politicians who direct it. Yet, addressing and rebalancing bureaucratically established pathways to more equitably distribute benefits in regulation, funding, and protection requires more than just willing. It requires committed change management and wide dialogue (as suggested above), to understand the past and present patterns of both state intervention and public consumption in culture and how they best ought to relate in given contexts.

To this end, and with express recognition that Hamburg's clubs do need to feel properly and proportionately supported, the Ministry is participating in the LiveKomm-driven building and sound regulation reform. It is also part of the efforts to relocate clubs and save spaces from closure, as seen with its involvement in negotiating spaces in railway arches as referenced above. Such efforts go some way towards changing the dialogue and perception of who needs access to cultural funding. Similarly, my conversation also touched on the ideas of relationships and benefits created through government funding of initiatives like Hamburg Music⁸⁸, which operates similarly to Sounds Australia,⁸⁹ but with a local growth focus, allowing the industry to support itself in tandem with cultural recognition and protection by the government.

All of this paints a promising picture of local/regional government involvement in an active and forward-looking approach to the support of local live music. However, entrenched systemic approaches remain an issue. Other conversations I had in Hamburg unearthed dissatisfactions at how well-meaning active interventions by the state government in supporting accessible live music were let down in some cases. The most interesting of these was the idea that the seemingly helpful instance of the state government subsidising popular music shows in venues in Hamburg actually represented public funding harmfully competing in places usually operated in by the private market (venues, operators, etc..) and so disadvantaging the latter. Many, for example, would think it admirable that the City of Hamburg books and promotes pop concerts in the Elbphilharmonie opera house, saving money on venue hire (as it is a Government-owned asset) so they can subsidise ticket prices to be accessible to most. Yet, in the first instance, for larger sized private operators in Hamburg this distorts the market for private businesses who might book the same show without access to these cost savings. In the second instance, for smaller private actors in the

market who don't have the same resources, setting expectations amongst the public of what represents good value with below-cost subsidizing distorts engagement with their own local live shows, as it is natural that the public will always go where there is bigger and better value. As it was pointed out to me, an approach like this may make sense in opera, which employs 1000 people and is a part of German heritage that would not be viable without funding, but it may not be for mid-market pop, where it encourages an already unmotivated audience to expect to get their tickets for less than they cost in real terms, a risky expectation for the stability of the market. In an ecosystem where private operators bear most of the risk of keeping a vibrant local music scene going this is no doubt not ideal. It is another perfect example of how continuing data-gathering, and cross-conversation (see section 4.1) between government and the scene is crucial to facilitation and understanding on both sides of the public/private divide.



Countering corporate monopolisation and supporting local scenes and jobs

Markus Ohm is co-founder of [Tix for Gigs](#), an independent ticket provider and event organiser established in Leipzig in 1996. Specialising in small-to-medium sized venue shows and festivals all over Germany, Tix for Gigs uses its independent status to sustainably serve local and community-oriented events that are not of immediate interest to larger corporations. These larger event organisers are often difficult for smaller venues to work with, especially as they tend to develop 360-degree operations – working (often monopolistically) with their own clubs, promoters, and acts.⁹⁰ Yet, independent clubs with up-and-coming bands, using local promoters, also need partners. Tix for Gigs doesn't jump straight to profit-maximisation and ever-escalating productions to operate, but builds sustainable and respectful relationships, networks, and audiences (either at small venues or festival-level) and grows organically as a trusted partner. Not seeking maximum short-term profit allows it to use relationship building in place of aggressive strategy, making decisions in the interests of audience and event organisers. It has gradually moved into other cities, including Hamburg and Nuremburg, but seeks to remain local and independent in its scale, making most of its money from small club shows. This is different to the norm where clubs (especially their owners and promoters) tend to be less profitable and have to be subsidised or offset. This foundation is important to Tix for Gigs, as it seems that the higher up the event capacity ladder one goes, the more chance a festival, venue, or act is bought out by Eventim, Ticketmaster or Live Nation. This happened to Tix for Gigs with one of its festival partners (during the period recently where Ticketmaster began buying into festivals like [Melt](#) and [Fullforce](#)) and resulted in a 70,000 person cut to their ticket sales. Having 10 festivals at 3,000 tickets a festival is a safer more diversified option for Tix for Gigs, and the same for its venue shows. If Tix for Gigs could successfully defend their rollout at this level across the country, Markus would be happy to grow organically in this way going forward. He thinks that if this market could be split off and operate below the level of the larger players it may well provide a model for how to preserve integrity of local musical culture.

The proximity of Tix for Gigs to its audience and customers also allows it to be innovative and responsive to context. The FairTix model,⁹¹ one of the solutions it has pioneered, could be rolled out across Germany.⁹² The idea is waiving the 10 per cent booking fees by vendors and instead charging €1, which is contributed to the clubs themselves through a kombinat style organisation as part of a sustainable support system for venues. This initiative allows cheaper, more accessible tickets for audience members and more sustainable funding for the venues. Partner providers now even include Ticketmaster/Live Nation.⁹³ Markus regards this as a conceptual gift from Tix for Gigs to everyone in the community. It ensures money flows directly back to clubs and the payoff for Tix for Gigs (or other providers) is more ticket sales, more loyal venue partners, and a protected scene with players continuing to operate and give space to up and coming bands and new audiences into the future. When introduced in Leipzig, this scheme made €27,000 in its first year from Tix for Gigs shows alone. Hamburg, which is now in its fifth year is making €110,000 per annum from Tix for Gigs shows. When the return from all the providers, including the very large ones, is included this means a lot of money flowing back into the scene.

Markus fully believes this model is scalable. As suggested above, he is happy to simply share the concept. He does not seek to own the platform/technology. And in a market where insurgent monopolists and venture-capitalist groups are trying to develop partners in Germany (even if to exploit and monopolise later), establishing the FairTix approach helps to protect the integrity of small clubs, as before potentially establishing a two-tiered approach to the market – the smaller clubs being supported as a necessary part of the ecosystem for there to be a larger, more profit-driven headliner, festival, and stadium market. Tix for Gigs, in this way, sees itself as part of a broad-based community solution, working in tandem with a kombinat model, to support the individual needs of players within the local community.

Another potential avenue in this vein at a national level was raised by Thore at Clubkombinat, Hamburg, who mentioned a cinema ticket tax in Germany (higher turnover multi-plexes supporting a federal film fund which includes subsidies to arthouse cinemas as well as niche film production subsidies).⁹⁴ Not yet implemented in the

music scene, as occurs in France.⁹⁵ A 3 per cent tax on some of the large acts that play in Germany could support the entire live music industry underneath the higher-end market, supporting local music scenes and audiences around the country.

Another example of countering corporate monopolization came from Hendrik Meier, a booker and promoter for [STP Hamburg Konzerte](#), a local concert organizer operating since 2011 to promote and facilitate club concerts, open air concerts, festivals, and other events. Hamburg Konzerte's local knowledge allows individualised support of artists and agencies from planning to implementation and post-processing of events. They pride themselves on their scalability, beginning with the smallest club concerts and ending with open air concerts with tens of thousands of attendees like [Open Air am Grossmarkt](#), [Am Fernsehturm](#), and [am Volkspark](#).

Right now, the new reality is market penetration by larger, monopolising booking agencies, many of them foreign, like Ticketmaster/Live Nation or [Cobra](#). Hamburg Konzerte used to have a model (in instances where the artist didn't go directly to the venue themselves) where they would often be approached by national booking agents as the local promoter (they also do their own events). Now, Hendrik suggests, the large foreign agencies are simply monopolising the venues and artist bookings and freezing out the medium-sized local and national ones. This aggressive vertical integration is creating a harsh market for small, local, or independent actors, especially as it is being adopted by most agencies now as a best practice business model. Hendrik works hard to distinguish Hamburg Konzerte as a local specialist and works in the gaps left by the larger players. He utilizes Hamburg Konzerte's value as a knowledgeable local presence on the scene – particularly good for breaking artists or addressing specific artist's needs. This can be in the form of good venue partnerships and placements, or hiring local labour (security, audiotech etc) which creates local relationships and a better experience for the artist and the agency than a larger cost expedient and more corporate approach, while also creating a more sustainable employment ecosystem within the community.

Supporting the pipeline

Thore's experience at Clubkombinat, Hamburg, has revealed to him that every city develops its own unique culture. It is based on the place, the people, the politics, and many other factors. Live music is part of this. If Taylor Swift comes to town and plays one show with top tier tickets costing well into the hundreds of euro, that is not a culture. Nor, really, is the Reeperbahn Festival where live music abounds uniquely and with great intensity, but only once a year. Local culture proper, for Thore, is about small clubs allowing small, diverse performances and developing artists, (some of whom may go on to be the headliner acts of the world). Local live music culture is thus a pipeline and matter of cultural production and renewal, especially as a rallying point for new ideas and articulations within a community's culture.

Hamburg Konzerte's local focus supports such a pipeline. Hendrik likes that there is still opportunity in the scene to take risks. Instead of always looking at the profitable artists and agency requests, he looks at smaller artists or agencies, booking them in smaller venues, and often underscaling, i.e. booking a 250-capacity venue for a request of 300. This is a situation of mutual gain as it creates demand for a sold-out show and a great atmosphere. Giving smaller venues a sustainable look in and giving smaller artists a chance at stage work/booking attention before they might otherwise get it might seem risky, but Hendrik subscribes to a little but often approach. Yes, it leads to everyone just about breaking even, but also results in a lot (in absolute numbers) of shows in the city and a lot of good relationships which means that in one or two years this or that booking agency might repeat their business and send their bigger artists. In this way, such an approach can often turn into more sustainable profits over a more relaxed timeline as a reward for this risk. So, like Karsten Schölermann from Bundesstiftung Livekultur, Hendrik is wise to how something is always subsidising something else. This is because it is from these 'bigger artists' that where Hamburg Konzerte's principal profits come from, specifically their playing at outdoor gigs/festivals – he calls them 'open airs'. Hendrik tells me that in a good year Hamburg Konzerte's big open airs pay everyone's wages and can subsidise those relationship building risks with clubs. It is in this way that the pipeline of artists and venues is best

supported, so that it can, as Thore suggests, keep the entire live music culture healthy.

Of course, the fact that Hendrik can approach his bookings this way is a testament to how the Hamburg club scene can still incubate and develop great relationships and talent despite concerns about market penetration, but more than that, it shows, as with Markus from TixForGigs, that networks and relationships are as integral to a live music culture as profit (and is in itself a broader part of a city's unique culture).

Hendrik hopes that this is a lesson that all who are interested in Hamburg's live music culture will internalise. He is concerned, for example, that there is still not enough collaboration with the groups and subcultures resisting monopoly – some punk/alternative venues and artists, he tells me, think Hamburg Konzerte is still too much a part of the 'capitalist structure', even though they are very keen to promote sustainable music performance in the community. For Hendrik, relationship building and sharing information within the community is the only way forward.

A musical education

Learning this kind of perspective and understanding, especially in one's own context involves hands on work. Hendrik began playing alt-rock music growing up in rural Bavaria. Moving to Nuremberg and then to Mannheim he took his punkish DIY mindset to start-up music events, and it was here that he learned to book and promote 'on the fly', according to him, a great way to learn and develop novel, innovative approaches. This was echoed by Thore, whose involvement in live music culture came about through studying social/cultural management at university and attempting, while there, to put on events with his peers. Thore's efforts began in 2001 with a campus festival and proceeded to the attempt in 2004 to set up a club/bar there with live performances. This cultural program, he recounted, was disallowed originally by the city council due to incorrect licencing applications. This initial brush with bureaucracy gave Thore the motivation to dive more deeply into supporting/reforming cultural entrepreneurship. Similarly, though an alumnus of the Pop Akademie in Mannheim (the University for Music Business, Creative Industries, and Popular Music), and though the Pop Akademie is very much an exciting initiative to bring music education up to date with the modern rock/pop music scene and to create knowledgeable and prepared artists and professionals to navigate it, Hendrik regards his DIY education as equal in importance in his preparation for truly understanding the kind of actor he needed to be in the local music scene. Upon graduating, Hendrik worked for VibeLab before pursuing his own booking and promoting agency in Hamburg, which he still runs as well as working at Hamburg Konzerte. None of this is to suggest that the DIY should just replace the academic but rather these spheres can work alongside each other. Hendrik also spent time lecturing at the local Hafen City University, during which he discussed ways forward for the live music industry with a mix of students interested in these challenges during COVID-19. The interdisciplinary problem-solving encompassed architecture, music, business and planning, in pursuit of innovative solutions through his practical expertise and the students' novel approaches. Hendrik found it incredibly enlightening from a personal perspective, and through this even discovered clubs and audiences he was unaware of. Meanwhile, the students planned a festival in their local area with Hendrik's help, in exactly the kind of DIY way Hendrik values. The lessons to take from this is that like his approach to booking, his approach to education and experience is that all stakeholders share experience and build relationships such that new and exciting energy can continue to be fostered, and in the end a culture is contributed to, strengthened, and developed, not just joined or accepted.

For Hendrik, more educational initiatives like this need to exist in Hamburg. He'd also like to see the Nuremberg Stadtteilzentren model reproduced more widely. This is an initiative which facilitates neighbourhood cultural hubs to reproduce units of culture per neighbourhood based on the open sharing of information and demand in individual contexts.⁹⁶ They are charitable, grassroots, DIY affairs, excellent at providing accessibility for specific locales and communities while also growing and instructing each neighborhood in how to grow their local culture and try out the things that work for them.

4.3 Supporting musicians

Supportive communities and frameworks for emerging artists

Jonas Hammerschmidt and Peter Milde make up the guitar/bass folk/country duo that is The Danjoband. As an emerging band on the Freiburg scene, their focus is original handmade acoustic music. They have already released their first album and are producing their second. With Freiburg's population of around a quarter of a million, they nevertheless described to me a city with a thriving music scene with plenty of *Anerkennung*. Jonas told me how, during COVID, when music venues were closed, the busking community exploded, and was well funded by passers-by, sometimes dropping €20-50 notes into hats and cases, and offering encouragement. It is clear that music matters to the community here.

Peter echoed this. Having spent time in Berlin studying music, he prefers Freiburg, finding the sheer multiplicity of possibilities in Berlin diluted the earnest investment and commitment of both musicians and audiences in individual bands, initiatives, and venues. Peter described a city of villages and bubbles in contrast to Freiburg, which is built around a centre on which people converge (see section 3). Jonas similarly praised the family-like atmosphere in Freiburg – something he really felt from the two-year mark of his time on the scene when he knew everyone. Both said Freiburg's lively, adaptable, and valued live music scene is a great place to start with an invested audience that genuinely values its artists in payment and attendance.

Jonas and Peter are also in general very impressed with the array of sustainable and accessible live music on offer in Freiburg, whether it is the 600 concerts a year that the Hochschule für Musik performs, or [the Freiburg Institute for Musicians' Medicine](#)'s ability to help musicians understand and repair their bodies as a result of intense playing. They also point to [E-WERK](#) and other such venues which support cultural integration through working with musical initiatives like refugee choirs and children's music programs and the [Jazz & Rock Schulen](#) which educates young students to learn and love performing music.⁹⁷ All of these bodies and organisations exist in close proximity to each



Jonas Hammerschmidt (left) and Peter Milde (right) of The Danjoband live on stage from www.thedanjoband.com

other and work together to generate audience and germinate new participations across the city, whether it is the Hochschule für Musik sending students to play at the Goethe-Institut, or the Goethe-Institut bringing in international musicians to play with partner venues in the city.

However, they admit that to grow they will eventually have to leave the supportive incubator that is Freiburg. Several bands they know have left the city for Hamburg or Berlin because they need the volume and scale. However, not necessarily wanting to move so far afield, The Danjoband are assessing the frameworks there might be to support them. They have already begun strategising their development options, but are unsure. One option is to tour a thematic circuit of Irish pubs, who always want live music, are friendly to English-language country/folk music, and whose audiences may help grow their reputation among visiting anglophone patrons as The Danjoband uses English lyrics. It is also Peter's hope that the pub owners can link up with each other and catapult them from one venue to the next.

This highlights the difficulties of finding supportive frameworks for up-and-coming musicians in regional Germany. For one thing, the band described a lack of stage visibility for certain genres, such as folk. Their audience is healthy, however, even at festivals and in Freiburg's venues, they feel they are often playing on weird stages, because they are paired with other less common genre acts, so the concentration of the audience on a niche genre nexus is not possible.

A guaranteed expectation of fair payment is also difficult for them to secure, they say. It is the principal reason they are a duo and not a larger combo, as splitting fees four or more ways is too meagre a salary. Peter listed the three festivals which are crucial to the region's musical ecosystem. He praises the fact that each gives stage space for local bands, but also points out that small artists are basically expected to play for free (for exposure, or just for love of music). It is not, he believes that there is not sufficient funding going around – sound techs and other logistical staff are well paid, just less so the artists.

The band has also had less success than they would have liked with their album on the local radio in the region. They believe that the local radio could do a better job at promoting local German artists as they do in France with their indigenous/Francophone cultural quota. Many radio stations receive public funding, but don't make a proportionate effort to cultivate and serve their public with local musical content, according to the band.

In terms of the bureaucracy behind live music funding, Jonas and Peter also had interesting insights. As part of another band project, [QULT](#), Peter and Jonas were involved in the recipient of a €25,000 federal grant. What in the first instance appeared like a very generous windfall, indicative of a robust and supportive funding environment, did, according to Peter, in its details, quickly reveal many of the problems with local music support frameworks. Firstly, the grant was taxed, which reduced its size significantly. Secondly, the grant could only be used as part of a project proposal, in this case a music video (it could not simply be used to subsist or to support the buying of gear or recording time). Thirdly, the money had to go into the hands of other vendors. So basically, none of it was supposed to go into the artists living and working as a job. It was Peter's opinion that sustaining artists should be a bigger funding priority than funding big projects, the weighting of which towards developed and industry profitable/adjacent job creating initiatives is not supportive of emerging musical talent. Though, in the end the music video was impressively made (as I saw on YouTube),⁹⁸ the discrete project approach to the funding meant that it had no promotional paths to proceed. There was no follow up application possible to market, promote, and gain momentum for the video.

Similarly, Jonas has a passion project to video all of the bands in his music cooperative playing an extended mini-festival. The band piggy-backs off a community co-working space by occupying the basement with five other bands (one per weeknight). The music co-op, as it has become, wishes eventually to break off from the co-working space and become independent, creating an artist funded studio rather than a band funded one to provide established artists facilities to record, which then subsidises the bands who use it to grow and develop. This video would add to

the argument for the viability of their musical co-op model, and surely be a good news story of thriving cultural interaction and growth. According to Jonas, the deputy mayor of Freiburg is reputed to love the idea, but the bureaucracy around which media is handled means that apparently, the video project is not 'video' enough to gain video funding, and not 'musical' enough to gain musical funding from the city, and no higher order funding seems available either .

As above when discussing government's need to intervene in a way that understands the current context and landscape, it would thus seem in some ways that the goals of the arts and culture policy are sound, but the application imperfect. Both also have the impression that the general funding and support frameworks are weighted towards more classical music and theatre in the first instance, and larger, more bankable initiatives in the second.

The band are nevertheless optimistic about the Freiburg KulturLabor [\(see below\)](#) and Baden-Wurtemberg's state-funded Popland studies.⁹⁹ They hope that these promising reform-oriented approaches will tilt the conversation and the frameworks of support towards something more immediately supportive of them and their contribution to Freiburg's rich live music scene.



Buskers on the streets of Freiburg

Government innovations to support the creative community

The aforementioned KulturLabor is an innovative approach to supporting live music and musicians within the community. To learn more, I spoke to a cultural planning advisor for the city's Cultural Department. This department advises and supports artists, groups, and art and cultural institutions in all aspects of their work to promote and develop a diverse art and cultural life in the city. In particular, it appears focused on the management of networks, cooperation, and development of cultural infrastructure (all issues The Danjoband appear invested in on their own journey above). Currently, this focus is being pursued through a novel process of engagement and analysis that translates into English as the cultural laboratory.¹⁰⁰ KulturLabor looks at how to support a vibrant cultural scene as an essential part of the quality of life of the city, and seeks to build on and fulfil policies and ambitions to put arts and culture at the centre of life in Freiburg. It revolves around an open, participatory process with a wide variety of stakeholders, already spanning 2-3 years. Three full-time staff are assigned to the initiative, supported by university partnerships. The end goal is an updated municipal strategy to meet current and anticipated cultural needs in the community. The process was open to any artist or cultural stakeholder and rolled out in three stages.

Discussion forums – amongst artists and experts about current and future issues and themes with a focus on promotion, sustainability and inclusivity in the cultural sector.

Experiments – open calls for practical trials to learn and assess possibilities or measure theory against practice over the course of a year. This was run in partnership with the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.¹⁰¹ Participants were mostly artists but also some independent venues. Nine experiments were chosen, then monitored and evaluated with academic rigour.

A Cultural strategy – the consolidation of discussions and trial learnings into a paper for politicians on new policies.

Some of these experiments focused on live music, such as *Initiative Free Music Scene #1 – free.networked.sustainable* looking at how common interests work and how solidarity and synergy in the music scene can replace competition and self interest, or *Music in the district*, which promotes networking through younger clubs and groups and gives amateur groups greater access to the city's support. Perhaps the most innovative musical experiment was *Music experience for the deaf*, on how to provide the right to participate in music and live concerts for the hearing impaired.

In late February, 2024, the City of Freiburg released the outcomes of this process in the strategy *Shaping art and culture funding for the future* for sustainable cultural promotion.¹⁰² The strategy identifies seven strategic goals, each aligned with a principle. The goals are:

1. Art and culture funding enables spaces for free and experimental work. Cultural organisations can rely on secure basic structures and work to a greater extent in a networked and agile manner.
2. Social responsibility is anchored in politics, administration and cultural businesses.
3. Environmentally friendly, climate-protecting and resource-saving orientation of production-related processes, distribution and communication channels are part of art and culture funding.
4. Forms of discrimination and barriers to the perception and participation of cultural offerings are actively recognised and reduced through appropriate measures.
5. Personnel, program planning and communication of cultural offerings as well as the composition of committees correspond to the plurality and diversity of our society.
6. Cross-departmental collaborations strengthen art and culture as an integral part of a vibrant urban society.
7. The City of Freiburg's funding measures are understandable for third parties and pursue sustainable development in the art and culture sector.

The consultation period and engagement will not end with the code. The city will reorient its planning, support, and

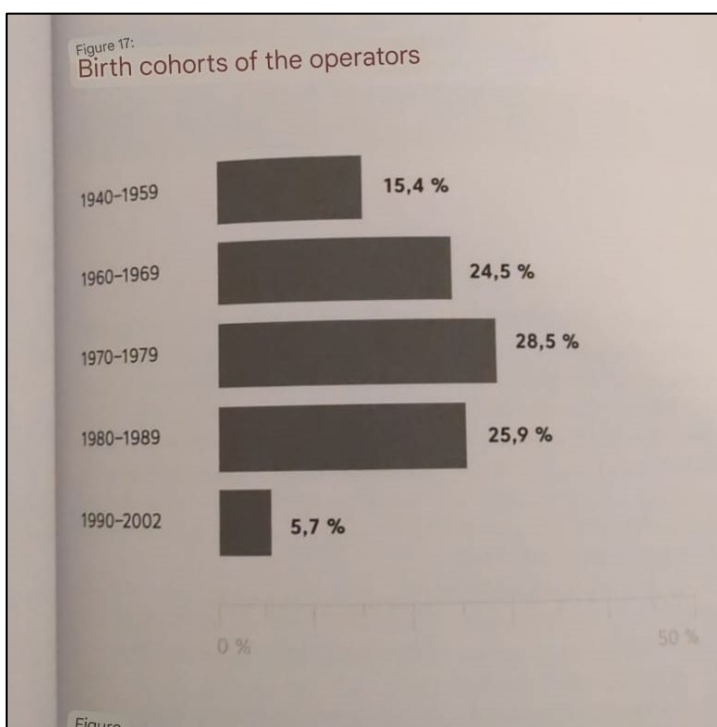
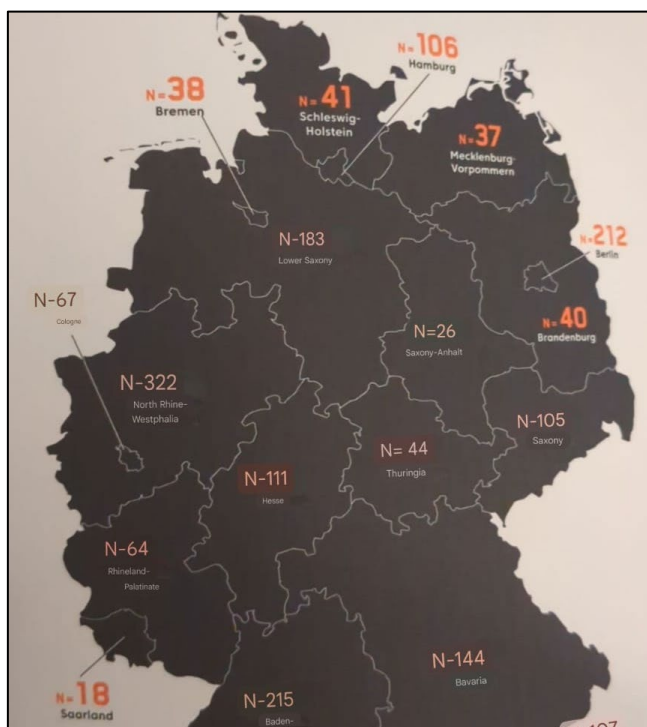
capacity building and distribution of resources accordingly. This will include industry-specific principles, outreach and assistance. Workshops and engagement will continue to ensure a balance of interests and representation. The city will also provide more skills development and training in addition to funding and facilitation. External partners will be brought in to assist, but it will be run out of and as the City of Freiburg to ensure tools are supporting those most in need of them, and in a sustainable, maximally accessible way.

Flexible and needs-based support and funding

At the federal level, a progressive flexibility is also pursued. Lisa Andersohn and Boris Paillard are co-leads for Live Music Funding at Initiative Musik,¹⁰³ the German federal government’s central funding institution for live music artists and performance venues. Their work aims to support a diverse musical landscape while also encouraging social justice and ecological sustainability. For example, this could be through supporting emerging talent, diversity, or regional access. After the more comprehensive Neustart Kultur program¹⁰⁴ that encouraged pandemic and post-pandemic survival, Lisa and Boris currently co-lead the Live500 program and Festival Promotion Fund.^{105,106} These provide project/performance specific funding for smaller concerts featuring newcomers or experimental genres, as well as a focus on specific socio-cultural aspects, such advocating for ecological sustainability in clubs and festivals.

Having access to music and musical opportunities for everyone regardless of where they are in Germany, or who they are, is what drives Lisa and Boris in their roles. This means an understanding that the destination or endpoint for every venue or act is not to be a stadium or stadium filler, but simply that people can find a stage to watch or get up on, and that doing so at the scale of ten or twenty fans is, as already expressed by others in this report, an important end in itself in terms of culture, freedom of expression, democracy, and self-development. The needs-based funding Lisa and Boris administer can support this in many ways, including funding a festival in a regional area, part-funding emerging talent in a local club, or funding a venue to secure more tech infrastructure or skills.¹⁰⁷

As mentioned in section 4.1, data collection is also an important part of Initiative Musik’s work. Lisa was intimately involved with the [Clubstudie](#) and also praises the [Deutsche Musikinformationszentrum](#), the data collecting arm of the Deutscher Musikrat.¹⁰⁸ Such data collection, connected with ongoing dialogue with lobby groups allows Initiative Musik to make the best argument to politicians when they are pitching for funding, as well as to understand and adapt their funding programs to best suit the landscape.



As seen elsewhere, experience on the ground is important for the approaches of Lisa and Boris. Lisa formerly ran a small jazz venue in Berlin, while Boris is a former musician, musical production professional and booker. Initiative Musik has many employees whose experience in the music scene helps them to translate government process for their stakeholders. For example, they provide 'how to' guides on the notoriously cumbersome German form filling process and hold sessions with applicants. With an aging group of venue owners and festival organisers in particular, a big part of their work is also relating the intrinsic importance of current thinking and social value of things like technological and digital investment, as well as ecological sustainability, not to mention social diversity.

They find ways to offer flexibility in a process that otherwise needs firm guardrails to ensure probity and fairness. The first example of this is that the formal criteria for rural regions and clubs tend to be more relaxed. A second example was the response to many smaller, regional clubs objecting to the standard 24 shows a year as the minimum requirement to be considered a music venue, which was too onerous for them. So, a scalable metric has been introduced: towns of below 20,000 must put on twelve shows per year, while those with below 50,000, eighteen, and finally only towns of 50,000+ must put on 24. Thirdly, Lisa and Boris have suggested the interaction of concerts/performances organised (Boris's favourite and most useful metric) also interacts interestingly with venue density, and state or regional populations. An example of this adaptability is that every state gets a maximum amount of money blocked out for them, however, should they not meet this maximum at the end of the application round window, the overhang can be reallocated to waitlisted projects from other states or regions.

For Initiative Musik, partners like the various kombinats or LiveKomm help local needs be understood, and how funding programs can be designed to support musicians and venues, in combination with an objective and fair process and distribution. Their semi-autonomous agency model allows Initiative Musik to act on exigent matters as they see fit. Being able to do this is a major part of their success, say Lisa and Boris, and a model they recommend for Australia.

Mentoring musicians in their careers

As identified by The Danjoband, up-and-coming musical success can be a difficult journey without supportive frameworks and engaged follow-through, but this can also come from artists themselves. Sharon Kempton, an opera and oratorio singer, originally from Melbourne, Australia, is a musician who understands this, and argues for the need of mentoring and coaching as another necessary aspect in the support of artist fulfillment. Currently working as a soloist with the Hessen State Theater in Wiesbaden and as a freelancer throughout Germany, Sharon has built a sustainable and fulfilling career. In the first instance, she credits the cultural value Germany holds for opera and its



Sharon Kempton on stage used with permission from <https://sharonkempton-coach.com/>

music population density, institutional distribution, and accessible transport network for being able to access these opportunities. However, Sharon believes that a healthy sense of initiative and practice at seizing opportunities has been also instrumental. To this end, she believes that there should be more mentoring for musicians, not just on the craft of singing, but to promote and support oneself as a musician. Her expansion into life and career coaching, helping up-and-coming singers to find pathways with certainty and direction is representative of this.¹⁰⁹ She helps her mentees understand how to manage themselves as solo entrepreneurs and navigate their environment with resilience and confidence. Setting clear goals and integrated 2/5/10 year plans to fit contexts and desires are also crucial. Sharon believes that this kind of support should be available in every city when it comes to the instruction of classical singers and performers coming out of universities as part of a coordinated follow-through framework through which full maturity and fulfillment of artists and talent can be pursued.

For example, in her own genre, opera, she claims young singers currently face four pathways – young artist program, audition, chorus work, or competition. Each of these experiences offers a different experience and trajectory, and each has different competitive demands on the individual. Without knowing this, singers can stumble into an ill-suited path, resulting in negative experiences. Until she won and placed in competitions, Sharon received little career guidance or much positive affirmation and felt quite lost. Now Sharon helps her mentees clarify their positions and what their ideal future would look like by asking: “Why are you doing this? What kind of performer do you want to be? What will make it sustainable for you as a person? What kind of family, wealth, living circumstances do you want?” It is only then that a pathway can be identified and a plan can be formed – often involving mapping and developing important networking contacts, identifying ways into the consciousness of promoters, venue owners, and relevant audiences, and flexibly practicing their craft in a targeted and refined way.

Sharon does not think the responsibility rests solely with artists themselves, she also desires the teaching of better expectation management around what it means to be an artist during artistic training, as she does with the young Australians who come over on the [German-Australian Opera Grant](#) (see section 4.4). Also helpful would be to see more entrepreneurial spirit in universities and with young artist programs, rather than the hands-off attitude taken on how to navigate the landscape after graduation by universities – a sentiment echoed by many of the academically trained musicians I spoke to.

Facilitation and sharing

Nevertheless, inter-artist community as a necessary support framework was also identified on the other side of the country and from an entirely different perspective by Mary Ocher. Mary is a recording artist, performer, poet, director, and visual artist. Born in Russia, and also a citizen of Israel, she has been living and working in Berlin since 2007. She cites the Berlin she moved to (see section 3.5) as a city appealing to people who didn't fit in elsewhere, with a healthy sense of the ad hoc/informal in event planning. Lamenting gentrification and financialisation in city that is much less permissive than it used to be she emphasizes the importance of communal pooling of knowledge and resources as a remedy to this narrowing permissibility and low-stakes permissibility.

To this end, during the pandemic Mary also worked on setting up the [Underground Institute](#).¹¹⁰ This is an initiative that shares resources, knowledge and experience to create a network of national and international connectivity between the underground and the art-music scenes. In the face of increased market control and profit maximisation in the broader industry and the rigidity it brings, the institute is run entirely by artists, and seeks to use that like-minded network as a platform to empower outreach to sympathetic collaboration with promoters, festivals, radio stations, and labels. It is also responsible for putting together promotional compilations (functioning like a mini-label) and has mounted at least one festival for the artists on its roster.¹¹¹ Mary thinks that Berlin's main strength continues to be that people from many different places are doing many different things. This is in contrast, she says, to Hamburg for example, which is more unified and also more culturally German. Both models have their advantages and disadvantages, but for her, especially as a niche, experimental artist, the Berlin model is more fruitful, it simply

requires more navigation and engagement of the various constellations and networks.

Sharing and general capacity-building is key to this. Through her work with the Underground Institute, she strengthens the scene's capability in general, sharing her knowledge and learning in relation to the administrative and entrepreneurial activity necessary to becoming a self-sustaining artist – echoing Sharon here, she suggests that the majority of her job is self-promotion, relationships with funders, booking agents, etc. Yet this is not taught or spoken about, and often expected by young artists to be done by some other body or institution.

Mary sees the community fostered by the institute as essential to the survival of artists, even her own artistry. The reliance on friendly-discounts and connections becomes ever more important in a world of rising costs, while orienting tips and tricks help people over obstacles that perhaps they might not have surmounted otherwise, keeping alive the possibilities for the next up-and-coming artist in this or that genre. In other words, for Mary, community among artists is the only way to operate within the ecosystem such as it is, as it is the only part of the ecosystem that will still offer them recognition, permission, and capacity simply because they are artists.

This being said, Mary remains complimentary of the funding landscape, and the general protection of artists in Germany. During the pandemic, she received freelance support, GEMA support, and still managed to procure project funding. For Mary, as a Berlin denizen, it is good that funding is available for smaller, riskier undertakings in the first instance and the funding administration personnel are happy to explain and assist with the difficult application process. As with The Danjoband though, she is clear though that the majority of funding is project focused and requires concerted organisation and a network of partners to be successful. This is a relatively high barrier to entry, and Mary suggests that one seems to have had to have had a project funded once to be likely to have one funded in the future, so it is not always a system friendly to outsiders. Moreover, the funding landscape changes with topicality creating trends in social causes that often sets the tone for who gets funding – with catchphrases and labels sometimes being thrown around more than substance. Meanwhile, Mary still sees large barriers in Germany to those of racially diverse backgrounds, and the visa/citizenship situation continues to be slow and complex, especially for those with limited funds, but plenty of political outspokenness. As a result, more and more of her colleagues are

*Mary Ocher, Fruitmarket, Edinburgh Jan 2024 © Andy Catlin
www.andycatlin.com*



worried about having outspoken politics for the same reason of falling in or out of funding trends. It is for this reason, she remains firm that artistic networks are the essential community support in the first instance.

In terms of the broader music industry and its networks and facilitation, Mary sees it as at best subsidising smaller artists, and the development pipeline of talent and venues by way of putting on bigger artist shows. At worst, Mary sees the music industry simply rent-seeking and being overly focused on commercial return – she is particularly unenthused by social media’s drive toward market monopoly. She cites what she calls YouTube’s “pay for visibility” model, and laments that virality is often not organic anymore, but sponsored. Added to a generally balkanised media/informational landscape, it can be very challenging for artists to find, engage, and motivate an audience to attend their live shows. Compounding this for Mary, small music club shows are not profitable in the current financial environment in Berlin. While Germany and Switzerland can pay twice or even five times as much as what she might make for one show in the UK, she believes that the relationships between funders, promoters, audiences, venue owners, and artists need to be re-examined to create an optimal balance.

In terms of facilitation and sharing internationally, as a touring musician, Mary wants to make it easier for musicians to travel and tour different countries in the first instance. Her experience of Australia was particularly problematic due to the licensed sponsorship model of the artist visa that was in operation. As a Russian/Israeli citizen she finds it very difficult to navigate immigration systems in general, including in Germany where she is a resident. Nevertheless, she sees Australia as having fertile ground for artistic activity because of its encouraging culture and generous desire to help others.

Fair access to instruction, remuneration, and support

Anna Mavrommatis-Karaaslan has a lot to contribute to the subject of accepting and helping musicians. Anna is a classical musician and graduate of Music Schools in Maastricht and Würzburg. She is active as a freelance violinist, a music teacher for children, and also as part of an initiative to create an inclusive music school for local immigrants and disadvantaged children: Willkommen mit Musik (or [WIMU](#)).

Anna describes Würzburg as a city with a thriving live music scene – with a very dense number of high-quality classical musical concerts for a small, regional Bavarian city of its size – with the music, for the most part taking place in very beautiful venues, which adds to a sense of value for the music. Even without a website, the opportunities to play as a freelance musician are many for her.

As a teacher, Anna has found her experiences with WIMU very heartening. Its award-winning success is indicative of the importance and value placed on live and classical music. Anna expresses great admiration for WIMU, a mutually beneficial musical community project for all involved parties. The local Abbey satisfies its outreach requirements by subsidising space and gains occupation and repair for unused assets,^{112,113} the City of Würzburg supports musicians and immigrant outreach, musicians gain wages, experience, and CV-building opportunities as teachers, and poorer local children and immigrants get a community support network that is also socially and culturally enriching.

Nevertheless, Anna suggests that the network she built through WIMU and the recognition and funding from the City that the initiative receives is missing more broadly in her life as a working musician. Anna’s principal issue is payment. As a freelance musician, it is a constant fight for her to justify the price of her playing, with people only considering the performance time, rather than practice, travel, and organisation. The problem, too, is that there is no minimum wage situation for artists that takes account of this. There is no minimum performance fees for artists (below national minimum wage per hours worked), such that whatever price is quoted by concert organisers will always find willing participants. It is the same story all over the country, according to Anna, thousands of graduating Hochschule für Musik students, including many of her former peers, are chasing mere hundreds of places in various orchestras around the country. These places alone often do not even suffice for a living, except for competitive A-grade orchestra contracts, which, even so, are seldom for more than a year at a time. Anna agreed with The Danjoband’s sentiments that Germany really places emphasis on the right and access to culture in its funding, but

that it doesn't feel like that from a practitioner's perspective, as funding is more institutionally focused. It would be a big help if there was an artist's minimum wage so that she wasn't constantly worried about being undercut, or even something like the French Government's artist's wage which ensures guaranteed provision for a respected vocation during times of difficulty or insufficient work.¹¹⁴

As a freelancer – and because of the way most contracts for any kind of musical work are set up for classical musicians, most classical musicians in Germany are freelancers – her commercial viability is her responsibility. Anna felt incredibly privileged and grateful for her time at the Hochschulen für Musik, and had amazing experiences studying at these institutions. However, once out of the prestigious institutions, musical resources and provision drop away. Anna was already teaching in her undergraduate degree as early as possible to build her CV. Meanwhile, finding a place to play/practice after graduation was her primary difficulty, with noise restrictions in residential buildings and rehearsal space difficult to find in Würzburg. Anna suggests in a Hochschule für Musik city, a post-Hochschule musical rehearsal space would be a simple throughline of effective support. This was a sentiment echoed to some extent by The Danjoband. When interviewed, Jonas had heard of the affordable music rehearsal spaces in Munich and lamented the fact that they were not in existence in Freiburg. Both Peter and Jonas said that publicly funded rehearsal space would be nice, but that their private basement space in a co-working community office has been a lucky break in itself. Like Anna, The Danjoband say that if they did not have this, they would not have anywhere official to rehearse or record as so scarce is the availability of rehearsal spaces in Freiburg that the trend is for house owners to rent out rooms to bands by the hour as it is more profitable than having lodgers.

For Anna, this wider lack of support for freelance/up-and-coming young artists became very stark during COVID-19 where she was among the last employment types to be prioritised for vaccination, and even her position as a music teacher was placed behind regular teachers. A greater engagement from all three levels of the bureaucratic framework (local, state, federal) with musicians and their wellbeing would be a good thing. She noted the professional association for (freelance) musicians: [Der Deutsche Tonkünstlerverband](#) was a helpful support network for her.¹¹⁵ However, Anna suggested that even her most prestigious performances, such as supporting pop stars in large state capital opera houses with her freelancer-based orchestra do not pay nearly enough given the preparation and transport costs involved. €150 before tax for one night of show work and the practice and travel that is involved. This is in comparison the biggest church shows she plays as a chamber musician: €80-€100. Indeed, Anna praises how involved the local churches are as employers, venues, and entrepreneurial organisers of concerts in her city and region, yet the work is remains competitive and subject to sometime hard pay negotiations.

Unlike The Danjoband, after years of tuition at prestigious Hochschulen für Musik, including her local one, Anna also described a fear of public condescension should she try busking on the street. This distinction between what is permissible for classical musicians is a barrier for more live classical performance in public spaces, helping to create greater accessibility for local audiences and perhaps more opportunities for its musicians by removing the pedestal it has been put on – in a positive sense. A common theme already examined in other ways above, Anna believes that less polarisation in general between the 'high' and 'low' cultural spheres in Germany could be a good thing for local classical music, allowing more conjoined advocacy and opportunity for it as part of a unified live music sector.

In this sense, [Piano Salon Christophori](#) is a lively example of bringing more accessibility into classical music. They host affordable concerts (usually €25-30 on the door) in a piano workshop in Wedding, Berlin, hosting everything from classical hits to serious and obscure sonata playing.¹¹⁶ Audiences get to hear amazing virtuosity at much less cost than they would usually pay, and classical musicians of all stripes can reach new audiences, curate and experiment with their repertoire, and receive payment outside of more formal, preparation intensive concerts. This is an easily replicable model that can be reproduced anywhere (give or take the availability of a well-tuned grand piano or two.)



Piano Salon Christophori, Berlin

4.4 Music beyond borders

This section focuses on initiatives that facilitate and create benefits from music's power to reach beyond borders, whether social or geographical – in short: from community to community. Some are social initiatives, looking at practitioner and audience access and participation. Some are focused on building and supporting networks of exchange through music. While I was familiar with the Goethe-Institut's work supporting live music and cultural exchange between Australia and Germany, I was also interested to hear of other collaborations between our countries that aim to support live music, highlighting music's unsung role as one of the world's most successful mediums for cultural exchange.

Overcoming socio-economic barriers to participate in music

Jonas Hermes is a founding member and one of five permanently contracted teaching staff at Willkommen mit Musik, as discussed above, WIMU is a solidarity-oriented music school charity which aims to bring music education to all in its home city of Würzburg. WIMU emerged to fill a gap in the market in relation to music access. It began as a series of student concerts at a refugee shelter in 2014. It has since grown into a local and state government backed initiative (formally registered as a charity association in 2018) with its own premises thanks to a local religious congregation's subsidized rent.^{117,118} It now provides a broad community outreach of continued migrant integration, augmenting under-resourced high school instruction, and regular in-house musical instruction.

WIMU teaches in-house lessons to students, as a conventional music school might, but targeting students in need. It creates a sustainable model by agreeing a fee with each family based on their personal circumstances, with the remainder of costs funded through WIMU's other resources. Musical instruments are provided, as is space.

WIMU's community outreach also takes place in family-assistance centres and temporary migrant shelters and processing centres. WIMU performs concerts and uses social media to highlight events and student profiles to showcase their multi-cultural and integrative work and promote a positive method of cultural integration.^{119, 120, 121} WIMU has also worked abroad with incoming migrants into Greece.

The community, according to Jonas, is a big part of WIMU's success, with one-off donors, long-term subscribers, the help of several institutions from the Hochschule für Musik, and as mentioned, the religious congregation subsidizing its rent. Some wealthier students also choose to attend WIMU at full fees, which can help to subsidise costs for other students, although full fee places are limited to retain WIMU's status as a charity. The prestige and recognition across the community also provides a positive image for class-conscious and multi-cultural integration.

WIMU has already sent several students to higher level musical education. However, ultimately, for Jonas, the mission of WIMU it is not about sending students to predetermined futures, but simply to deliver the benefit of music to the community. With many more passionate musicians now in the city thanks to WIMU, and jobs created both directly and indirectly for the musical community through its endeavours, this seems a goal that's been achieved. Jonas is happy to say he, himself is an example of WIMU's musical benefits claiming a greater sense of joy in working with music that he previously had as a session musician, and he thinks this is true of all the teachers.

Ultimately, it is Jonas's ambition to continue growing WIMU's outreach and to support earlier and easier access for students. As part of that he hopes to see Germany's onerous form-filling bureaucracy move to an access-first model, as currently language barriers, complexity, and the lack of digitised administration impacts people's ability to navigate the system and remains a major barrier to WIMU and those it wishes to serve.

Cultural mixing within cities and between countries

Ghazaleh Ebrahimi is in the music division at the Goethe-Institut HQ in Munich. This team consults and advises on the musical activities of Instituts worldwide, overseeing policy, outlining goals, proposing acts, and aiding with finance and grants. She also helps to run the Goethe Institut podcast about the German music scene, [The Popcast](#)

(on which Mary Ocher was recently asked to be featured), and is a judge for the [Goethe Talents Scholarship](#). This program supports and connects young, aspiring musical artists including singer-songwriters and composers, usually under thirty years old and from developing countries. Having programs like this is a great cultural interaction for Germany's music scene and the musicians themselves. The scholarship is a cooperation between the Goethe-Institut and the [Pop-Kultur festival](#) organisers. 2023 was the eighth time it was run.

Ghazaleh also spoke to me in her role as a musician based in Munich, working in various genres. Originally from Iran, like Mary's work mentioned above, she herself is also an example of the richness of international cultural exchange, and originally came to Germany through an internationally-focused artistic program. From her own journey to being a practicing musician based in Munich, she has a valuable perspective. She is especially very aware from own background, having left Iran quite late into adulthood due to her commitment to the local underground music scene there, that political power deeply affects cultural production, and that not only reactionary politics, but also simple risk-averse, or conservative politics can be a great enemy to mixing, change, and new ideas. According to her, the best thing about Munich's live music culture is the rich mixing that can occur. This takes its cue from the general culture of beer halls and gardens, where all sit together. Taking me to the local music café, [Café Baader](#), she showed me how old and young, rich and poor tend to mix freely, such that new and interesting ideas germinate. This makes for a risk-taking and entrepreneurial music scene that is open and thriving.

The poster features a background of vertical stripes in shades of orange, red, and purple. At the top right is a white circular logo with concentric lines. The main title 'KLAVIER BEI GOETHE' is in large white letters. Below it, 'MIT KLAVIERSTUDIERENDEN DER HOCHSCHULE FÜR MUSIK FREIBURG' is written in smaller white text. On the left, the names 'BEETHOVEN', 'SCHUMANN', and 'DEBUSSY' are listed vertically in white. The date and time '22. NOVEMBER 2023 19 UHR' are in the center. Below that, the venue 'GOETHE-INSTITUT FREIBURG WILHELMSTR. 17 | 79098 FREIBURG' and 'EINTRITT FREI | SPENDEN ERWÜNSCHT' are listed. At the bottom left is the logo for Hochschule für Musik Freiburg. At the bottom right is a red circular badge with '50' and '50 Jahre Goethe-Institut FREIBURG'.

Ghazaleh likes how the funding of live music in Munich allows people to take risks to make things for their community. She cites the [Puch Festival](#) in rural northwestern Bavaria. This was initially a DIY festival started by farmers to bring music up to their community. The festival attracts more than 20 bands a year now and brings music (including well-known bands) to an audience that might not get this music otherwise.

Ghazaleh also highlighted Munich's [Kafe Kult](#) as an "anything goes" place that puts on bands that are good, but not necessarily commercially viable elsewhere. She likes this more supportive, volunteer-based model, as it reminds her of back in Iran, where shows could be put on in abandoned places with a 'pay as you like' model. She also mentions live DJ bikes, in which a bike with a sound system can turn any public place in the city into an outdoor disco, for free and open to all.

Gentrification and wealth in Munich mean that often times outlying or underground venues fall victim to neighbourhood sound ordinances or rising prices. Nevertheless, with an excellent transport system that runs all night and

the opportunity to convert the many old factory buildings and breweries, plenty of venues seem to replace those that close and the public remains able to easily access them. The incredible resilience and specificity of some of these venues is a testament to the engaged and daring communities that form them.

In comparison to Iran, Ghazaleh is always aware of the privileges and freedoms of the German cultural landscape. She felt strongly animated as a performer in Iran on the basis that everything she did was an act of political and personal assertion (as women are not so freely able to express themselves in Iran as in Germany). She felt a huge amount of validity as an artist practicing her art in that the context in which the artist and the audience needed each other was very pronounced. Now in Munich, Ghazaleh would like to see the local live music scene maximise its comparative freedom, with more ambitions for social change, including the tackling of the visible, albeit improving gender gap in live music performers themselves.

As above, Ghazaleh is very keen on mixing cultures and perspectives to support stronger music scenes everywhere. She wants to maintain that openness for all and sees the perspectival comparison of artists engaging with other contexts as supporting a critical lens for each. To appreciate one's context fully, and one's mindset fully, Ghazaleh says exposure, exchange and comparison is vital.

Supporting social initiatives for inter-community inclusivity and change

Naturally, more inclusive live music scenes in themselves (for participants and audiences) are also more sustainable within the community. During my interviews, a number of people spoke to me of wider initiatives designed to support this widening participation and outreach to wider communities. BDKV is very active in addressing social questions where it can, especially for diversity, equality, and inclusion. In the first instance it has helped in the support of [Themis](#) as an industry member. Formed in the wake of the #MeToo movement, Themis supports those affected by sexual harassment or violence in the cultural and media industry. BDKV, as well as many of the other organisations I spoke to, also work with [Act Aware](#) which creates preventative awareness of discrimination and (sexualised) violence in German nightlife. BDKV is proud to use Act Aware as a partner and competence checker. It also is a member of [Key Change](#) for gender equality in the industry. Clubkombinat, Hamburg also supports Act Aware and the TBA (to be aware) campaign,¹²² creating the political debate for this in the media, with the public, and ultimately with politicians. Clubkombinat members can play an important role in the discussion of safety, diversity, and diverse ability access through their experiences on the ground in clubs every night. They can express preferences on the best outcomes for policing, security, lighting, and transport design. Next year, as part of its efforts, TBA will go from its recent round table event to conducting a national study of current circumstances around the country to feed a summit for awareness and kick off a large debate on the matter.¹²³

In Leipzig, Kordula noted that in terms of accessibility, Initiative Musik asks for statistics on ethnic minorities, women patrons and acts, and disability in clubs when clubs apply for funding. She sees opportunities for the industry to better use this data to understand what and who is attending events and what kind of events so that the industry can adapt accordingly. She tells me that Stuttgart has now used Leipzig's convening model (see section 4.1) and strong approach to data gathering to look at incorporating stakeholders in areas of disability, and designing culturally inclusive funding.¹²⁴ In terms of equity and inclusivity it is also worth revisiting the comments on directing more funding to developing the younger audience as a matter of generational fairness, and as a way to ensure a future audience for live music and the benefits it delivers.

Another part of inter-generational fairness involves looking at ecological initiatives in the live music ecosystem. Hamburg's Clubkombinat facilitates this by its Code of Conduct "Celebrating the Future". This does not provide direct financial support for sustainable climate action among its members, but by participating in the network and accessing expertise and resources, club operators can benefit from other financial support options.¹²⁵ It also operates a Future Fund which provides funding for clubs from the City of Hamburg to engage staff to work on environmentally sustainable management practices.¹²⁶

Beyond the stage – from live to label and back again

Gareth Davies is the former Head of International at [Kontor Records](#) (since we spoke Gareth has moved to a new role). Kontor is a dance music record label based in Hamburg, with an artist roster including ATB, Tiësto, Armin van Buuren, Leony, and Scooter. Gareth is responsible for overseeing the development and expansion of the label's international network.

Though Kontor Records is predominantly a dance music label which is more about pushing music streaming/album purchases or music, the label nevertheless grew organically from artistic DJs creating their own music in the Kontor club and is a good example of how a live scene can evolve into different initiatives beyond the stage. The label carries this legacy today, nearly 25 years later, in its name. Kontor Records and its associated business Sheffield Communications Publishing are now a 360 degree offering from A&R all the way through production, publishing, distribution, and artist management and bookings.

Gareth noted in general he felt that the dance music sector was often ignored or left to do its own thing, under the radar, so to speak. He points out that Kontor has never had any government funding, rather the label has fully leveraged the benefits of what they can do in marketing, promotion and profit maximisation.

Despite being a self-sustaining label, Kontor are enmeshed into the network that advocates for music culture and clubs in Hamburg and across Germany. It's live/digital connection with the community was epitomized by the [Kontor DJ Delivery Service livestream](#), which was an award winning musical livestream that kept vitality in the electronic music community during Germany's difficult lockdown periods. It employed DJs to play live sets and engage audiences, running seven days a week during the pandemic. The initiative won a sustainable/social-business award,¹²⁷ the prize money from which Kontor donated back to the then shuttered dance clubs in Hamburg.

Gareth and Merlin in the Kontor studios - Merlin is a producer who is signed as an artist and studying music at the local university. Merlin's example is a perfect encapsulation of Kontor's flexible and interesting relationship with both musicians, employees, and people in the industry more broadly.



Gareth sees the dance music community as an indispensable part of the ecosystem in which Kontor operates. Kontor carefully studies public trends and are constantly finding and connecting artists and publics. What allows them to do this are communities that show up and support their preferred artists, although increasingly this is happening digitally. Indonesia, one of Kontor's target areas, shares music on social media platforms with an incredibly density, as almost social interaction itself, so Kontor has been very interested in looking at this through further livestreaming.

A helpful trend that Gareth has noticed is that people don't pay so much for international DJs anymore (for albums or to see live), so the monopolisation of attention and prestige is not so pronounced as in rock/pop. This makes it harder for rock/pop clubs to continue to put on local shows profitably, but it is not the case for local artists (or artists from anywhere) when it comes to DJ albums/shows.

Kontor accordingly also puts on festival performances and various club nights with its artists. It uses its studio space not only to record its current roster of artists, but also works on pairing writers, producers, and vocalists, with the aim of developing and discovering new talent or cross-collaborations for its label. These 'songwriting summer camps' is one of the initiatives that Gareth is proudest of. It brings people from all over the world to collaborate in-studio in Hamburg, and similarly, brings Hamburg artists to partners internationally also. Naturally, Kontor works with licensing, label, and promotional partners in a similar way to facilitate their productions and performances.

Looking abroad in order to focus on the local

Hans Henkell is a German-Australian property investor, wine-merchant, and philanthropist who funds an array of classical music initiatives in Melbourne and around the country, including opera productions, lieder and opera grants, some of which even take place in his own Henkell Brothers Office buildings and Shopping Centres (expanding ideas

of what can be a venue for local live music). Notably, Hans is a part funder of the German-Australian Opera Grant, which sends young Australian opera singers to Wiesbaden to hone their craft. Hans also runs a consolidated classical music schedule of events for Melbourne and wider Victoria. He cites a strong emphasis on music education and the importance of the arts in his upbringing in Wiesbaden. As an immigrant to Australia, he wanted that emphasis and the riches it brings for Melbourne. This is not to say that his adopted city is in the shadow of his birth city.

Hans cites visibility, discoverability, and curiosity as being important to simply connect audiences to the performances of so much worthwhile classical musical performance in Melbourne. Hans wants to counter perceptions that Australia has less going on than countries in Europe, as this not always true. Lots of operas are staged in Melbourne every year, but visibility and public consciousness isn't what it could be. This could be related to how music is taught and the community value of *Anerkennung* given to it. Hans certainly believes that more emphasis on and quality of musical education is important- playing and practicing, and acquiring a love for listening to classical music, and certainly looks to his own upbringing as

MOE PLAZA
invites you to a sparkling lunch and a performance of
Friedrich von Flotow's opera
MARTHA
performed by Lyster Opera

Sunday, 27 OCTOBER 2024
2:00-5:00 PM
(Doors will open at 1pm, includes a 40 minute intermission)
22 Moore Street, MOE

This opera premiered in 1847 and was very popular in the 19th century. Even today, the melodies of this opera are so moving, that they will bring tears to your eyes.
Not convinced yet? Google this extraordinary rendition on YouTube, where you can hear Pavarotti's soulful interpretation of one of his personal favourite songs:
"Pavarotti- Flotow- M'Appari- Martha"

"Indulge in a Culinary and Cultural Experience, where gastronomy meets art."

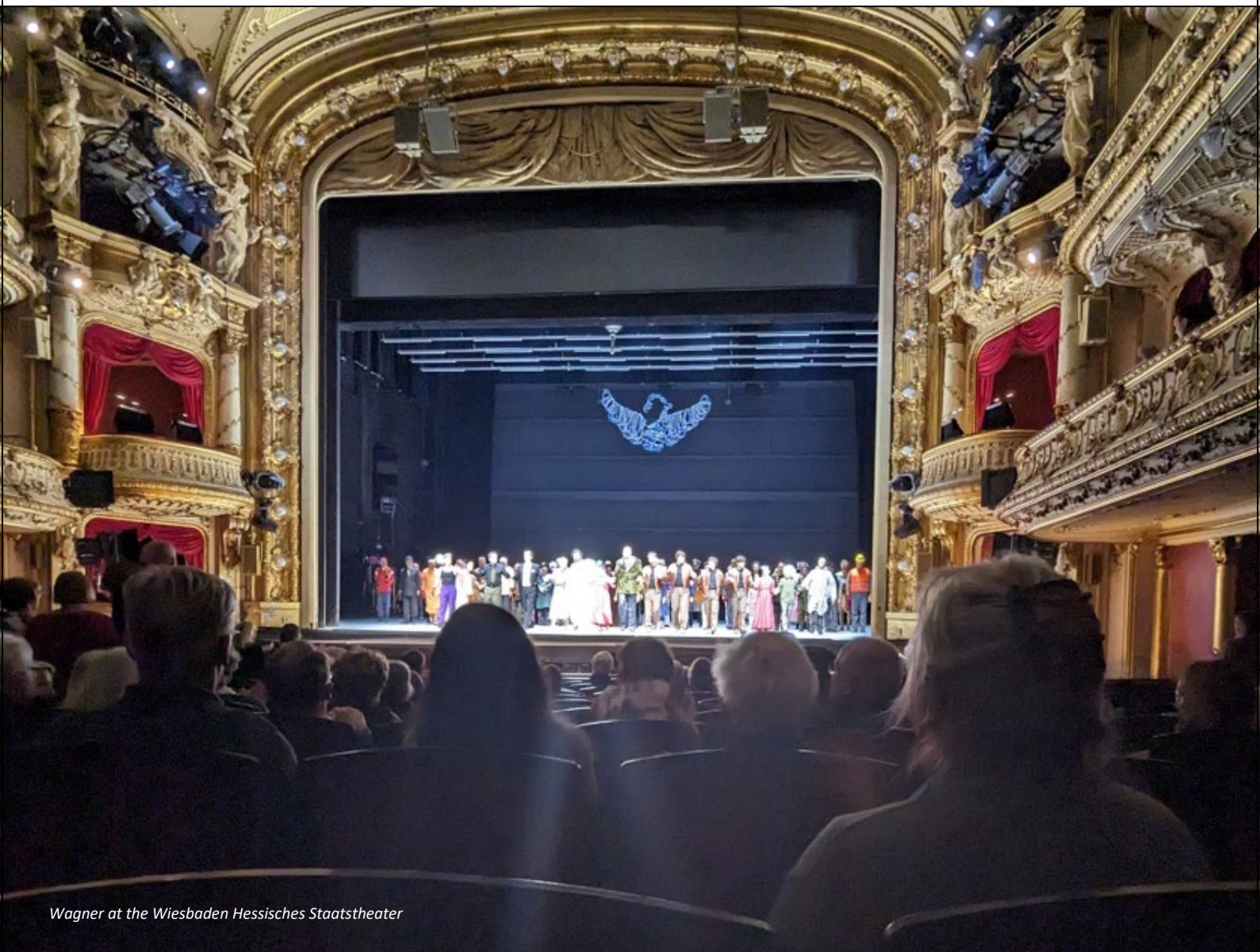
Price: \$65, including 1 HENKELL TROCKEN Piccolo and a light lunch plate
<https://www.trybooking.com>
lysteropera.com.au moeplaza.com.au

Performance of German Opera Martha in a Melbourne shopping centre, 2024

guidance for this. In this way, Hans thinks to support a sustainable classical scene the cultivation of musical education and support of artist progression is needed – musical education in Australia needs to be considered as essential, starting as early as it does, and emphasized as much as it was for him in Germany. This needs to be designed to ensure everyone has access to discover and pursue musical studies and attendance. The pipeline of musicians and their development needs to be encouraged and protected. For example, he cites the undersupply of good male opera singers in Australia as an example of where encouragement and intervention is necessary. He has no doubts that Australian men love to sing – just visit the MCG on game day! However, it’s just possible that the opera pathway clashes with a sense of what is culturally masculine and culturally Australian.

Hans is also careful to point out that looking abroad is not always the best way to understand what will work locally. For example, while Hans believes that funding and cultural facilitation is part of a government’s role– as with many I spoke to, he understands that culture is not best measured in immediate profit. However, Hans is also wary to suggest that a German approach of pursuing the fullest possible funding model is the way to proceed in Australia. Germany has a rich institutional funding model and supports artists more open-endedly. It costs billions every year and has been built up culturally and infrastructurally over decades. Delivering this platform of stable production is admirable, but not necessarily reproducible in Australia.

Rather, Hans notes, there are many worthy community groups and chamber societies that put on good value shows, engage their publics, and develop talent. In the first instance, Hans believes that simply connecting these events with an audience, and promoting visibility and support where necessary is the way forward in his locale. To this end, as well as through his funding, his wine business, Henkell Wines, supports that idea in a consolidated calendar, displaying a full run down of all live classical music in the area.¹²⁸



International networks of music to support local communities

Lena Ingwersen is the Managing Director of Music Cities Network (MCN), a transnational non-profit association of music cities and associated policymakers. The network is dedicated to improving communication and collaboration for all music city stakeholders, ultimately pursuing a sustainable acknowledgment of music as an integrated part of city development. MCN is focused on hands-on solutions and best practice approaches to a more diverse, fairer, and healthier music ecosystem. Currently Germany has two cities in the network (Berlin and Hamburg), and Australia has one (Sydney). The MCN forefronts collaboration to build better music ecosystems, including through policy exchange roundtables¹²⁹ and creative management master classes, and I was not surprised to hear the origins of the network can be traced to Hamburg.¹³⁰ Not only do MCN work to connect member cities, but to connect groups within cities, cities within the same country, and to promote the visibility of their members as music cities. The MCN are aiming for a growth of about three to four new members per year, a sustainable pace that allows for members to be nurtured and supported based on their priorities and stage of development as a music city.

The MCN incorporates five key values into their activities: Collective intelligence; Holistic approach; Continuous improvement; Innovation; Diversity. MCN champions a sustainable framework for thinking about live music. In terms of integrating music into city development, MCN looks at how to extend this beyond a siloed cultural policy approach, as a key consideration in policy for housing, employment, night-time economy, and community building – part of a new toolbox for living in 21st century society. New policy tools are required to achieve this penetration. The MCN also has a leading policy handbook available on its interactive website, covering topics such as equity, diversity and inclusion, music education, jobs and skills and infrastructure. It is a must read for anyone involved or interested in music, culture and vibrancy policies.¹³¹

MCN are looking to grow an international ecosystem of music cities. The transnational perspective is important as it sits beyond local and national politics and allows for depoliticised celebration and support while circumnavigating the pitfalls of political despair and cynicism, particularly in countries, where intransigent, extreme, or unfriendly politics shuts down debate or further possibilities for cultural innovation. In this way the power of community passion, of artists and facilitators, both internally and cross-culturally is a strong way to cut through the traditional, local, state, or nationally based political obstacles. MCN are continuing to push for community in and across music cities as way to include people, bring them together and reconcile their differences.

ABOUT MCN MUSIC CITIES NETWORK

WHAT IS A MUSIC CITY?

BEING A MUSIC CITY IS A CONCEPT

VIBRANT ECONOMY	A Music City thrives with a dynamic music economy, encompassing a community of any size.
ARTIST ORIGIN	The core of a Music City begins with the creativity and talent of artists and musicians.
PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT	It provides a nurturing environment for a wide range of professionals dedicated to assisting artists and music entrepreneurs in their career growth.
CREATIVE SPACES	The city offers a variety of spaces for education, rehearsal, recording, and performance, essential for artistic development.
LIVE SCENE	A Music City boasts an active live music scene with an enthusiastic audience, creating a fertile ground for artists to hone their craft.

www.musiccitiesnetwork.com 4

ABOUT MCN MUSIC CITIES NETWORK

FROM CONNECTING TO SHAPING

Our key missions described as below:

01 Connect
We connect with music cities, policy makers, music business professionals and artists around the globe. We jointly explore and live common transnational values, similarities and differences.

02 Learn
We learn from a diverse and experienced team of music cities experts gathered within the network. We get and give advice and insights on good practices and possibilities for music cities policies.

03 Share
We share and exchange knowledge sustainably on a professional music policy level. We understand ourselves as advocates for a more fair and diverse future in our music cities and within the global music industry.

04 Shape
We actively shape hands-on solutions to bridge the gaps between music scenes, city marketing and music policy makers. Our joint transnational activities are paving the way for Music Cities prioritising music and culture policy actively.

Our Key Missions

www.musiccitiesnetwork.com 6

5 Reflections for Australia

It can't be ignored that Germany is qualitatively different to Australia. Germany has a much older, more diffuse, and larger population with 84.6 million people vs. 26.8 million in Australia (2023) and Germany's GDP is 4.08 trillion to Australia's 1.69 trillion GDP (USD) (2023).^{132,133,134,135} The same funding, density, economies of scale, and cultural penetration are not likely to be reproducible. Germany also has institutional density: 129 publicly funded professional orchestras, 80+ permanent opera houses and 24 world-renowned Hochschulen für Musik.¹³⁶ This makes music education and training a major export, with almost one third of Germany's hochschulen students being foreign. It also makes for greater audience density. However, good chunks of what I heard in Germany could be adapted to support a sustainable, thriving live music scene across Australia as it focuses on methods and the design of initiatives rather than means. Similarly, Germany also throws into relief some of Australia's particular opportunities, advantages, and innovations, which we can continue to build on.¹³⁷

Given the above, and given that I am not an expert on local live music in Australia, a corresponding open-endedness is necessary in this section. Initially, I intended to divide this section into learnings for different roles – musicians, venue owners, support organisations, policy makers, community, audience and activists. However, in speaking with people, I saw how often these roles cut across one another. Advocates are venue owners. Policymakers are musicians. Everyone is audience and community. Therefore, I suggest this section be read by readers choosing their own role(s), and to think about how these reflections might be useful in supporting local live music in your context or simply starting or continuing conversations to do so, whether in your neighbourhood, town, city or beyond.

5.1 Collective voice, data and collaboration

The models Germany uses for a collective aggregate of voices (see section 4.1) advocating for policy change and other support for local live music is replicable in different contexts. The important steps are to set up a mission and values, build a network of collaborative relationships, and set up the data infrastructure to understand participant makeup, needs, and opportunities. This method can be replicated down to a grass roots level – while data infrastructure can be highly sophisticated and costly, it can also be as simple as soliciting and documenting the desires of the local community. Existing organisations, at either the state or federal level, in Australia could develop a free a kit for how to set up a live music focused advocacy organisation at different levels or interested parties could reach out to organisations in Germany for advice.

In making cases to politicians, different levels of government and other bodies, demonstration of the value of live music through data is critical. The VibeLab approach to data is has already been applied to Sydney (see section 4.1) and demonstrates best practice at looking beyond economic measures to overall vibrancy and community impact. Advocacy is not just about making the case to politicians, but tracking political activity, noting party promises and manifestos, and holding parties accountable for delivering on these or declining to provide support and reforms.

Having the national and local in dialogue, as through the LiveKomm model (see section 4.1), is another way to build strength through relationships. For example, [The Live Music Office](#), established by the Federal Government, offers a map of spaces and organisations across the country as a tool for artists and industry, including a search filter for music organisations. It also does great work with capacity building through its local council support program [Live and Local](#).¹³⁸

Essentially, with pathways large and small available – from NSW's world-leading state-wide 24-hour economy strategy and its exciting local programs like the Uptown Accelerator for vibrancy and Venues Unlocked programs,¹³⁹ to the City of Sydney's involvement in the international capacity building and knowledge sharing of the MCN¹⁴⁰ – the question is how can new conversations begin and how can existing ones be broadened – folding in musicians'

advocacy groups, partners big and small, urban and regional, grassroots groups and communities whose voices aren't currently being heard.

As noted, the national advocacy organisation of LiveKomm, as well as having large and well established organisations, has individual venues and festivals as members, especially from places with no city or state representation. Grassroots groups can look to the portable advocacy model (see section 4.1) for how to best get a seat at the table. A voice and knowing how to make it heard is an incredibly powerful thing – and a preceding factor to getting support through legislation and funding. Governments at all levels should ask themselves how they are talking to their live music communities (see section 4.1). Established organisations can look at how bigger, more lucrative members can support smaller ones (see section 4.1). Live music is an ecosystem with many players, and a pipeline (see section 4.2) between smaller musical acts and venues and the headline acts and stages at the more lucrative end of the market. The big need the small for this pipeline, and the small need the resources and political weight of the big. This includes big players throwing their weight behind advocacy for the entire ecosystem and paying proportionate costs for initiatives.

If organisations don't have smaller players at the table, both in terms of power, size, and geographic region, they can look at the barriers to having these voices at the table and how they can be dismantled. In terms of the number of representative bodies for different locations, in Australia this will be scaled down from Germany, both due to population size and density and age of institutions. Many towns will not have anything like a representative body, or even local government resources to support live music, but they are likely to have a musical community, perhaps venue owners and people within it who are committed to keeping that alive. Bringing more established bodies and grassroots organisations into dialogue is an important opportunity to pursue.

Certainly, progress is being made at the government level in Australia, with a wider, more constant collaboration between administrative bodies and the community itself. Sydney's recent vibrancy reforms showed how government can cast a wide, interdisciplinary net – with transport, hospitality and racing, planning, policing, and arts agencies all contributing, within government,¹⁴¹ while the community was also engaged through several surveys in the crafting of the state's new arts policy.¹⁴² Replicating this into wider society and creating widening cross-participation is an important step.

Similarly, in the private sphere, a public, consolidated catalogue of initiatives (like Clubs ARE Culture in the German context) would be a helpful resource across Australia at the national and state level, down to examples at the local level that could be leveraged, so interested parties know how they can get involved and where they might best commit their time, skill, and energy. To this end, a comprehensive map (see section 4.1) of who is having discussions in Australia, who is leading them, what relationships are in place or could be developed, and who is not participating or being heard from in the ecosystem could be an area for further research.

Having fewer long-running organisations in Australia with inflexible identities, and Australia's willingness to experiment, is another thing our country has in its favour. Australia has an opportunity to address matters that Germany hasn't made firm inroads into yet but has identified as opportunities. With the importance of sharing and community so strongly emphasized by my participants, it seems there is always more opportunity for musicians, venues, and other groups to be collaborating and advocating jointly for the health of the musical ecosystem. For example, where are musicians sitting in this dialogue? In Germany there is a lot of representation for policy, industry, and venues, but the voice for musicians wasn't as integrated into the picture, yet without musicians there is no live music. Australia can explore what a musicians first model would look like. Australia can also start looking at how all cultural voices can come together and advocate for the arts and culture as a unified whole. As the building of relationships and data infrastructure takes time, the earlier the better.

In general, the broad concepts behind most of the initiatives outlined in this report could be of benefit to the local live music ecosystem when applied to an Australian context: Advocacy for live music venues or "clubs" as culture

and “cultural ordinance reform” at a national and state/region/city/town level; mapping and geo-mapping of clubs, (which can also be overlaid with other creative and cultural spaces to create a full picture of opportunities and networks that can be developed in the cultural space) – noting mapping can be as sophisticated as a clubkataster (see section 4.1), or as simple as a flyer or calendar of venues/events in a town; campaigns on the protection of accessible creative spaces in cities and for greater inclusivity in live music scenes and venues such as gender, race, and disability.

Dialogue: Identity and *anererkennung*

This collective voice is not just about articulating needs, but part of securing recognition of the critical role local live music plays in society and communities, changing the dialogue towards one of respect, value, and *anererkennung*. With this assigning of value comes more access to what musicians and venues need – community investment and participation and fair access to funding and support.

I visited many cities in Germany whose live music is a key part of their identity (see section 3). Some of this comes from a long-established tradition of classical and opera music, but many of these musical histories are more recent. Australian cities, on the other hand, do not tend to have preeminent musical identities that precede them, or which the city rallies around. Even in the case of Melbourne, which due to its concert and venue numbers has at times named itself the live music capital of the world,¹⁴³ its reputation as a cultural capital outside of the city itself doesn't tend to underline the important role live music plays as part of its vitality – for example, in Germany, among my interview subjects, Sydney was more known for its bands and music than Melbourne, even if that simply meant knowing about the Sydney Opera House.

In Australia, on the other hand, when a place is associated with live music it is more likely to be in specific suburbs, or regionally in specific towns, rather than overall cities. There could be interesting lessons for cities here – some presumably about physical and venue density, community, and cultural identity, and maybe relief from the noise regulation wars that tend to crop up in city administration. Also lessons about scale and community autonomy – for example in Sydney, notoriously a city of villages (and thanks to the six cities strategy now also part of a NSW state of cities)¹⁴⁴ the question may be better posed not as how does a city become a music city, but how does a place come to contain many thriving musical places?



Another advantage for Australia over Germany may be the less defined boundaries of ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture, at least at the level of cultural dialogue, which means Australia can look a building more cross-collaborations across genres and institutions. This makes identities more flexible when it comes to cultural offerings. For example, Australia is acknowledged as a nation of sports lovers, but a 2011 study found more people attended live music annually in Victoria than AFL games.¹⁴⁵ Clearly, the Victorians are musical connoisseurs in addition to sports fans. In fact, if any division is apparent in *anerkennung* and funding in Australia, it appears to be the sport vs. culture divide. Clearly there is an opportunity here. On the ground, the love and passion for live music does not appear to be lacking, but it is not reaching the level of conversations that can influence political and funding priorities, as well as the larger dialogue about community value. Recognition of identity is solidified in a number of ways, through dialogue and symbolism. How do we talk about live music in a way that goes beyond ‘what we like’ to ‘who we are’ or, perhaps better still, as a way to answer, and continue asking that question?

Some participants stated that leaders need to speak for the value of music (see section 4.3). But the community also needs to speak about music in this way. Hendrik of Hamburg STP Konzerte (see section 4.2) suggests that every good thing that Hamburg has now was built on the platform of what was fought for since post-war reconstruction. Political freedom, liberalism, the community, the venue density – all of that was fought for and either preserved or created over time. The community needs to consider itself not in a static moment but on a journey of preserving and building what it wants and thinking about what will be lost if those spaces and opportunities go away. To Hendrik, as to many others interviewed, these spaces are important, non-linguistic, non-political places where the community can see itself and articulate itself. Framing the matter with rhetoric that stresses the critical socio-cultural and political role of living live music culture, or cultures, can be done by all, from the grassroots level to the governmental.

Australia is not one thing, its First Nations peoples are custodians of the world’s longest continuous culture, its recent colonial-settler history has shaped the institutional and urban landscape, and Australia is strongly multicultural, with one in four Australians born overseas and one in two having an overseas born parent.¹⁴⁶ Allowing full expression of this polyphonic identity requires space for local identities and communities to express or discover themselves through music now and into the future. It requires space and support for open-ended experimentation, without the necessity of all music framing itself as a pre-packaged cultural ‘product’. It requires cultural openness, embrace of diversity and cultural risk-taking. It requires space, support, and inclusivity for everyone to participate (see section 4.4). Musical identities can also be celebrated in other mediums – music depicted in public art murals, statues, and street names was ever present in the cities I visited in Germany, signaling its importance to the community.

5.2 Supporting musicians and venues

Permissibility and experimentation

Permissibility (see section 4.3) was a common theme behind the success of creative scenes like Berlin and Leipzig (albeit with gentrification now posing threats to both) and even Munich. For Markus of Leipzig’s TixforGigs (see section 4.2), everything begins with the phrase “you are allowed”. He suggests the power of Leipzig’s musical culture has come from an ability for people to build their own scenes (and being given the space and regulatory freedom to do so), and low-enough stakes in terms of affordability of housing and business space. In her night-life advocacy, Kordula (see section 4.1) also notes Leipzig is good at granting permission. There is an openness in local government and the city to allow new and innovative ideas to flourish. For that to keep occurring though, Leipzig’s city administration needs to support these ideas, and the enthusiastic, often volunteer-based networks behind them (including Kordula’s own student work which aided in the set up so many of Leipzig’s night-time institutions) with more than rhetoric and really see the need to fund the likes of LiveKombinat in order to preserve this spirit, which, after all, is such a big part of why Leipzig/Hypezig has become one of Germany’s fastest growing cities.

Australia, often accused of nanny-state tendencies, can also move towards facilitating more permissibility. These

pathways are from the top down and the bottom up. In terms of the top-down, there are two things policy makers and organisations seeking to encourage this can do. The first is, ask people what they need to support cultural openness and experimentation, and look for ways to give it to them and build their capacity. This is a simple answer, but perhaps in some ways it is the best answer. The second is, give them space to do it. This is true literally in the provision of spaces of different sizes and forms, but also in a regulatory sense – most relevant for those working with policy and regulation – what spaces are government in that they don't need to be in? Live music occurs in physical space, but it also occurs in aural space – this is why noise reforms are also a key focus area, with several governments in Australia looking at this (including NSW's recent reforms, which along with incentives in the form of extended trading hours, has seen an astonishing 84 per cent increase in the number of venues hosting live music since the reforms started)^{147,148} with opportunities for other administrations to learn from what is being done through open inter-state or inter-city dialogue.



Permissibility is important because as well as allowing live music scenes to create and develop themselves it can also foster inclusivity. Back in Leipzig, Marcus pointed out that a rich mix and unrestrictive approach to content and event production means that all identities are able to find their niche in the city. This is important, as people and communities can say things to the world and to each other through music in ways that language (both in speaking it, but also in language's reductive possibilities within a particular power dynamic or milieu) cannot accomplish. Hence he sees a permissive, DIY environment as best when it comes to culture.

Nevertheless, this does not mean it is simply a case of governments playing no role at all. As above, The Freiburg Kulturlabor model (see section 4.3) should be considered a best in class model for how governments can engage with their creative communities as it is highly experimental in its process and leverages the artistic community to design policy and process reforms through this open ended but academically rigorous approach.

Attitudes to policing also play a part, and it is important to get police and other stakeholder groups (see section 4.1) in conversations about vibrant live music and nightlife. In Berlin, as part of his work for Clubcommission, Lutz mentioned that it was never helpful when the police looked at clubs as the cause of crime, or the cause of dangers, litter, disorder. The police seldom if ever treat other businesses this way – basically denying them privacy and treating them like the street. Often it is actually the case that they are the safest spaces in an area at night. Instead, therefore, Lutz would prefer the police and government to work together with them to create the night-time safety that both parties want. Lutz's work with [UN Habitat](#) and its [Neighbourhoods](#) program means that he is often better versed than the government at any level on the problems and solutions to urban space and associated planning. He would prefer Clubcommission to be able to be a champion of tool provision for its clubs – sharing knowledge on security, support, dialogue with the community. In this scenario, the police and government would partner with them, speaking together (even in the same WhatsApp groups) – identifying trouble spots and turning them into safe spaces for the benefit of the community – for example the trip from the club to the station: well policed, well-lit, and redesigned in dialogue with women, girls and other groups that can feel vulnerable in these spaces at night. In this way, as with everything else, the model should be that the local city government will be able to support the community and its institutions rather than tell it what it should do. Lutz notes the clear legal/illegal line is less helpful than someone who can find ways to facilitate what works in a given area. For example, though there has been anti-smoking laws in Berlin since 2007, only recently have the government/police been sending in raid-like investigators to crack down on non-compliance, whereas before there would be more discourse and accommodation. Again, the answers return to open dialogue and sharing skills and knowledge.

Integration into policy and politics

While what conversations are being had and between whom is always a question worth asking, in Australia, the question might also be what dialogue channels are set up in Australian government organisations, and how can they be widened or improved. Night council models, with a committee of all interested stakeholders with expertise in night-time vibrancy can be scaled at different levels. Kordula's experience in night-time structure building in Leipzig shows the importance of showing not telling, with police, planners, and transport officials getting out into the live music scene and talking to clubs, bouncers and ravers. Cities can also consider opportunities for a Corule model (see section 4.1). Sydney and the broader region now has a night mayor (the 24 hour commissioner) and the learnings from his office can be observed and leveraged by other cities.

Governments of all sizes can look at how they support the smaller, vulnerable, and more risk-taking end of the live music ecosystem, including less established musicians, grassroots groups, younger community, experimental groups and spaces, as well as continuing to lift regulations and recognise live music as something other than 'noise'. For Thore at Hamburg's Clubkombinat, the best practice is in San Francisco where laws protect existing entertainment venues and new housing or accommodation developments within 300 feet of them need to be reviewed with a goal of encouraging compatibility and reducing conflict in the neighbourhood between venues, residents and visitors.

LiveKomm's Christian also flagged the 'Agent of Change' initiative campaigned for by [Music Venues Trust](#), where the National Planning Policy Framework features guidance that 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.'¹⁴⁹

Governments can also structure their funding for maximum accessibility and flexibility (see section 4.3) and provide resources to help artists and venues navigate the process. Australia overall seems to be ahead of Germany in this respect with well-established bureaucratic digital infrastructure which reduces the need for in-person visits and multiple form filling. It could further benefit from flexible models like Initiative Musik in having autonomy to dialogue with kombinat style groups to understand how this can continue to be improved. The viability of a KSK model (see section 4.1) could also be analysed as part of cultural strategies, as well as the artists' wage in France that was raised by a few participants.

Another role for governments is including musical organisations in the conversations about education, housing, transport, and infrastructure. As before, there are good examples of this occurring in Australian policy already, but more can and should be possible. Especially as Australia, with its sprawl and lack of connectivity, is at more of a disadvantage than Germany here. Sharon's opera career in Wiesbaden and around Germany has been enormously helped by the country's transport connectivity – as a mother of two without a car living in a city of just over a quarter of a million, she can still easily move about and access different freelance performance opportunities while balancing carer responsibilities. MCN's model and best practice frameworks also show pathways for music to be integrated into policy for housing, employment, night-time economy, and community building in 21st century society.

Australia can also build on some of its less rigid governance approaches. One of my participants was fascinated that in NSW, the cultural ministries and their activities are departmentally combined with investment, enterprise, liquor and gaming, hospitality and racing, tourism, and the 24-hour economy (once upon a time sport was also in the mix). This almost one stop shop offers avenues to fold the creative sectors into broader strategising, with shared goals and joined up thinking, something that would not be immediately possible in Hamburg due to the more developed, pre-existing players, networks, interests, and other more diffuse aspects of the city's scene. Of course, some participants I interviewed were doubtful about centralised precincts being activated in Sydney, seeing a decree for nightlife to occur in one area as artificial, and likely to create unintended effects of concentrated littering, disorder, crime, and complaints about favouring one area or part of the city over others. However, many liked the idea of nightlife precincts being integrated into the business precincts that are being planned under more 15-30 minute city models, which see culture and business unified. They believed that the government can help to set up initial nightlife precincts. Though inorganic and constructed, the approach will nevertheless provide the space for young people to try out new ideas, "presenting the pot in which the plant will eventually grow", and ensuring that the tools and associated supports are provided to cultural entrepreneurs to get set up and self-organise. Either way, other Australian cities, (and interested parties in in Germany), can engage with the lessons learned along the way.

Providing and protecting space

One of my participants pointed out there is a joke in Berlin that every pub or café has an Australian in the corner playing guitar. He speculated that many of these artists come to Germany because there are more stages and possibilities for them in Germany than Australia itself. In my conversations with experts in Sydney, I heard about the need for more small venues in Australia's live music ecosystem, but especially for medium sized ones, spaces much more prevalent in Germany, which allow musicians the step to build their audience and capacity for working on

larger stages. Without this stepping stone, it was pointed out to me in many conversations, that artists are basically faced with two choices, either to become very mainstream and try to make the jump right to big venues – easier said than done, even if it is an explicit goal – or stay underground and ignore the idea of mainstream success, which is fine if this is a preferred pathway, but not if that is the only option, particularly as this impacts how such artists make their living. In this way, it would be instructive that whatever support and development a city or government administration was going to offer its scenes/artists should be based on this idea as a starting point.

The above being the case, mapping the venue landscape and relationship network is a critical step – this can be overlaid with information on the communities that are using them, and also extend out to a BDKV model (see section 4.2) – supporting the purchase of vulnerable venues to ensure they stay venues and preserve what is currently there, and opportunities for the acquisition of new medium sized venues. In the private sector, a Fair Tix (see section 4.2) model is also transposable to an Australian context and a great way to invest funds into the live music pipeline.

Meanwhile, in addition to direct support, a key area for government intervention can be some of the redistributive taxation models raised above (see section 4.2), while also helpful would be the use of cultural infrastructure strategies to look at building this ‘missing middle’ that is so often referred to in housing density conversations, and integrating it into policies and actions around land use, cultural zoning and the ongoing or temporary use of underused assets (see section 4.2). The other type of space needed is affordable studio and practice space (see section 4.3). While governments can also look at strategies to assist with the provision of this, other organisations, and musical education bodies can also share their space more widely with the larger musical community. Advocacy organisations could consider keeping a database where groups or individuals who are able to provide this can register and musicians can register expressions of interest for available space.

Available, needs-based and flexible funding

A lack of institutional funding for local live music, especially non-classical genres, is also more than just an idealistic complaint to be dismissed. Many countries around the world are in a fiscal and political environment where cultural institutions of all types are under threat. Of course, this is difficult, as all of the arts, and those institutions and publics that have supported it previously, are currently engaged in a real struggle. Resources are squeezed across even rich countries like Australia, and this has led to a retrograde discussion about art’s profitability and growth in a given instance, rather than a fuller picture of socio-economic and (human) development.

Indeed, institutions and publics suffering from lack of funding or disposable income in an age where both austerity, and market domination move money away from public-oriented, equitably distributed circulation means a lack of commissioning and a lack of grassroots support power for the development of new cultural products. Local live music cannot be a luxury good if it is to be representative of the communities that it occurs in.

Naturally, a change of conversation will not be sufficient. New and innovative approaches to funding and supporting musicians and venues will need to be developed, but there are unexplored possibilities here. Online, grassroots, and local partnerships as new sources of funding exist as has been seen in politics and startup cultures. Freiburg Hochschule für Musik’s Partnership with its Medical School, and with the Goethe-Institut, and many other local partners shows the power of a new approach to funding that is sustainable, locally beneficial, and innovative. This comes back to the strength of advocacy organisations as well. These informed, independent organisations can supply the data to help funding providers design schemes to provide flexible funding (see section 4.3) where it is most needed for the health of the entire live music ecosystem. Providers should also look at grants that allow musicians to support themselves in their practice and living as well as develop outcomes, and to provide follow up support (see section 4.3) that allows them to develop their careers further, rather than produce a one off project that cannot be promoted or capitalised on due to lack of continuing resources.

A broader musical education

In terms of government-led education policy, returning to my conversation with Hans in Melbourne (see section 4.4) one of the best ways to instill a dialogue of respect, value, and love for live music, and build an enthusiastic audience who experience life-long benefits through their engagement with live music, is to examine how music is taught in schools. As well as musical skill, this education can also look at the importance of live music for communities and society, and also educate on the broader ecosystem that supports the creation and practice of this music. A large number of the participants I spoke with had been educated in cultural governance and management, a degree which appeared to me much more prevalent and respected as an area of study in Germany than in Australia, which has sometimes attacked degrees in culture and the humanities.¹⁵⁰ As students progress through school, career sustainability, cultural policy governance, and venue management could all be included in the curriculum or developed as available separate courses. Education should also address and model diverse participation and inclusivity.

Ultimately, music and its place in broader cultural development is part of the creative education and skillset that all of us will need in a future of innovation and machine learning. Creative imagination is something that the World Economic Forum says is one of the top three essential skills needed for the future.¹⁵¹ And this should be borne in mind as arts education for children is being squeezed around the world, with the conversation focused on high-value STEM subjects rather than creativity.

Adapting the educational discourse to this insight will take time. However, in the meantime, it may simply be up to venues and facilities that can, to ensure the continuation of spaces for imaginative and creative development/education for children and adults so that they may be nurtured to reach their full potential. If there is an absence of people from non-wealthy backgrounds receiving musical education, venues should look at creating spaces for learning and development. Otherwise, authentic, community-focused music-making will not be possible, as privilege and concentration at the top echelons of wealth will take over in music careers. This is already a big issue in urban Australia, whose cities have become so acutely expensive for any professionals, let alone those working in arts and culture. Where living costs are prohibitive, substantial investment in risk-taking and honed self-development is less possible. Where the education system or access is falling short, models like WIMU (see section 4.4) can provide education to those who may otherwise be unable to access it.

In time, hopefully, it will be possible to make the argument again that musical schools and their associated partners /venues promoting appreciation and learning are magnets for creative people from all over the world and can foster huge gains in innovation and intellectual soft-power. The 24 German Hochschule für Musik, for example, are a major export source for Germany. In music and musicology alone, non-German enrollees comprise almost a third of all enrollees, and at certain universities the statistics are much higher – at Cologne, the biggest Hochschule für Musik in the country is it about 40 per cent, while at Weimar, it is 45 per cent of the 810 students, with 61 countries represented.¹⁵² This has made Germany a, perhaps even the, musical education capital of the world, over and above Austria, which has as much, if not more, history of musical excellence. Meanwhile, such schools facilitate thousands of inspiring shows every year, both in-house, and in all types of venues and locales, providing opportunities for growth and development, as well as audience engagement. It is clear from the joke referenced earlier that Australians recognise Germany's important position in this regard, as many of its creatives, not just in classical music, but in all genres, have–relocated, or have at least spent formative developmental periods in Germany.

On the individual level, established venue owners, musicians, and cultural managers can also consider ways to mentor or guide others (see section 4.3), while educational institutes can also investigate how they are supporting the careers of their students beyond the school – choosing paths and throughout their musical careers. As Anna noted, this could be as simple as allowing alumni access to practice spaces. Schools could also look at sharing space with the community – young musicians and bands being able to access for free or rent subsidised space.

Local live music also needs to be supported by education in how to keep venues and scenes viable – showing people pathways and support and developing the younger generations to ensure there is not just a pipeline of musicians and venues, but venue owners. Other ways to build community capacity that Australia can promote are the educational models for running clubs and live music scenes, seen in The five pillars Karsten uses at BDKV and the Academy for Sub-Cultural Understanding, the Pop Akademie (see section 4.2), and the Underground Institute (see section 4.3). Live music advocacy organisations can also help to build specialist skillsets and upskill existing practitioners, like in the working groups offered by the Berlin Clubcommission and LiveKomm.

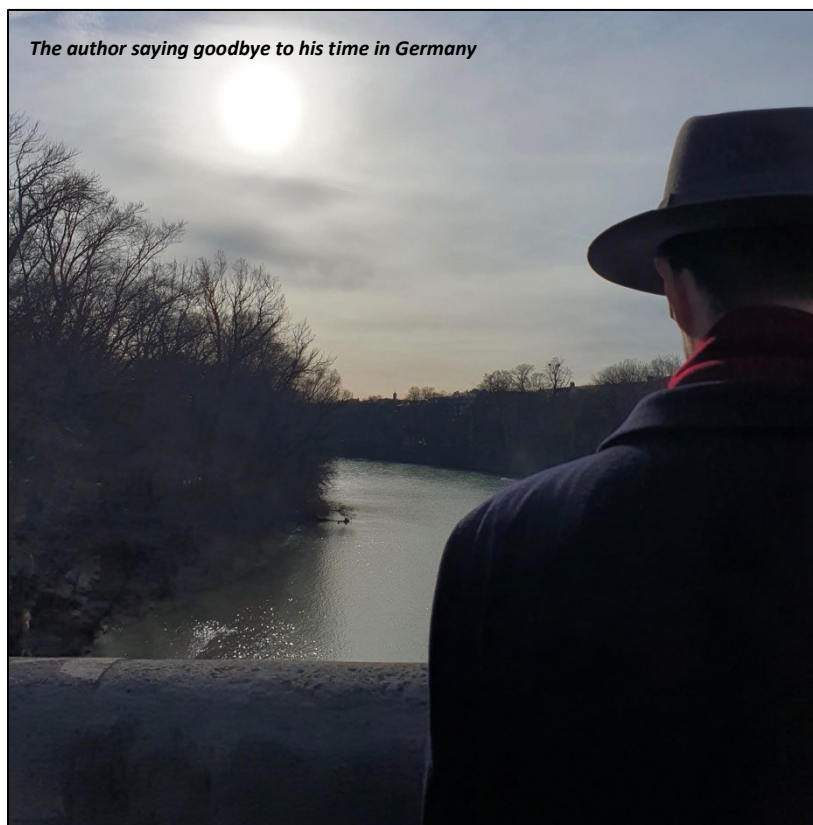
5.3 Music beyond borders

Continuing the conversation

My participants also suggested further exchanges, such as internships with a kombinat organisation or LiveKomm (all of which are keen to share their insights for up-and-coming players in the field) for Australians, or international students from Australia attending courses like at the Academy of Subcultural Understanding. As the university study framework in Germany for cultural management is much more developed sending more Australians to Germany to look at this model and seeing how to import some of its teaching for Australian instruction is also worth thinking about. There may be a facilitation role for the Goethe-Institut in this area. Germany can also learn from Australia's new approaches, more flexible and user-friendly bureaucracy and less rigid administrative hierarchies.

Music is both intimately local and borderless

Local live music is a place where community culture and voice is stored. Perhaps it is the oldest such place. As part of a broader musical culture it is both local and borderless at the same time. There has been no other art in all of human history that has benefited and grown by process of cultural cross-currents the way music has. Whether it is around socio-economics, gender, or international culture, dialogue is essential for music as an artform to keep pace with reflecting our society and our meaning. As music says things that we might not be able to in speech, journalism, or politics, we need it being performed in all our communities. It convenes. It can also build. It centers togetherness: a world in relation, it centers belonging, and can unleash much energy and power to those who feel powerless and unheard. More than ever after this project, I believe that local live music is a key motivator for building society in which compassion and joy in one's place is centered. If a society believes in democracy, liberalism and community, it must value and invest in its live music scenes. I am heartened that it is an exciting time for Australian live music, with growing political investment and opportunities to support a living live music ecosystem for our community. I hope this report may be able to play a small role by sparking ideas and new relationships.



Endnotes

- ¹ https://hdp-au-prod-app-nsw-haveyoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/6616/9897/5992/3ba62fd39e5ceb5565535dd3914_INV00338_Create_NSW_A4_brochure_V5_Red_RBG.pdf
- ² <https://www.nsw.gov.au/sound-nsw>
- ³ <https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/new-national-cultural-policy>
- ⁴ Australia's live music sector, working paper, 2023 by the Australian Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts
- ⁵ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/creative-communities-arts-culture-and-creative-industries-policy.pdf>
- ⁶ <https://hypezig.tumblr.com/post/90338321671/und-wenn-ein-begriff-wie-hypezig-derart>
- ⁷ <https://www.dw.com/en/scholz-says-top-courts-budget-ruling-means-new-reality/a-67568774>
- ⁸ <https://www.kulturpass.de/jugendliche>
- ⁹ <https://www.initiative-musik.de/livemusikfoerderung/>
- ¹⁰ <https://miz.org/de/statistiken/musikpraeferenzen-und-soziodemografika-nach-genre-studie-zur-zukunft-der-musiknutzung?filter%5Bresource%5D%5B0%5D=Statistik&start=72&position=79>
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² <https://miz.org/de/statistiken/freizeitaktivitaeten-in-deutschland-freizeit-monitor?filter%5Bresource%5D%5B0%5D=Statistik&widget%5Bdescription%5D%5Btid%5D=15490&context=musikleben&position=13>
- ¹³ <https://miz.org/de/statistiken/verteilung-der-oeffentlichen-ausgaben-fuer-kultur-auf-die-verschiedenen-kulturbereiche-nach-laendern?filter%5Bresource%5D%5B0%5D=Statistik&start=36&position=49>
- ¹⁴ <https://livekombinat.de/and-the-party-is-over/>
- ¹⁵ <https://livekombinat.de/projekte/lostclubsleipzig/>
- ¹⁶ <https://miz.org/de/dokumente/clubstudie-der-initiative-musik>
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Munich#Nightlife>
- ¹⁹ <https://www.giesinger-rockpalast.de/%C3%BCber-uns>
- ²⁰ <https://www.musictraveler.com/en/germany/munich/commercial/drums-&3B-piano---duo-rehearsal/2281/2023/11/24/>
- ²¹ <https://anytime-music.com/home.html>
- ²² <http://www.kafekult.de/wordpress/>
- ²³ <https://www.kulturraum-muenchen.de/en/>
- ²⁴ <https://www.kulturraum-muenchen.de/en/>
- ²⁵ <https://www.kultur-barrierefrei-muenchen.de/>
- ²⁶ <https://www.kultur-barrierefrei-muenchen.de/actice>
- ²⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/nov/07/far-right-germany-afd-minorities>
- ²⁸ https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freiburg_im_Breisgau#Bildung_und_Forschung
- ²⁹ <https://www.mh-freiburg.de/en/university/general-information/about-the-university>
- ³⁰ <https://ewerk-freiburg.de/>
- ³¹ <https://www.jazzhaus.de/index.html>
- ³² <https://www.kyosk.org/>
- ³³ <https://www.freiburg.de/pb/229640.html>
- ³⁴ <https://visit.freiburg.de/en/feel-freiburg/theater-concerts-and-museums-in-freiburg/music-city-freiburg>
- ³⁵ <https://www.uniklinik-freiburg.de/musikermedizin-en.html>
- ³⁶ <https://www.jrs.org/>
- ³⁷ <https://www.popakademie.de/en/>
- ³⁸ <https://www.freiburg.de/pb/1831873.html>
- ³⁹ <https://haus-des-engagements.de/>
- ⁴⁰ <https://www.kulturboerse-freiburg.de/en/for-artists>
- ⁴¹ <https://www.bach-wiesbaden.de/>
- ⁴² <https://www.wiesbaden.de/microsite/stadtlexikon/a-z/jazz-in-wiesbaden.php>
- ⁴³ <https://www.artist-wiesbaden.de/konzerte-2-23/art-ist-1983/>
- ⁴⁴ <https://musiklehrnetzwerk.de/>
- ⁴⁵ <https://www.wmk-wiesbaden.de/musikschule/ueber-uns>
- ⁴⁶ <https://kreativfabrik-wiesbaden.de/veranstaltung/flinta-beatproducing-workshop-w-itothek/>
- ⁴⁷ <https://www.ak-stadtkultur.de/kontakt1>
- ⁴⁸ <https://www.reeperbahnfestival.com/>
- ⁴⁹ [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sternbr%C3%BCcke_\(Hamburg\)](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sternbr%C3%BCcke_(Hamburg))
- ⁵⁰ <https://www.exberliner.com/berlin/the-2018-nightlife-venue-die-off/>

-
- ⁵¹ <https://www.electronicbeats.net/fischburos-dada-experiments-berlin-experiment-vol-6/>
- ⁵² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/07/berlin-goerlitzer-park-gentrification-crime-drugs/>
- ⁵³ <https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/german-commission-proposes-raising-minimum-wage-2024-2025-2023-06-26/>
- ⁵⁴ <https://www.hmt-leipzig.de/en/home/hochschule/internationales>
- ⁵⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leipzig#Demographics>
- ⁵⁶ Refer to <https://www.livemusikkommission.de/livekomm/schwerpunkte/> for verbatim definitions
- ⁵⁷ <https://www.gema.de/de/musiknutzer/tarifuebersicht/tarif-u-k>
- ⁵⁸ https://www.initiative-musik.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/05/2021_Clubstudie_Initiative_Musik-1.pdf
- ⁵⁹ <https://www.musikindustrie.de/weiteres/publikationen/musikwirtschaft-in-deutschland>
- ⁶⁰ <https://www.musikindustrie.de/warum-wir-tun-was-wir-tun/wir-wollen-mehr-musik/ueber-uns>
- ⁶¹ <https://www.livemusikkommission.de/livekomm/was-wir-wollen/>
- ⁶² <https://www.livemusikkommission.de/clubs-festivals-ergebnisse-der-blitzumfragen/>
- ⁶³ <https://www.clubscareculture.de/rettetdieclubs/>
- ⁶⁴ <https://www.livemusikkommission.de/die-ta-laerm-novellieren-mit-der-einfuehrung-der-ersten-kulturschallverordnung/>
- ⁶⁵ <https://www.clubscareculture.de/ta-laerm/>
- ⁶⁶ <https://www.moz.de/lokales/frankfurt-oder/techno-party-in-frankfurt-oder-reflex-festival-am-heleneesee-abgesagt-wo-es-stattfinden-soll-70838261.html>
- ⁶⁷ <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baunutzungsverordnung>
- ⁶⁸ <https://www.livemusikkommission.de/haushalt-2024-bundesebene-unterstuetzt-erstmal-schallschutzmassnahmen-im-clubbereich-und-staerkt-den-festivalfoerders/>
- ⁶⁹ <https://clubkombinat.de/>
- ⁷⁰ <https://clubkombinat.de/veranstaltungskalender/#/clubkombinat/?widgetToken=8LQTMoNYi2k.&>
- ⁷¹ <https://geoportal-hamburg.de/club-kataster/#>
- ⁷² <https://clubkombinat.de/clubscareculture-breites-buendnis-strebt-befreiungsschlag-fuer-die-clubkultur-an/>
- ⁷³ <https://clubkombinat.de/projekte/manifest-wirbrauchenraeume/>
- ⁷⁴ <https://clubkombinat.de/projekte/tba-to-be-aware/>
- ⁷⁵ <https://clubkombinat.de/projekte/live-concert-account/>
- ⁷⁶ <https://clubkombinat.de/fairtix-info/>
- ⁷⁷ <https://vak.wtf/>
- ⁷⁸ <https://www.nachtrat-leipzig.de/nachtrat/struktur/>
- ⁷⁹ <https://www.timeout.com/sydney/news/night-mayors-from-new-york-london-paris-and-more-are-in-sydney-to-share-ideas-050423>
- ⁸⁰ <https://2023.stadt-nach-acht.de/team/>
- ⁸¹ <http://www.stiftung-private-musikbuehnen-hamburg.de/>
- ⁸² <https://www.musikrat.de/>
- ⁸³ <https://www.kuenstlersozialkasse.de/>
- ⁸⁴ <https://tresor.foundation/academy/>
- ⁸⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dimitri_Hegemann
- ⁸⁶ <https://miz.org/de/dokumente/clubstudie-der-initiative-musik>
- ⁸⁷ <https://www.hamburg.de/kulturstadt/>
- ⁸⁸ <https://www.musikwirtschaft.org/en/>
- ⁸⁹ <https://soundsaustralia.com.au/welcome-2/>
- ⁹⁰ <https://www.zeit.de/kultur/musik/2023-07/eventim-ticketmaster-preise-verbraucherschutz/seite-2>
- ⁹¹ <https://livekombinat.de/fairtix-leipzig-clubbeuro/>
- ⁹² <https://fairtix.io/en/about-us>
- ⁹³ <https://clubkombinat.de/ticketmaster-und-clubkombinat-kooperieren-bei-fairtix/>
- ⁹⁴ <https://www.ffa.de/film-levy.html#:~:text=For%20cinemas%20with%20higher%20turnover,FFA's%20statistical%20analyses%20and%20studies.>
- ⁹⁵ <https://www.live-dma.eu/vat-in-the-european-live-music-sector/#:~:text=The%20French%20VAT%20system%3A&text=Concert%20tickets%3A%205%2C5%25,of%20a%20same%20show%20%2B%20ticketing>
- ⁹⁶ https://www.nuernberg.de/internet/kuf_kultur/freie_kultureinrichtungen.html
- ⁹⁷ <https://www.jrs.org/ueber-uns-musikschule/>
- ⁹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sLUtYd6tAU>
- ⁹⁹ <https://www.baden-wuerttemberg.de/de/service/presse/pressemitteilung/pid/dialogprozess-zur-popkultur-startet>
- ¹⁰⁰ <https://www.freiburg.de/pb/1789804.html>
- ¹⁰¹ <https://www.transformationszentrum.org/index.php>
- ¹⁰² <https://www.freiburg.de/pb/1831873.html>
- ¹⁰³ <https://www.initiative-musik.de/en/live-music-funding/>
- ¹⁰⁴ <https://www.initiative-musik.de/en/neustart-kultur/>

-
- ¹⁰⁵ <https://www.initiative-musik.de/en/live-music-funding/program-description-live-500/>
- ¹⁰⁶ <https://www.initiative-musik.de/en/live-music-funding/program-description-festival-funding/>
- ¹⁰⁷ <https://www.initiative-musik.de/en/live-music-funding/>
- ¹⁰⁸ <https://miz.org/de/ueber-das-miz>
- ¹⁰⁹ <https://sharonkempton-coach.com/>
- ¹¹⁰ <http://www.underground-institute.com/about.html>
- ¹¹¹ <http://www.underground-institute.com/festival>
- ¹¹² <https://wimu-ev.de/musik-fuer-alle/geschichte/>
- ¹¹³ [https://www.konzertfluegel.com/;](https://www.konzertfluegel.com/)
- ¹¹⁴ <https://www.etui.org/publications/art-managing-intermittent-artist-status-france>
- ¹¹⁵ <https://www.tonkuenstlerverband.de/was-wir-tun/unsere-themen/>
- ¹¹⁶ <https://www.konzertfluegel.com/>
- ¹¹⁷ <https://wimu-ev.de/musik-fuer-alle/geschichte/>
- ¹¹⁸ <https://www.mission.erloeserschwestern.de/Startseite.html>
- ¹¹⁹ <http://wimu-ev.de/termine/>
- ¹²⁰ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrKd1_I-LsE
- ¹²¹ <https://wimu-ev.de/musik-fuer-alle/schuelerportraits/>
- ¹²² <https://www.stadtkultur-hh.de/2023/10/clubkombinat-projekt-tba-to-be-aware/>
- ¹²³ <https://clubkombinat.de/tba-to-be-aware-bestandserhebung/>
- ¹²⁴ <https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Stuttgart-pledge-principle-17.pdf>
- ¹²⁵ <https://www.themayor.eu/en/a/view/partying-with-a-conscience-hamburg-5-nightclubs-embrace-sustainability-managers-11786>
- ¹²⁶ <https://clubkombinat.de/future-fonds-hamburg/>
- ¹²⁷ <https://www.gunnar-uldall-wirtschaftspreis.de/der-wirtschaftspreis/>
- ¹²⁸ <http://www.henkellwines.com.au/opera/calendar>
- ¹²⁹ <https://www.musiccitiesnetwork.com/european-music-policy-exchange>
- ¹³⁰ <https://www.musiccitiesnetwork.com/european-music-business-task-force>
- ¹³¹ <https://www.europeanmusicpolicyexchange.eu/>
- ¹³² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Germany
- ¹³³ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/sep-2023>
- ¹³⁴ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/national-accounts/australian-national-accounts-national-income-expenditure-and-product/latest-release>
- ¹³⁵ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=DE>
- ¹³⁶ Die Zeit- Study and Research "The Study Guide" 2022-2023
- ¹³⁷ <https://www.ft.com/content/2ca79669-b7f2-4067-a4bf-0d85e74dde98>
- ¹³⁸ <https://livemusicoffice.com.au/livemusicmap/>
- ¹³⁹ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/24-hour-economy>
- ¹⁴⁰ <https://www.musiccitiesnetwork.com/sydney>
- ¹⁴¹ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/24-hour-economy/vibrancy-reforms>
- ¹⁴² <https://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/arts-culture-creative-industries-policy>
- ¹⁴³ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-12/melbourne-is-the-live-music-capital-of-the-world-census-shows/9643684>
- ¹⁴⁴ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/building-our-way-forward/what-were-building/six-cities-vision>
- ¹⁴⁵ <https://livemusicoffice.com.au/about-us/about/>
- ¹⁴⁶ <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/face-facts-cultural-diversity>
- ¹⁴⁷ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/statewide-vibrancy-reforms>
- ¹⁴⁸ <https://www.liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/staging-a-comeback-live-music-venue-numbers-soar#:~:text=NSW%20is%20in%20the%20midst,venues%20to%20host%20live%20music.>
- ¹⁴⁹ <https://www.musicvenustrust.com/2018/08/4-year-campaign-agent-change/>
- ¹⁵⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20200728-why-australia-is-charging-more-to-study-history>
- ¹⁵¹ <https://www.cncb.com/2023/05/03/the-10-most-important-skills-for-workers-according-to-the-wef>
- ¹⁵² Die Zeit- Study and Research "The Study Guide" 2022-2023