



We support people of all ages in the Highlands develop confidence, friendship and skills through music and more

# TRUSTEES REPORT 2024-25

**Rod Shannon - Trustee**

## Rokzkool Academy (SCIO)

**SC049455**

**[www.rokzkoolacademy.org](http://www.rokzkoolacademy.org)**

**WHO WE  
HELP**

Young people and families in the Highlands

**WHAT WE  
DO**

Building confidence & life skills

**HOW**

Workshops, holiday clubs & community projects

**WHERE**

Various locations across the Highlands and Studio 58, Eastgate Centre,

We are a charity based in the Scottish Highlands with big ambitions to help everyone achieve their potential in life, whatever their circumstances or challenges. We aim to bring together all generations and all abilities to share their skills and life experiences.

Through a range of workshops, events, training programmes and community work, we strive to give everyone the motivation, enthusiasm and dedication to follow a path to their goals with a sense of pride and purpose.

Whilst music is at the heart of what we do, we adopt a holistic approach encompassing teamwork, communication, adaptability and leadership – skills crucial not only in creating beautiful melodies but also in navigating the intricate symphony of life.

# OVERVIEW

At Rokzkool Academy, we create friendly, sociable classes where people can find a place to relax, be creative and discover new passions and skills. We run from Studio 58, a creative space in the middle of a shopping centre in Inverness where we run the majority of our classes and a cozy community space in a deprived area of town where we run community events.

Creativity is at the heart of everything we do but we are much more than music and art. We offer volunteering opportunities, leadership skills, training and qualifications but most of all we offer a space where people feel they belong and are welcome to be themselves.

We use a holistic approach where we look at the strengths and challenges of the people we are working with. We provide support, mentoring and signposting to other services so we can help them live up to their potential.

Our students are focused on developing their skillset, but we go beyond that. Our programmes are designed to build self-esteem, resilience, social skills, and independence while promoting respect. We aim to provide a platform for our students to excel not only on stage but also in their professional, personal, and social lives.

- Classes – art, music, make and build, keyboards, guitar and more
- Free drop-ins – family jam time, teen studio hangouts, adult social club
- Group/school bookings – working with local schools, charities e.g. Connecting Carers, social work referrals and local community groups
- Rokzkool Young Leaders – a leadership programme for teens to take the lead and pilot ideas within the charity
- Training & Volunteering – opportunities for volunteers to become involved in and lead projects within the charity and work as mentors for those who need support
- Employability – supporting young people to complete training and gain qualifications



# OUR CORE VALUES

## 1. Empowerment:

- We believe in the transformative power of music, art, and creativity to empower individuals to take control of their mental and physical well-being.

## 2. Inclusivity:

- We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive community that celebrates diversity and promotes equality for all individuals, regardless of background or ability.

## 3. Innovation:

- We are committed to exploring new and innovative ways to use music, art, and creativity as tools for promoting health and well-being.

## 4. Collaboration:

- We value collaboration and partnership with individuals, organizations, and communities to maximize the impact of our programs and initiatives.

## 5. Integrity:

- We uphold the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct in all aspects of our work, ensuring transparency and accountability to our stakeholders.

## 6. Compassion:

- We approach our work with compassion and empathy, recognizing the inherent value and dignity of every individual we serve.

## 7. Improvement:

- We strive for excellence in all that we do, continually seeking to improve our programs and services to better meet the needs of those we serve.

## 8. Sustainability:

- We are committed to sustainability, both in terms of our impact on the environment and our ability to support the long-term health and well-being of individuals and communities.

## 9. Resilience:

- We believe in the power of music, art, and creativity to foster resilience and strength in the face of adversity, helping individuals to overcome challenges and thrive.

## 10. Fun:

- We celebrate the inherent joy and beauty that music, art, and creativity bring to our lives, and seek to share that joy with others to enrich their lives.

# OUR FREE DROP-IN SESSIONS

## Family Jam – Saturday 3 – 5

Every Saturday, we open the studio for a free drop-in session where families can come into the studio and have fun together. We have a variety of instruments, arts & crafts activities, family board games, building materials and Lego available.

We have held these sessions every week this year and have many families who visit regularly. Within these sessions, we are able to signpost other local services available for families and young people where appropriate.

On average we have around 80 visitors each week to these sessions.

## Studio Social Adult Drop-in – Tuesday 1 – 3

This is an open studio session for any adults who want to pop in and hang out at the studio. They can play on the instruments, have a go with the art materials or just have a cuppa and a chat. The jukebox is full of the old classics and the kettle is always on! This is a social opportunity for adults who are looking for something to do and a chance to try something new.

There is usually on average 15 people who attend the sessions each week.

## Studio Hangout Teen Drop-In – Friday 1 – 3

As the local secondary schools finish at 12 on a Friday, we have a drop-in session for any teens who are looking for something to do. They are welcome to come hang out in the studio, use the art materials and play on any instruments.

This is a great opportunity to engage with this age group and many then become involved in our other projects such as Young Leaders or become Rokzkool student volunteers.

These sessions are attended by on average 40 young people every week.



Impact across 50 sessions a year  
(based on averages)

Family Jam =  $50 \times 80 = 4000$

Studio Social =  $50 \times 15 = 750$

Teen Drop-In =  $50 \times 40 = 2000$

Total = 6750 free fun filled sessions!

# OUR CLASSES

## KidzRok Music Classes

This is a kids club which is all about being creative and having fun with music and instruments. These classes are for primary age children and run on a Tuesday after school and on Saturday afternoons. It is a relaxed class where the children experience a wide variety of different instruments and explore songs, percussion, rhythms and more as they learn how to be creative and confident.

## Art Classes

Our art classes are where kids can explore a range of different media, techniques and styles as they create their own art works. This is a child-led class where they are free to explore their creativity and own inspiration in a supported environment. This is for primary age children and run every Saturday morning.

## Keyboard Classes

These classes give children an introduction to the basics of playing the keyboards. This is a group class where they learn together and can gain the basic skills they need to play some introductory tunes.

These are weekly classes for 8 – 12 year olds every Thursday.

## Studio Jam

This is a session for young people (secondary age) who already play an instrument. They get the chance to jam with others in the studio. There are volunteer musicians to help support them and as they learn from and teach each other. This is a relaxed space where they can socialise, geek out about music, meet new people and make some noise!

This is on every Tuesday night from 6 – 7pm.

## Adult Rock Group

Our adult rock club is for anyone who always thought they'd make a great rock star but life got in the way! This is for adult beginners who want to learn the basics of playing an instrument in a fun social setting.

This is a two-hour session every Wednesday evening.

Our classes run for 5-week blocks so we can ensure continuity and a progression of skills across several weeks.

We charge £50 for each block however we offer free and subsidised places for those who need it. We can cover these costs through public donations, our fundraising events and charity grants.

# OTHER SERVICES

## Holiday Clubs and Workshops

We run holiday clubs from Phipps Hall in Beauly during the school holidays where we have a mixture of music, art, sports and outdoor activities. We go on day trips to local spaces such as beaches, fruit picking and Fairburn outdoor activity centre. In studio 58, we have a mixture of creative workshops where the children can make music, paint and create, play games and explore creative building toys. We run through the holidays and inservice days throughout the year in the Easter, Summer and October holidays.

## Rokzkool Leaders

Our senior students were invited to be part of our trial for our 'Rokzkool Leaders' programme. The focus of this was to develop the leadership skills and for them to take the lead of aspects of running the charity. So far they have been a huge help with running the classes, supporting our drop-in sessions and helping to develop resources for our instrument library.

## Individual & Group Referrals

We have been collaborating with local schools, agencies and social work to develop individualised programmes of support for their learners and clients. This have included young adults who need to build their confidence, teens with additional support needs and adults who are looking for opportunities to learn new skills. Each programme is developed with the learners so they can personalise their aims and outcomes.

## Event Workshops

Rokzkool Academy are often asked to support local events by providing music workshops and activities. This is supported by our team of volunteers and our teen students who lead activities. We have provided this at many local events such as Belladrum Tartan Heart Festival and further afield such as the Action Duchenne's International Conference.

## Instrument Library

Throughout the years, Rokzkool has always informally loaned out and rehomed instruments wherever possible to give young people the opportunity to learn to play. We are now creating an official Rokzkool Library where families can borrow from a catalogue of instruments and take it home for a month at a time. If it is a success, they can request to book it out for longer or return it and swap for something else if they wish. As we are restoring existing instruments, buying second hand and receiving donations, we see the environmental impact this will have by keeping instruments in use for longer and saving many from being discarded.

# OUR LAST YEAR

In the last year, we have:

- Sold almost 500 tickets to our classes for young people which focus on creativity and build new skills, develop confidence and create a safe and welcoming environment to grow and thrive
- Held over 50 'Family Jam' free open sessions for families to come in and play together in our studio and experiment with our wide range of instruments alongside arts and crafts and family based games and building challenges.
- Had over 40 open studio sessions for adults to come together in our studio to play our instruments, listen to music and just relax and socialise in a free, comfortable setting.
- Supported local events such as free workshops in shopping centres, marshal stands at local marathons, guardship and safety support at Belladrum music festival, run activities at the Action Duchenne's International Conference, supporting local charity events such as Breakfast with Santa.
- Welcomed visitors from around the world into the studio. Over 20 countries have been pinned on our visitor's board.
- Run over 150 activities during holiday clubs attended by children taking part in music, art and sports activities over 12 weeks throughout the year.



# OUR BOARD

Our board of trustees has grown this year so a warm welcome to our new fabulous team. We have a wide diverse skill set between us and we are looking forward to the opportunities of the next year.



**Rod Shannon**



**Kay Ewen**



**John West**



**Pam Foster**



**Amy Sinclair**



**Adam McMaster**



**Val Sweeney**



**Emily Gray**

# SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

APRIL 24

- We helped marshal the Etape Loch Ness event and we cheered on our volunteer Jennifer Power who took part to raise funds for Rokkool Academy.
- Our students had the fantastic opportunity to help Neon Waltz set-up for their gig at Upstairs Inverness. It was a great behind the scenes experience for them to see the preparation which goes into live performances.



MAY 24

- We welcomed lots of groups and schools in for workshops this month, including Connecting Carers who joined us for an evening workshop of music and art and the Buzz Project who brought their students down to visit.
- We were gifted a family pass for the Belladrum Festival so we held a fundraising raffle.
- Eastgate Centre had a busy month and we helped to support their bear trail and held a workshop during the Vintage Car event.



# SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

JUNE 24

- The Friday teen drop-in sessions are building in popularity and we have regular visitors from all the local secondary schools.
- We had several school visits this month including classes from Cawdor Primary.
- Rokzkool was selected as one of the charities supported by a 24-hour golf-a-thon at Inverness Crazy Golf.
- Our fantastic students won the YPI award for Rokzkool Academy.



JULY 24

- The summer holidays are here so Holiday Rokz is back at Phipps Hall for musical fun, sports, art and lots of outdoor fun.
- We rocked the tent at Belladrum Festival this year! A fabulous experience for all our volunteers, students and visitors. We had the Rokzkool tent and also assisted with the ambassador role ensuring a safe environment for families.



# SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

AUG 24

- Summer Holiday Roks continues! We had workshops in the studio and more fun in the Phipps Hall and beyond!
- We supported the Inverness Street event by providing an open studio with music and art activities.



SEPT 24

- Aaron and his fabulous mum won the 'Blue Lights Got Talent' competition in aide of Rokzkool.
- Our fantastic Rokzkool volunteers helped to marshal the Loch Ness Marathon and manned a water station for the runners.



# SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

OCT 24

- We took part in the Halloween trail in the Eastgate Centre and decorated a glass cabinet with our spooky mannequin.
- Creative Clubs took place over the October holidays where kids could explore art, music, games and building challenges.
- St Stephen's Church held a fundraising Harvest afternoon.



NOV 24

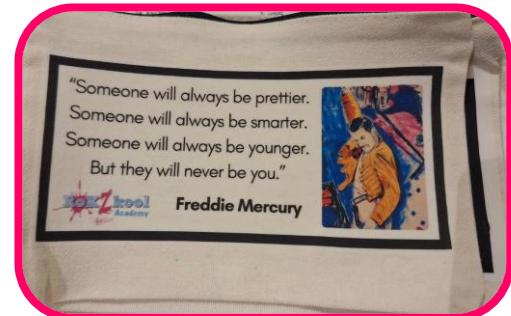
- Joined the Operation Respect taskforce team to help with support for young people during the festive period.
- Featured in the Inverness Courier in a Q&A feature.
- Attended the BID Inverness Awards at the Drumossie Hotel as finalists in the Creative & Culture Business category.
- We provided musical workshops and performances at the Action Duchenne International Conference in Hinckley.
- Welcomed DYW Young Ambassadors to the studio for a day of learning and fun.



# SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

DEC 24

- Christmas was busy as we welcomed lots of new faces to our drop-ins thanks to the increased footfall in the Eastgate Centre.
- Zoe, our incredibly talented volunteer, created a stunning image for our Rokzkool Christmas cards and our students helped to produce a range of merch using images from our mural with inspirational quotes by musicians.
- We welcomed Emily Gray and Twose radio to broadcast an episode of their show from the studio.



JAN 25

- Another busy block of classes this month including Kidzrok, art classes and studio jam sessions alongside all our regular drop-in sessions for families, teens and adults.
- We welcomed Brora Youth Group to Studio 58 for a creative workshop and pizza party and continue to build our relationships with a network of local groups who support youths.
- This month saw the relaunch of activities at Merkinch Hall at Simpsons Lane, run by our incredible Tesco Community Champion, Liz Sutherland, and our amazing team of volunteers from the Rokzkool family. This includes a craft club, gardening, prize bingo, day trips and outings and coffee afternoons. Designed so locals can pop in for a chat in a supportive, friendly environment creating a perfect place to connect and combat loneliness.



# SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

FEB 25

- New block of classes launched including a new keyboard class led by our amazing volunteer Fiona.
- Rokzkool Academy attended the 'speed dating' style event at Culloden Academy where students could learn more about the services we offer.
- We had holiday workshops running in Studio 58 for the February long weekend.
- Inverness Caledonian Thistle invited us along to play for their guests at their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations at the Kingsmills Hotel.



MAR 25

- We re-started our Friday late night drop-in sessions for teens, supported by Police Scotland as part of Operation Respect, a multi-agency approach to lessen anti-social behaviour.
- Our volunteer team helped by marshalling the Inverness Half Marathon.
- Groups of our students were invited along to a match at Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC



# PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

This year we have continued to reach out to and collaborate with agencies, groups and other charities to ensure we provide support to those who need it.



**AWARDS  
FOR ALL  
SCOTLAND**



**POLICE**  
SCOTLAND  
Keeping people safe  
POILEAS ALBA

**TESCO**

Proud to be  
supporting  
our local  
community



**ACTION  
DUCHENNE**

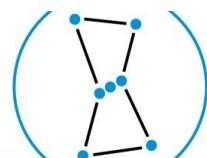


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YOUTH AND  
PHILANTHROPY  
INITIATIVE  
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**Highland**  
Community  
Planning  
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas  
Dealbhadh  
Coimhearsnachd  
**na Gàidhealtachd**

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## CHARITY INCOME

TYPE	Sum of Credit Amount
Classes	£25,139.87
Donations	£7,420.58
Grant	£52,557.00
Hall	£800.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£85,917.45</b>

**6 April 24 to 5 April 25**

This year we were grateful to have had financial support from several sources including fundraising, partnerships, grants and donations.

## EXPENSES AND DEDUCTIONS

TYPE	Sum of outgoing
Facilitator/Volunteer Expenses	£47,780.49
Events	£2,793.17
Project Expenses	£15,591.68
Utilities	£4,407.58
Tech & Subscriptions	£880.66
Transport & Travel	£7,979.79
Website & Promotional	£2,692.68
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£82,126.05</b>

INCOME - OUTGOINGS	£3,791.40
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# PLANS FOR 25-26

## STUDIO 58

- This new location has enabled us to raise the profile of the charity as we have a prominent location with a lot of footfall. We want to continue to build the range of classes we offer and develop our community drop-ins.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- We will continue to work with other agencies, charities and local organisations to ensure we are best serving the community and increasing our reach.

## DEVELOPING OUR STUDENT EXPERIENCES

- Our senior students will be involved in the development and running of Studio 58 and we want to empower them to take the lead and help shape the programmes and classes we offer.

## EXTENDING OUR COMMUNITY PROJECTS

- We want to extend the community projects we offer including mentoring, skills-sharing and volunteering opportunities.

## EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES

- We are developing a programme of employability classes to ensure that local people can be supported to find, apply and keep a job to improve their lives. We will utilise the skills and expertise of our team and also link with local businesses to create opportunities for growth.

## SUPPORTING FAMILIES

- We will be launching services to support families who are having financial challenges including free spaces in classes, our instrument library, snack packs in the school holidays and our care cupboard for free hygiene essentials.