



**GIANT
STEPS**

2020

IMPACT REPORT



= WHERE MUSIC MEETS SOCIAL ACTION

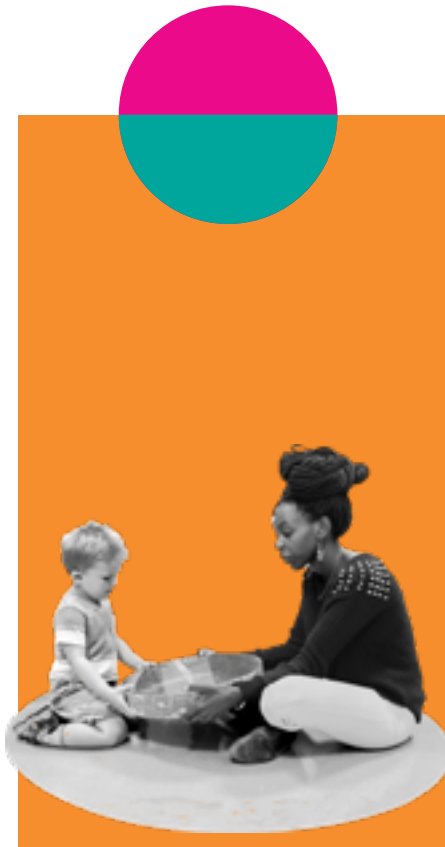
Giant Steps Music is tackling poverty and injustice by unleashing the power of music to uplift the human spirit and create healthier, vibrant communities across the world.

We invest in, connect, and amplify the voices of world-class musicians to build a field of **social impact music**— a genre defined not by its sound, but by its singular focus on fostering and celebrating a world in which all have equal rights and opportunities to live healthy, successful lives.

Giant Steps Music is building a global network of musical leaders that harness their artistry to design solutions in service of a better world.



= OUR APPROACH



The predominant responses to world poverty have been driven by market solutions and aid. Neither are sufficient to uplift the more than two billion people living in poverty that lack access to basic rights and opportunities enjoyed by so many others around the world. This paradigm has begun to shift into investments in social entrepreneurs—talented visionaries who are working to transform injustice.

More creative approaches are needed, and the creative industries can play a big part. At Giant Steps Music, we believe that musicians are the original social entrepreneurs—the untapped, creative resources that are harbingers of large-scale change. We also believe that social change happens in community, in the daily experiences and actions of communal life. That's why we created our flagship program, the Music Action Lab—a creative fusion of music residency and incubator models.

A platform exploring the intersection of artistic innovation and social entrepreneurship, the Music Action Lab brings together talented musicians across the world to **CONNECT** and learn from one another, **CREATE** music collaboratively that reflects their lived experiences and the issues and challenges facing their communities, and **TRANSFORM** themselves and their music in the process.

MUSIC ACTION LAB

Collaborative music-making serves as a vehicle for the qualities of social impact leadership: cross-cultural communication, empathy, adaptability, flexibility, and openness to multiple perspectives. Breakthrough learning experiences, including workshops with subject matter experts and community outreach to vulnerable populations—provide additional knowledge, skills, and tools for artists to chart and lead change in their home communities.

“Music Action Lab is giving birth to inspiration and creativity, cross-pollinating cultures and joining mind, heart, and spirit to create a unified movement. That’s amazing.”

—Eric Harland

*Four-time GRAMMY nominee,
drummer, composer*



“Music Action Lab was the full package for me to shape my goals in life and understand what I am fighting for: change, social justice, and to use my voice as a contribution to the renaissance of this world.”

—Teta

Music Action Lab 1.0 Fellow, Rwanda



OUR REACH & IMPACT

Fellows have come from more than 20 countries across 6 continents



100% of FELLOWS

★★★★★

Call Music Action Lab a transformative experience

★★★★★

Believe they can make a difference in their community

★★★★★

Recommend the program to others
76% highly recommend it

Music Action Lab is fostering significant skills in

SOCIAL IMPACT LEADERSHIP



Have more openness to multiple perspectives

100%

Gained more empathy

94%

Increased knowledge of global social issues

94%

Increased cross-cultural communication skills

88%

Increased collaboration skills

88%



MUSICIANSHIP

94%

Reported the program prepared them to be a musical leader

88%

Gained new tools for musical collaboration

88%

Reported the program increased their overall musicianship



Music Action Lab has taught me to be more humble, to communicate better and definitively the complexity of the music industry and what we can do to thrive in it"

*—Ernesto "Matute" Lopez
Music Action Lab 2.0 Fellow,
GRAMMY-nominated drummer, Nicaragua*

MUSIC ACTION LAB WOMEN

In recognition of the inequity faced by women worldwide and in the music industry, Giant Steps inaugurated a women's edition of the Music Action Lab in 2019 for talented female artists to collectively advance the causes of women and create a global community of women leading artistic and social change. The program also featured an all women's faculty.

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“Music Action Lab Women is a very important program because it creates bridges between women from all around the world who are facing the same issues in different forms, connecting and empowering them, giving them a voice and inspiration to be mentors in their communities. It has been a catalyst to orientate my professional, artistic and personal life.”

—Sevana Tchakerian
Music Action Lab 2.0 Fellow and
Music Action Women
Project Director, Armenia

OUR MUSIC

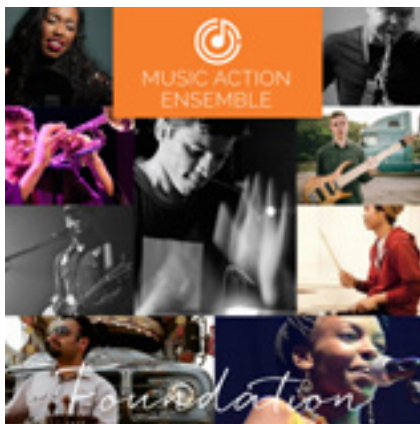
Each Music Action Lab results in an album of original material composed collaboratively by the Fellows that defy stylistic categorization by design. Diversity, an evidence-based approach leading to better outcomes, is a cornerstone of the Lab. Fellows are selected from explicitly diverse geographic, musical, social, and ethnic backgrounds, and are provided with the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with at least four geographic regions outside their home.

Grounded in cross-cultural understanding and artistic innovation, the diverse musical discovery and creation of the Lab has crossed indigenous and folk traditions, multilingual hip-hop, world rhythms, and western forms such as groove, jazz, classical, and pop unified by the human values of social justice. Available on all major distribution channels and streaming services, our music is always available free online and includes fact sheets for further study, reflection, and lesson plans for educators.

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“I’ve been to summits across the globe—at the UN, White House, in South Africa, Azerbaijan, Mexico and beyond. This was the single most compelling performance I have ever witnessed; it gave me joy and created community when I needed it most. Giant Steps is an essential player in this space.”

—Sam Vaghar
Executive Director,
Millennium Campus
Network; Advisor to
the Executive Director
of UN Women



As featured in

HUFFPOST



KQED
Public Radio

Jazz Weekly
Creative Music and other forms of Avant Garde

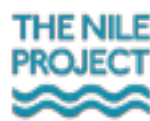
= OUR COMMUNITY

In its initial startup phase, Giant Steps Music has relied on a talented network of volunteers to support and invest in our vision for change—including our Founder. Dozens of music industry experts, subject matter experts in social entrepreneurship, human rights, leadership development, and thought leaders in the nonprofit and international NGO community, have generously shared their knowledge, expertise, time, and talent to play an integral role in our success.

Founding Partners



Community Partners



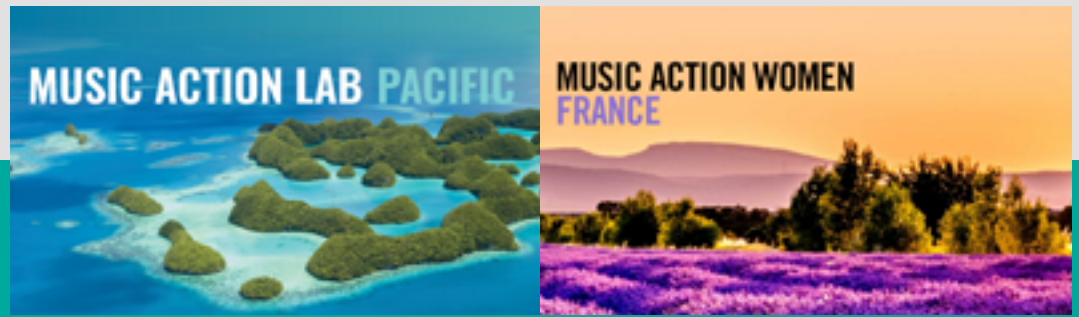
Key Supporters



= VISION 2025

Our work is more important now than ever before as we face an uncertain future amid pandemics in racial and economic justice as well as public health. Giant Steps will be creating new blended creative learning models and opportunities while continuing to expand Music Action Lab thematically, regionally, and internationally.

We will reach 10 new geographies and 50 artists in the next 5 years and unveil a web platform singularly dedicated to the world of music and global social justice to reach more listeners, educate and inspire advocates, engage more supporters, and amplify the impact of inspiring work happening across the globe.





THANK YOU

giantstepsmusic.org |   @gstepsmusic