

NCH

NATIONAL
CONCERT
HALL \ AN
CEOLÁRAS
NÁISIÚNTA



National Concert Hall
STATEMENT
OF STRATEGY

2022 – 2026



A young girl with red braids is looking upwards with a curious expression. In the foreground, a portion of a tambourine with several metal jingles is visible. The background is softly blurred, showing another person in a grey sweater.

Our Vision

**To be an inspiring and world-renowned
music destination, accessible to all,
enriching the cultural landscape of Ireland**

Learn & Explore

Our Purpose

**To be a living space for music, for
lifelong enjoyment, connection and
participation in music, for everyone**





David Brophy, conductor and Finghin Collins, piano

Foreword

This strategy document, which will form the bedrock of our annual business planning process, outlines our key priorities for the next five years, reflecting our statutory obligations, our role and our core responsibilities.

We believe the National Concert Hall's impact can go beyond music. As we set about fulfilling our vision, we will influence, nourish and inspire Ireland's wider cultural life. With a strategy that embraces all – audiences, composers, songwriters, singers, musicians, and promoters – we can deliver fully on our promise and NCH's potential.

Thank you especially to all those who contributed to the formation of this strategy – our staff, musicians, our key stakeholders, and our audiences. On behalf of all who have the future of music in their hearts and hands, collectively we will make every effort to transform the NCH into a world-renowned destination for lifelong enjoyment, connection and participation in music, for everyone.

Maura McGrath
Chairperson

Robert Read
CEO



Joyce DiDonato

Our Journey

During the period covered by this strategy, we will be continuing the ambitious journey that began with our 2015 strategy.

| From... | | To... |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| A receiving hall for music | → | to an international centre for the performance of music |
| A music organisation | → | to a leadership voice for music |
| A classical music focus | → | to all music, for everyone |
| An iconic Dublin venue | → | to a national presence |
| A national reputation | → | to a global profile |

Throughout this journey, we will continue to deliver our principal functions:

- To provide the national venue for the performance, appreciation and enjoyment of musical, creative, artistic and cultural activities with regard to international standards;
- To promote and support performance, knowledge, appreciation, creation and enjoyment of music as an integral part of Irish life;
- To entertain, educate and engage the public through musical experiences;
- To encourage inclusivity, participation, creativity, experimentation and involvement in music through engagement with diverse individuals and communities as both performers and participants.

Over the next five years, two important projects will lead to a significant transformation of the NCH.

Firstly ...

The planned redevelopment of the NCH site, into a state-of-the-art campus for music facilitating innovation in musical performance, learning, and participation in music. This significant redevelopment will inspire a new generation of musicians and music lovers, creating infrastructure and facilities for the development of a world-renowned music destination.



Secondly ...

Since 1948, the NSO has been a keystone of Irish cultural heritage. In 1981 it found its rightful home in the newly established NCH, though management and administration remained with RTÉ. Now, following an announcement by Government, NCH is proud to welcome the consolidation of that relationship, as promotion, management and administration of the NSO transferred from the national broadcaster to the NCH on 24th January 2022.

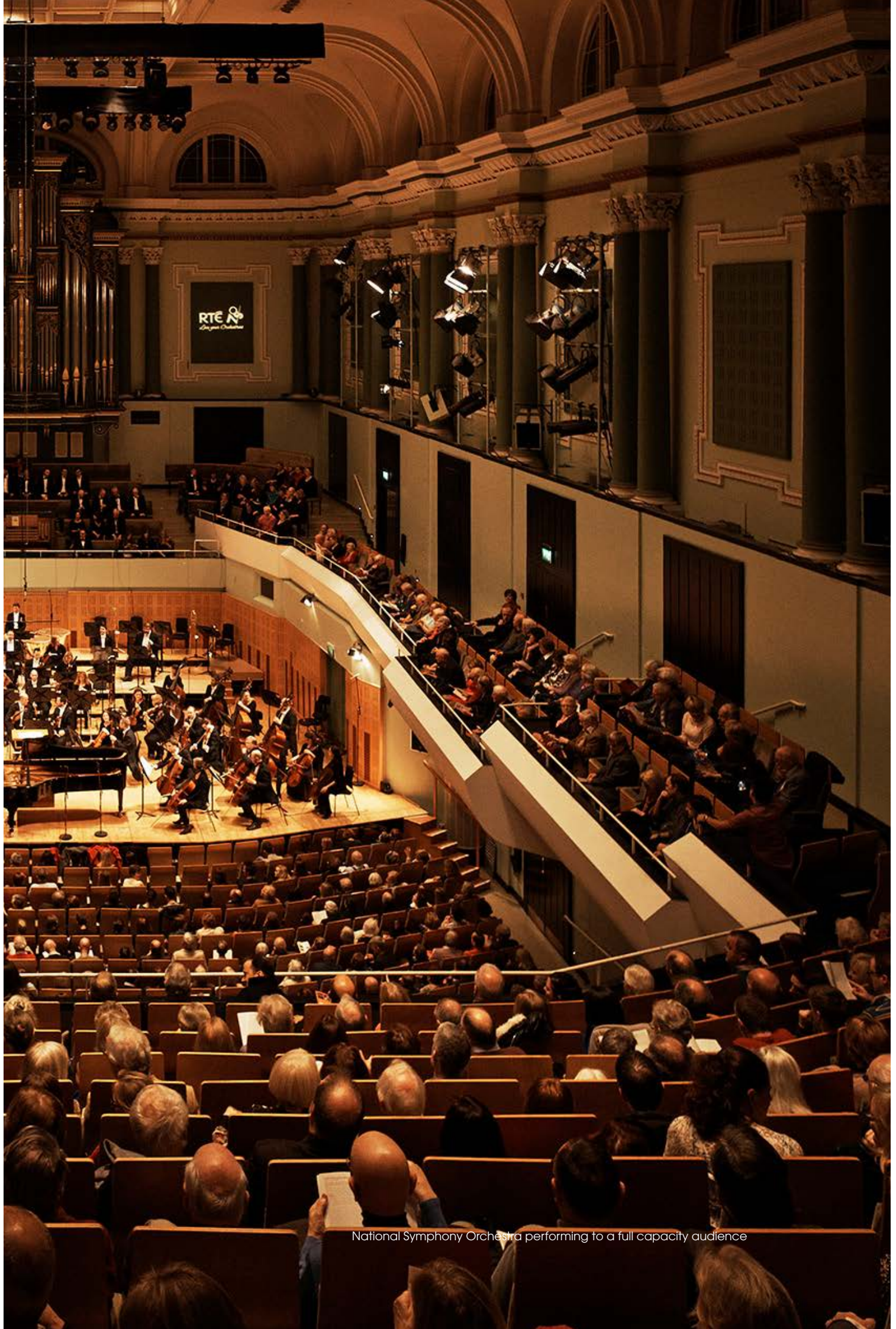
It is an exciting move and one of several landmark changes due to take place that will alter the musical landscape in the coming years. NCH is putting the NSO at the heart of its programme, fostering its development and its reputation as Ireland's nationally and internationally respected Symphony Orchestra.

To ensure we make the most of the opportunities presented by these two transformative developments, we will review all of our activities to ensure that diversity, access, equality and sustainability are at the heart of everything we do.

Access to excellence - in musical performance across all genres and practices - is at the core of our purpose and reputation. Our ambitious programmes will be foundations on which to develop and increase opportunities, both for young people and those from diverse communities, giving all audiences greater access to the transformative and life-enhancing power of music.



Our Strategic Focus 2022 – 2026



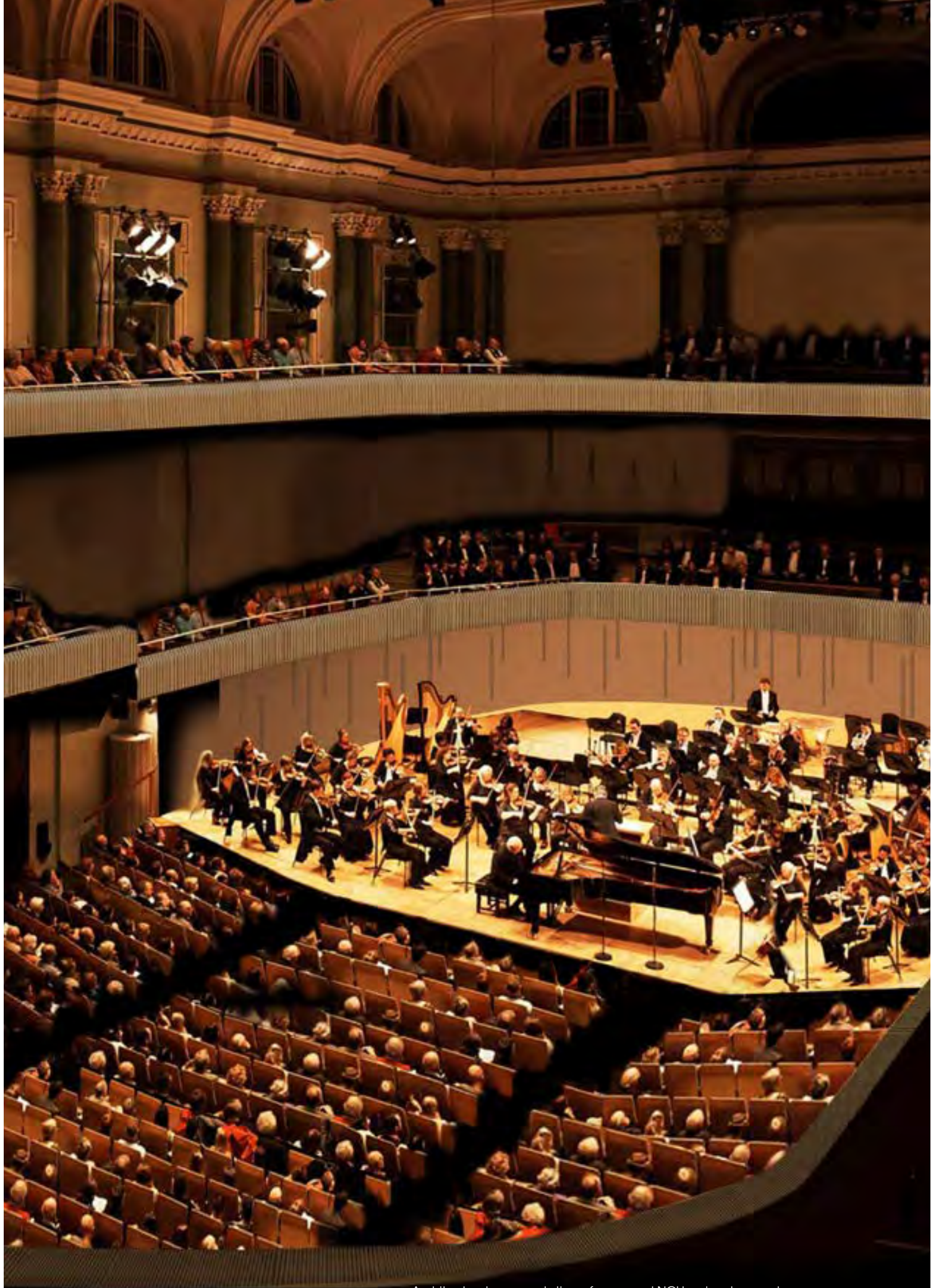
National Symphony Orchestra performing to a full capacity audience

A world-renowned music destination

Realise the true potential of the NCH campus by creating a world-renowned music destination for future generations.

Key actions:

- To secure the funding, complete the design, commence construction and plan for the reopening of a universally accessible world-renowned music destination
- Restore one of Ireland's most historic and cultural sites, creating inspiring opportunities for performance and participation in music
- Work collaboratively with our key partners, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, and the OPW, ensuring the designs for this redevelopment are inspiring, acoustically excellent and accessible to all
- Communicate and engage with all key stakeholders and audiences throughout each phase of the redevelopment project
- Develop an inspiring and diverse internationally regarded programme to launch the new campus
- Actively promote NCH as a world-renowned music destination, raising our national and international profile and reputation



Architectural representation of proposed NCH redevelopment

An inspiring community of musicians

To bring the NSO and NCH together and engage our community of musicians, bringing musical excellence and vibrancy to wider audiences, across Ireland and the world.

Key actions:

- Build on our joint capacity and capability, experimenting with new opportunities for presentation, for access and for participation in music
- Maximise the unique opportunities brought by a world-class ensemble of musicians
- Develop a new, integrated programme with NSO ensembles, including learning and participation activities, that offer audiences a programme of exciting international conductors and soloists, while championing the work of Irish artists and composers
- Engage and connect with communities across the country, through our touring programme starting from the period of the redevelopment of our site



Jaime Martín conducting the RTÉ NSO

Audience growth and diversity

Seek new and innovative ways to find, attract and grow our audiences and participation in music, ensuring they reflect our country and the diversity of our nation.

Key actions:

- Implement a communications strategy that reflects our vision and our programme
- Implement a comprehensive audience development strategy, focused on nurturing long-term relationships with new and existing audiences
- Develop pricing strategies that drive audience growth and enhance accessibility
- Implement a customer service programme that supports and fosters a positive customer experience
- Programme and present the work of artists and partners from under-represented groups, in ways that resonate and have impact
- Engage with advocacy groups to identify and remove barriers to universal access



Excellence in programme

Ensure our programme is creative, adventurous and ambitious through collaboration and partnerships, delivering new and exciting experiences for everyone.

Key actions:

- Continue to present a wide range of classical music-making in Ireland and develop new ways of engaging audiences for classical music
- Place the NSO at the heart of our programme, building and enhancing its profile nationally and internationally
- Continue to develop a new, diverse and accessible artistic programme that fully supports inclusivity
- Develop new projects, commissions and programmes to generate new work and new opportunities for artists
- Deliver excellence in production standards across all our programme
- Develop an off-site programme delivered nationally starting from the period of our redevelopment to establish greater presence across the country



Cellist Alisha Weilerstein with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Tomáš Netopil

Creatively enterprising

To be enterprising and entrepreneurial in developing the NCH into a world-renowned music destination, generating commercial and fundraising revenue, in addition to ticket sales.

Key actions:

- Ensure the NCH campus becomes a welcoming, lively and appealing music-based destination and meeting place for all
- Enhance the NCH's hospitality and fully serviced spaces to increase the range of commercial opportunities available
- Grow corporate and philanthropic support
- Position, market and promote NCH as a unique music destination for domestic and international visitors
- Build opportunities with promoters, maximising commercial income
- Devise a new venue and corporate hire model reflecting the increased capacity of spaces within the re-developed campus





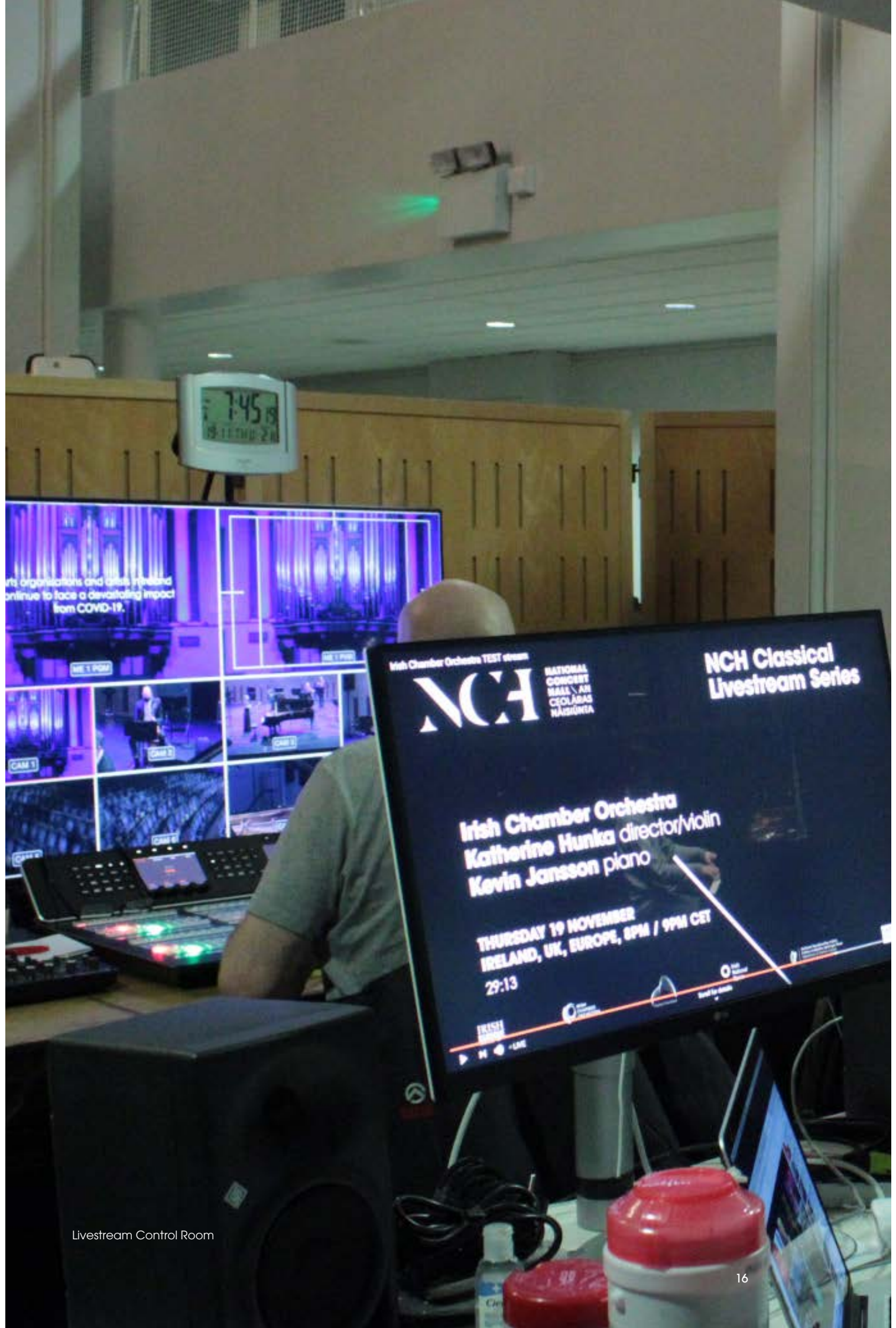
Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill

Music without boundaries

Enhance our digital and broadcast capabilities ensuring we are excellent at delivering live broadcasts, which will enable the NCH to reach global audiences.

Key actions:

- Enhance the global reach of NCH through digital platforms, marketing, communications and programming
- Invest in NCH's inhouse capacity to deliver high-quality broadcasting across all platforms
- Attract global audiences embracing digital marketing channels to share the NCH programme
- Provide a more personalised and richer experience for all audiences through our digital channels
- Exploit the potential of technology, data collection and data analysis to attract new audiences while growing loyalty with existing customers



Livestream Control Room

Collaboration and partnership in music

In collaboration with our partners and others in the Irish music sector, we will promote a stronger voice for music, enabling a national conversation on music practice - its importance, its future and its potential for enhancing many aspects of Irish life.

Key actions:

- Continue to identify a national and international network of partners to collaborate on our programme, new projects and new ways of engaging with music
- Further develop our programme and support for the music sector, through mutually beneficial partnerships with leading ensembles, on-site resident ensembles, and all musicians
- Build strategic partnerships throughout our communities to broaden NCH's cultural contribution to society
- Foster education partnerships to develop and deliver support, training and performance opportunities for emerging musical talent
- Engage with the music sector, our leading agencies and the State, to act as an advocate for music, highlighting important issues for our industry
- Identify and connect with new corporate and philanthropic supporters who align with our strategic ambitions, building long-term partnerships that support our programme



Leader in sustainability

To become a centre of excellence for environmental sustainability in the management of cultural organisations and spaces, demonstrating best practice and influencing change by reducing the environmental impact of our people, audiences, visitors and artists.

Key actions:

- Develop and implement an NCH sustainability policy focused on travelling artists and ensembles, public transport, renewable energy, recycling and the environment
- Communicate NCH sustainability initiatives and policies with the public and key stakeholders
- Become the benchmark for quality and sustainable event management and production by ensuring sustainability best practice in all aspects of the redevelopment of our campus



Our people and talent

To enable, empower and develop our people in meeting the demands and needs of NCH's transformation, attracting and growing the skills and talents needed to meet future challenges.

Key actions:

- Foster an inspiring and positive culture ensuring organisational values are embedded in everything we do
- Promote and foster equality, diversity and inclusivity throughout our organisation
- Prioritise staff development and increase resources for training and skills enhancement to ensure alignment with the strategic goals of NCH
- Nurture a culture of creativity for all staff
- Maintain excellence in arts practice, supporting the growth of those working in the cultural sector, including our staff, artists and the broader community of arts practitioners



Next generation of cultural leaders

Develop the next generation of cultural professionals, through structured and informal training, partnerships and work-experience schemes.

Key actions:

- Establish a career development programme for those looking to establish a career in arts and culture
- Engage with industry and educational institutions, creating opportunities for new entrants to work in our sector
- Promote a framework for career pathways in the arts in Ireland, collaborating with key partners



A participant in the Female Conductor Programme

NCH Values

We pride ourselves on the values at the heart of our organisation, which will be a key enabler in delivering this strategy –

Music

We espouse music as a profound form of human expression. We enrich people's lives through music and the magic of live performance.

Inclusivity

We work as a team and strive to embody an ethos of inclusivity, diversity and equality. We encourage all ages, demographics and abilities to participate in the enjoyment and creation of music of all kinds.



A man is seated on a stage, playing a guitar. He is wearing a dark shirt and light-colored trousers. The stage is dimly lit with purple and blue spotlights. A bright light source is visible on the floor near the man's feet. The background is dark and textured.

Ethical Standards

We embrace high ethical standards in the conduct of our business and in our interactions with others.

Relationships

We cherish our customers and the relationships we have with our artists, supporters and the community we serve. We strive to serve the public interest by balancing commercial imperatives with our statutory obligations.

Respect and Personal Responsibility

We value our colleagues at NCH and we uphold the principles of respect, honesty, integrity, personal responsibility and positivity, in everything we do. We take pride in the NCH, promoting it and safeguarding its interests.



By 2026...

the National Concert Hall will be

- Internationally recognised for our engaging and diverse artistic programme, both on campus and off-site
- A proud home to the NSO, who will be central to our programme, bringing musical excellence and vibrancy to audiences in Ireland and abroad
- An open campus of creativity, ideas and shared knowledge, deeply embedded in our redeveloped state-of-the-art home on Earlsfort Terrace in Dublin city centre
- Recognised as a welcoming, accessible and culturally significant asset for the nation, making a valuable contribution to Ireland's cultural fabric
- A digital leader, providing access to high quality live music broadcasts and educational content for global audiences
- A cultural leader supporting the careers and growth of those working in the sector, including our staff, artists and the broader community of arts practitioners in Ireland



