



# A Year of Joyful Growth!

OrKidstra Annual Report 2024-25





# Music: The Power to Change Lives

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Your support is changing kids' lives through the power of music! OrKidstra gives children and youth from equity-deserving Ottawa communities the opportunity to learn essential life skills – responsibility, teamwork, respect, communication, and compassion – through singing and playing music together. OrKidstra makes an immediate and lifelong positive impact!



**"I could not imagine my life without OrKidstra and the difference it has made."**

– Val, 2025 OrKidstra Graduate





# Your support makes a BIG impact!



**100%** of OrKidstra graduates have completed high school and have gone on to post-secondary education



**96%** of students showed growth in essential life skills like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving



Ages range from **5-18**



**3** after-school Hubs in the Ottawa neighbourhoods of West Centretown, Vanier/Overbrook, and now in Heron Gate

Reaching over **750** kids from equity-deserving Ottawa neighbourhoods



**95%** of students participate for free, including access to musical instruments



**90%** of musical instruments are donated by the community



Students from over **62** cultural and linguistic backgrounds



# Who we are

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OrKidstra is a social development program for children ages 5 to 18 from equity-deserving communities in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

## Mission

Our mission is to empower kids and build community through the universal language of music. We carry out this mission by providing children from low-income families with free group and individual music lessons and the chance to learn important life skills such as respect, compassion, teamwork, and responsibility through playing and singing together.

## Vision

Our vision is a future where all children and youth have the opportunity to find their voice and build their potential through music.

## Mandate

Our mandate is to give children from equity-deserving communities the opportunity to learn and make music together, and the chance to benefit from the individual skills and community values inherent in music-making.

*OrKidstra is a registered charitable organization (83246 7153 RR0001).*





# Our Programs



## KiddlyWinks

A fun music and movement program.  
**Ages 5-8**  
(in-school\* & after-school)



## KidStringers

Explores the joy of playing string instruments. **8 years +**  
(after-school)



## KidSingers

An upbeat choir program. **8 years +**  
(after-school)



## KidPlayers

Explores the joy of playing wind and brass instruments.  
**8 years +**  
(after-school)



## KidStarters

Gets kids ready to play an instrument.  
**8 years +**  
(after-school)



## OrKidstra

Senior level students explore playing wind, brass, and string instruments **12 years +**  
(after-school)

*\* Funded by the school boards*



**"I keep coming to OrKidstra because I love singing. When you sing alone, it doesn't make a harmony, but when you sing with everyone else, it makes a perfect harmony."**

– Lili, KidSingers, Heron Gate Hub



# A Message from OrKidstra

**Wow! What a year it's been in OrKidstra's 18th season! As we look back on 2024-25, we are filled with immense pride and gratitude for the incredible milestones we've reached together. With your sustained support, OrKidstra continues to build a community grounded in Love, Courage, Excellence, and a deep commitment to Belonging, as we empower kids from equity-deserving Ottawa communities through the universal language of music.**

This year was one of joyful growth, inspiring achievements, and meaningful transformation. From the heartwarming "Notes of Love" side-by-side concert and tour of Japan with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, to the first year of our newest after-school Hub in the Heron Gate community, to a performance for Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla, and being named Music Educator of the Year at the Capital Music Awards, 2024-25 was a season when OrKidstra shone brightly in the spotlight, illuminated by your support.

It was also a pivotal year for OrKidstra's leadership, as we embraced a co-leadership model. This approach aligns harmoniously with our Strategic Goals of "Expanding Our Welcome," "Deepening Our Relationships," and "Increasing Our Capacity and Sustainability." This collaborative leadership structure will continue to strengthen our ability to help even more kids reach for success through music as we grow and evolve.





## A Message from OrKidstra cont'd

And the demand for OrKidstra continues to increase: our student waitlist grew by almost 250% in 2024-25. Ottawa is seeing more clearly than ever the transformative power of music to help build community, and with your support, we are thoughtfully growing to reach more kids who would otherwise be left out.

As you review our OrKidstra Annual Report 2024-25, we invite you to continue playing your part in shaping OrKidstra's future with us: together, we can orchestrate a symphony of lasting, positive change. To every student, family, volunteer, teacher, staff member, donor, partner, and champion of our mission – thank you. You are the heart of OrKidstra. In concert, we are building a more harmonious future, one note at a time.

Playing every note with love,



**Chayanika  
Abeysekera Lutes**  
Chair



**Tina Fedeski**  
Co-Founder and Artistic  
Managing Director



**Carrie Lauzon**  
Executive Managing  
Director





# Key Events of 2024-25

## Summer 2024

**July 2, 3 and 6, 2024** – OrKidstra Summer Youth Program, including community performances at Parkdale Park and Alta Vista Market.

**August 17, 2024** – OrKidstra participates in Heron Gate Summer Fun Day.

**August 19, 2024** – OrKidstra students perform at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario Conference.

**Sept 12, 2024** – First day of after-school programming for OrKidstra's 18th season.

**Sept 14, 2024** – KiddlyWinks Training Workshop equips OrKidstra Teaching Artists with new skills.

**Sept 15, 2024** – OrKidstra performs at Family Activities day as part of the SPHERE Festival with Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra (NACO) at the at the Canadian Museum of History.

**Sept 16, 2024** – OrKidstra expands its KidSingers choir program to include Junior and Intermediate students: over 200 students sing in KidSingers in 2024-25.





## Key Events of 2024-2025 cont'd

### Fall 2024

**Oct 23, 2024** – Launch of the Heron Gate Hub after-school program.

**Oct 24, 2024** – OrKidstra Spook-tacular Concert brings Halloween fun to families.

**Oct 29–31, 2024** – Two staff attend the Catapult Canada Gathering in Halifax, NS, sponsored by the Rideau Hall Foundation

**Nov 2, 2024** – TEDxMechanicsville features OrKidstra KidPlayers for a musical performance and youth public speaking.

**Nov 8, 2024** – Community performance at Ottawa Children and Youth Summit, Ottawa City Hall.

**Nov 9, 2024** – Tina Fedeski receives Doctor of Music, honoris causa, from Carleton University.

**Nov 14, 2024** – Tina Fedeski inducted into the 2024 Order of Ottawa.

**Nov 25–Dec 6, 2024** – Various community performances to give back during the holiday season.

**Dec 11, 2024** – Vanier Hub Holiday Concert at Ottawa Technical Secondary School.

**Dec 17, 2024** – Centre Hub Holiday Concert at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre.

### Winter 2025

**Jan 17, 2025** – OrKidstra nominated for Music Educator of the Year at OMIC's Capital Music Awards.

**Jan 13, 2025** – OrKidstra after-school programming resumes for the after the holiday break.

**Jan 29, 2025** – Heron Gate Hub Winter Celebration, Ridgemont High School.

**Feb 14, 2025** – Notes of Love: OrKidstra's first-ever side-by-side concert with the National Arts Centre Orchestra at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre.

**Feb 20, 2025** – Re-developed KidStarters program launches at Centre Hub.



Photo courtesy of Carleton University



## Key Events of 2024-2025 cont'd

### Spring 2025

**Mar 26–29, 2025** – OrKidstra hosts Sistema Canada programs from Edmonton, Toronto, and Montreal.

**Apr 14, 2025** – Opening Ceremony performance at CHEO's Children's Healthcare Conference.

**May 2, 2025** – Community performance with Ottawa Network for Education.

**May 22, 2025** – OrKidstra wins Music Educator of the Year at Capital Music Awards (Ottawa Music Industry Coalition).

**May 26, 2025** – OrKidstra performs for Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla during their royal visit to Ottawa.

**May 26, 2025** – Heron Gate Hub End-of-Year Concert at Ridgemont High School.

**May 28–June 8, 2025** – Six OrKidstra students join NACO's International Tour to Japan.\*

**June 2, 2025** – Heron Gate Hub KidSingers named Top 10 in the CBC Music Class Challenge (spring edition)

**June 11, 2025** – Vanier Hub End-of-Year Concert at Ottawa Technical Secondary School.

**June 17, 2025** – Centre Hub End-of-Year Concert at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre.



**"The evening was...a reminder about what really matters: friends, community, kids, music and, to bring it all together...OrKidstra. This city is so fortunate."**

– "Notes of Love" guest

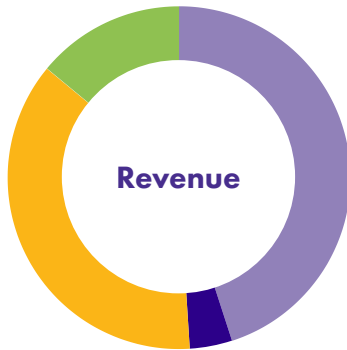
\*OrKidstra's participation proudly sponsored by Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra, with support from generous donors to the NAC Foundation.



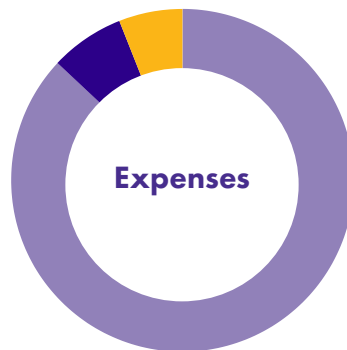
Photo by OrKidstra



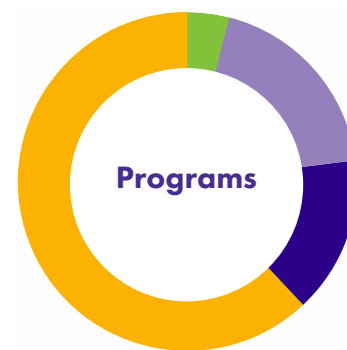
# Financial Highlights



- Individuals **45%**
- Corporations **4%**
- Charities/Foundations **37%**
- Government **14%**



- Program **87%**
- Management/Administration **7%**
- Fundraising **6%**



- Teaching Costs **23%**
- Instruments & Program Delivery **15%**
- Program Staffing & Volunteer Coordination **57%**
- Community Outreach **5%**

## Statement of Financial Position *(as of June 30, 2025)*

| ASSETS                                 | 2025           | 2024           |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS                         |                |                |
| Cash                                   | 117,753        | 52,291         |
| Short Term Investments                 | 252,724        | 314,086        |
| Accounts Receivable and HST            | 7,073          | 23,549         |
| Prepaid Expenses                       | 7,912          | 8,554          |
|                                        | 385,462        | 398,480        |
| INVESTMENTS                            | 267,257        | 144,537        |
| CAPITAL ASSETS                         | 66,212         | 65,830         |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                    | <b>718,931</b> | <b>608,847</b> |
| LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS             |                |                |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES                    |                |                |
| Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities | 23,585         | 27,244         |
| Deferred Contributions                 | 32,896         | 40,044         |
|                                        | 56,481         | 67,288         |
| DEFERRED CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS         | 54,092         | 60,400         |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES                      | 110,570        | 127,688        |
| NET ASSETS                             | <b>608,361</b> | <b>481,159</b> |
|                                        | <b>718,931</b> | <b>608,847</b> |



# Our Donors are a special part of our OrKidstra family!

## OrKidSTAR

### Changemaker Award

Dasha Shenkman OBE HonRCM

## Individuals

### \$100,000+

Dasha Shenkman OBE HonRCM

Estate of Wendy Dianne Leckie

### \$25,000+

Alexandra & Gregory Mondre

David Van Dine

### \$5,000+

Alan Poplove

Anda Sipolins

Anne Robinson

Anonymous (multiple)

Cheryl-Ann & Doug Casey

David Holdsworth

& Nicole Senecal

Evan Huus

Gary & Cornelia Duck

Ian Gibb

Jody Gomber

John & Jean Gomez

Mary Nash

Paul Wells & Lisa Samson

Peter Sagar

Robin & Louise Higham

Susan Prior

### \$1,000 to \$4,999

Angela Hewitt

Anonymous (multiple)

Barbara Lavictoire

Beverley Hughes

Brenda Muir

Carole Swan

Charles & Marilyn McMillen

Charlotte Gray

Chayanika Abeysekera Lutes

& Michael Lutes

Chloe McLellan

Chris & Sandra Van Barr

Claire Marshall

Constance Van Wijk

Eileen & Ralph Overend

Elizabeth Cosgrove

Evan Frank

Graham Carpenter

Issac & Marguerite Gollish

Janet Campbell

Jeff Heynen

John Hollander

Joseph Ha

Karen Ferguson

Kate Preston

Linda Ham

Lynda Heyden-Carroll

& Michael Carroll

Margaret Campbell

Marilyn Dawson

Marilyn Hart

Mark Stiles

Mike McGurn

Nancy Taylor

Robin & Louise Higham

Roseann Runte

Ruth & John Walton

Sandra Legault

Shirley Valois

Ted Friesen

Tina Fedeski & Gary McMillen

Van Mardian

Vicken Norian

Victor Wehrle

Winston Webber

Walter Hendelman



**"If I were to speak to one of the donors who support OrKidstra, I would say that a 'thank you' doesn't even begin to express the gratitude that I have for you. Your crucial support is what allows OrKidstra to continue changing lives, mine included."**

– Mariam, 2025 OrKidstra Graduate



## Our Donors are a special part of our OrKidstra family cont'd!

### Thank you to our generous Corporate, Foundation and Community Supporters for 2024-2025

#### **\$90,000+**

The Azrieli Foundation  
City of Ottawa Arts  
Funding Program  
Rideau Hall Foundation  
(Catapult Canada)

#### **\$70,000+**

Five B Family Foundation

#### **\$50,000+**

Lewitt Family Foundation  
Ontario Arts Council (OAC)

#### **\$20,000+**

Cajole Inn & Colin's Future  
Fund - OCF  
HALO Fund, a branch of the Minto  
Foundation  
Leacross Foundation  
Ottawa Community Foundation  
United Way East Ontario  
Wesley M Nicol Foundation

#### **\$10,000+**

F.K. Morrow Foundation  
Gowling WLG (Canada) LLP  
Kellett Patrick Family Foundation  
Kiwans Club of Ottawa  
Mierins Family Foundation  
National Arts Centre Foundation  
Nelligan Law  
Power Corporation of Canada  
The MATT Foundation

#### **\$1,000-\$9,999**

Andy Cohen Memorial Fund - OCF  
Ashbury College  
Barbara McInnes Executive  
Mentoring Project Fund  
Brookfield Renewable  
Carleton Engineering Musical  
Chamberlain Family Fund  
Children's Millennium Play  
Association  
CIBC Children's Foundation  
D'Addario Foundation  
Danbe Foundation Inc.  
Diamond Marketing  
Dufault Foundation  
ECIVDA Financial Planning  
Boutique

Epicuria  
Friends of the National Arts Centre  
Orchestra  
Gallop Family Fund  
George Cedric Metcalf Charitable  
Foundation  
Goodfellow Cleaners  
Harry P. Ward Foundation  
Johansen Larsen Foundation  
Kun Shoulder Rest Inc.  
Maker House Co.  
Meyers Ottawa  
OrKidstra Allegro Fund - OCF  
Rob Marland and Jane Forsyth  
of Royal LePage Performance  
Marland Realty  
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Family Foundation)  
The Bill Fenton Charitable Gift Fund  
The Merry Dairy  
The Ottawa Jewish Community  
Foundation  
The Wood Family Charitable  
Foundation  
Watson's Pharmacy &  
Compounding Centre  
William & Jean Teron Foundation  
Wills Transfer Limited

## Special thanks to our visionary Legacy Donors!

Learn more about leaving a gift to OrKidstra in your Will on our website or by calling us at 613.233.0166. Please visit [orkidstra.ca](https://orkidstra.ca) for the full list of our OrKidstra supporters!

Please note: donations for the Annual Report are calculated cumulatively based on OrKidstra's fiscal year (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025).



# Our Philosophy

OrKidstra was inspired by the renowned El Sistema program that has, over the last almost 50 years, proven to the world that music can be an agent of social change. OrKidstra's successful adaptation of this philosophy lies in the beautiful combination of musicianship and citizenship, which is ever present in our day-to-day programming.



**"Every day, I see so many kids playing their instruments, striving, and giving their best. That energy inspires me to do the same. It gives me the zeal to keep going and never give up."**

– Elizabeth,  
2025 OrKidstra Graduate

**Advocates kid-powered performance — passion over precision.**

**Encourages playing together to teach kids how to build a harmonious community.**

**Creates extensive and intensive community connections.**

**Supports peer-to-peer structure, which breaks down barriers and fosters friendship.**

**Develops a sense of belonging with joy and fun.**



# Our Team

## OrKidstra Staff (as of June 30, 2025)

- Co-Founder and Artistic Managing Director: Tina Fedeski
- Executive Managing Director: Carrie Lauzon
- Director of Development & Communications: Rebecca Russell
- Program Administration Manager: Emily Jenness
- Artistic Manager (Band) & Teaching Artist: Mark Constantine
- Artistic Manager (Strings) & Teaching Artist: Sonia Caceres
- Artistic Manager (KiddlyWinks & KidSingers) & Teaching Artist: Christine Hecker
- Librarian and Program Administrator & Teaching Artist: Astrid Camarena Correa
- Finance & Resource Administrator: Inga Vitols
- Development & Communications Advisor (On Leave): Leslie Noxon
- Development & Communications Coordinator (Leave Coverage): Elaine Baring
- Community and Youth Engagement Coordinator: Lisa Dings
- Program Assistants & Teaching Artists: Katerina Dimitrova & Niamh Bloomer
- Program Assistants: Kate Bélanger & Elhaam Namet-Allah

## OrKidstra Board of Directors (as of June 30, 2025)

- Chayanika Abeysekera Lutes – Chair
- Riaz Mohammed – Vice-Chair
- Marie-Josée Lambert – Treasurer
- Christopher Van Barr – Secretary
- Amar Marouf – Director
- Antoine L. Collins – Director
- Cathy Doolan – Director
- Douglas Lai – Director
- Jeff Heynen – Director
- Salim Charabati – Director
- Sean McGee – Director
- Shirley Westeneide OC – Director

## OrKidstra Co-Founders

- Gary McMillen
- Margaret Maria
- Tina Fedeski

## OrKidstra Ambassadors

- Angela Hewitt, CC, OBE
- Alexander Shelley
- Kellylee Evans

## OrKidstra Teaching Artists

Please visit [orkidstra.ca](http://orkidstra.ca) for a full list.



Photo by Ming Wu Photography



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613.233.0166

[orkidstra.ca](http://orkidstra.ca)

Charitable No. 83246 7153 RR0001

*OrKidstra is grateful to be located in Ottawa, Ontario, on unceded Anishinaabe Algonquin territory. Their culture and presence have nurtured and continue to nurture this land. OrKidstra honours all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and their valuable past and present contributions.*

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