

STATUS

Signals from the Nordic contemporary music scene

Report 2023-2025

THE STATUS NETWORK

Music Finland



Art Music
Denmark



MUSIC NORWAY



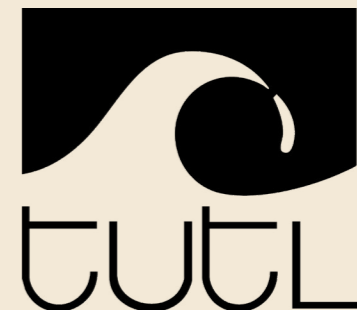
Tónlistarmiðstöð
Iceland Music



KOMMUNEQARFIK
SERMERSOOQ



UNGA TANKAR *om* MUSIK



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Art Music Denmark (Denmark), Tutl (Faroe Islands), Music Finland (Finland), Kommuneqarfik Sermersooq (Greenland), Iceland Music (Iceland), Music Norway (Norway), Musikcentrum Syd (Sweden), Unga tankar om musik (Sweden)

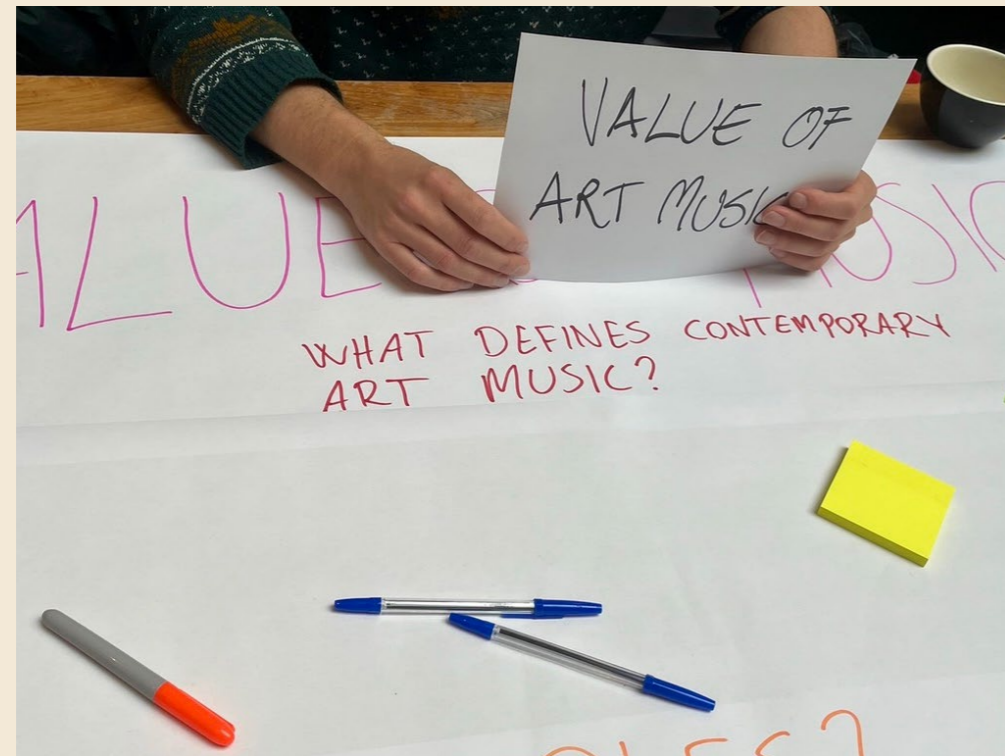


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1. INTRODUCTION

STATUS is a collaborative network of music centres in the Nordic countries, The network provides a platform for exchanging knowledge, comparing infrastructures, and exploring artistic and social developments within the genre. It is important to note that the views and opinions expressed within the STATUS Network reflect the personal insights of the individuals involved rather than a collective consensus from all professionals within each country. This report summarizes the activities, findings, and collaborative efforts undertaken by the STATUS Network during the years 2023 to spring 2025.



Nordic Music Days 2024 | Photo: STATUS

2. VISION & MISSION

Vision:

STATUS aims to strengthen Nordic collaboration in contemporary and art music, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and opportunities for mutual growth among partner organizations.

Mission:

STATUS gathers and compares the infrastructures and artistic and social status of contemporary and art music in the Nordic countries. The group identifies new possibilities for collaboration and development within the genre, seeking to enhance its influence and reach. The views shared within the network reflect individual perspectives and experiences, not necessarily a collective stance on issues from all professionals in each country.

3. METHODS

STATUS operates through the following methods:

- **Internal Knowledge Sharing:** Regular exchanges of information and experiences between partner organizations by collecting "signals".
- **Network Meetings:** Three annual (closed) network meetings, including one physical meeting.
- **Annual Publication:** A yearly publication summarizing findings and signals relevant to the network.
- **Open STATUS Meeting or Workshop:** An annual open meeting or workshop to engage a broader audience.

4. MEETINGS & FREQUENCY

Annual Plan:

- **Online STATUS Meetings:** Twice a year
- **Physical Meeting:** Once a year
- **Project Meetings:** As needed, determined during STATUS meetings and based on ongoing projects



The STATUS Network , Nordic Music Days 2024 | Photo: STATUS

5. PARTNERS & REPRESENTATIVES

DENMARK

Art Music Denmark
www.artmusicdenmark.org



Regin Petersen
 Director and Consultant



Laura Dalgaard Christoffersen
 Project Manager

FAROE ISLANDS

Tutl
www.tutlrecords.com



Sólvá Svatafoss
 Daily manager and
 HR manager.

FINLAND

Music Finland
www.musicfinland.com



Merja Hottinen
 Research Manager



Tuuli Elo
 Export Manager,
 Contemporary, Classical
 and Folk Music

NORWAY

Music Norway
www.musicnorway.no



Kaja Bjørntvedt
 Advisor Art Music

ICELAND

Iceland Music
www.icelandmusic.is



Signý Leifsdóttir
 Senior Advisor



Finnur Karlsson
 Manager of Sheet Music
 Collection

SWEDEN

Musikcentrum Syd
www.musikcentrumsyd.se



Astrid Selling
 Managing Director

GREENLAND

Komuneqarfik Sermersooq
www.sermersooq.gl



Pauliina Oinonen
 Festival Manager



Jonas Lundsgaard Nilsson
 Head of Department,
 Culture and Leisure

SWEDEN

Unga tankar om musik
www.ungatankarommusik.se



Gustaf Bäckström Elmelid
 Director

Leadership Roles:

- **Co-Chairs:** Signý Leifsdóttir & Regin Petersen
- **Secretary:** Laura Dalgaard Christoffersen
- **Website:** Signý Leifsdóttir (funded by Iceland Music)

Collaboration Leaders:

- **Nordic Music Days:** Laura Dalgaard Christoffersen
- **Northern Connection:** Heli Lampi & Tuuli Elo
- **Classical:NEXT:** Tuuli Elo & Signý Leifsdóttir

6. SIGNALS

Throughout 2023-2025, individuals within the STATUS Network shared several signals from the Nordic contemporary and art music scene.

These signals are based on the **personal insights and experiences of the network members**, and while they offer a snapshot of current developments, they do not necessarily reflect the consensus or researched views of all professionals across the Nordic countries. Signals represent individual important and concrete events, project or otherwise to serve as important examples and/or milestones for broader tendencies.

The signals are grouped by themes:

SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

- 1. Sustainability in Danish Culture (Denmark):** "Bæredygtigt Kulturliv" ("Sustainable Culture") is an example of a new initiative to address sustainability in the arts, evolving from the 2020 "Bæredygtig Scenekunst" ("Sustainable Theatre"). This initiative now also includes music, with collaboration between the Danish Composers' Society and efforts to support fair practices in the sector.
More information: <https://www.baeredygtigtkulturliv.nu>
- 2. Creative Iceland (Iceland):** The Creative Iceland platform continues to play an important role in raising the international profile of Icelandic music and art, with an emphasis on promoting sustainable global market engagement.
More information: <https://www.islandsstofa.is/en/marketing-projects-creative-iceland>
- 3. Environmental Focus in Finnish Music (Finland):** Contemporary Finnish composers are increasingly incorporating environmental themes into their work, with some musicians and composers also taking on advocacy roles to raise awareness of environmental issues through music. Organisations are taking action with KEMUT network and elma.live toolkit towards more sustainable live music industry.
More information: <https://www.elma.live/en>

TRADITION & HERITAGE

- 1. Revitalization of Joik (Norway):** There is a growing interest in revitalizing Joiking traditions and Sami music, with Sami musicians expanding into contemporary genres and participating in both traditional and experimental music scenes.
- 2. Lydskatten – Preserving Electronic Heritage (Denmark):** A national conversation is underway in Denmark about the preservation of electronic music and instruments. This discussion centers around archiving and reanimating vintage electronic music under the initiative Lydskatten.
More information: <https://lydskatten.com/en/about-lydskatten>

INCLUSION & REPRESENTATION

- 1. Increased Inclusion in Finnish Programming (Finland):** Across Finland, there is a concerted effort to increase diversity in concert programming, pushing for more varied and inclusive representation within the Finnish music scene. There are also projects such as HUOM – History's Unheard Orchestral Music which sheds light on overlooked compositions and composers.
More information: <https://helsinginkaupunginorkesteri.fi/en/huom-historys-unheard-orchestral-music>
- 2. SWANA Residency Collaboration (Denmark/UK):** A new artist residency initiative, focused on musicians from South West Asia and North Africa (SWANA), is being developed by Danish and British festivals to support regional inclusion and cross-cultural collaboration.
More Information: <https://artmusicdenmark.org/en/open-call-swana-x-struer-residency-2>
- 3. Girls Rock in Greenland (Greenland):** Educational initiatives such as the Girls Rock Camp in Sisimiut, along with tech courses aimed at girls and non-binary youth, highlight the growing focus on improving gender representation in Greenland's music scene.
- 4. Iceland's Genre Diversity (Iceland):** Iceland is seeing a broadening of musical styles within its contemporary music scene. New festivals like State of the Art highlight hybrid genres, while the revival of Við Djúpið brings international acts to regional Iceland, diversifying the national music landscape.
More information: <https://www.stateofheartfestival.is/> and <https://viddjudid.is>



Nordic Music Days 2024 | Photo: STATUS

WORKING CONDITIONS & INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1. Greenland's Management Boom (Greenland):** Two new music management bureaus have recently been established in Greenland, helping to support artists in a region where self-management has traditionally been the norm.
- 2. ((SOUND)) Center for Music Entrepreneurship (Denmark):** A new center for artistic entrepreneurship has been launched at RMC in Copenhagen, focusing on music across genres and working to bridge the gap between popular and classical music scenes through collaboration with various institutions.
More information: <https://soundsound.dk/da>
- 3. Crisis Readiness in Swedish Music (Sweden):** Swedish music organizations are exploring ways to build resilience in the face of crises. A new Baltic development project emphasizes the role of culture in times of war and societal upheaval.
More information: <https://balticartistsindevelopment.squarespace.com/nimbus-online-workshops/ukraine-in-focus-touring-in-ukraine>
- 4. Mentorship for Young Norwegian Composers (Norway):** Norway continues to invest in the development of emerging musical talent. A new mentorship initiative from Festspillene i Bergen aims to support young composers by offering guidance from established festivals, publishers, and producers.

POLICY & POLITICAL INTERVENTION

- 1. Icelandic Opera and Music Legislation (Iceland):** The Icelandic government is in the process of drafting new legislation for performing arts, which includes the formal establishment of the national opera. This follows only two years after the first law on music was established in Iceland.
- 2. Public Funding Cuts in Finland (Finland):** Finland's cultural funding has experienced significant cuts, putting pressure on music institutions and raising concerns about the sustainability of some initiatives and programs.
- 3. Public Funding Cuts in Sweden (Sweden):** The public cultural funding in Sweden has also decreased while the inflation is driving costs related to salaries and production. A debate is undergoing regarding the unique study associations and their cuts in public funding (by a third). There is also a big debate regarding public funding versus private funding and that topic is quite new in Sweden.
- 4. Greenland's Music Scene in the Shadow of Geopolitics (Greenland):** Greenland's cultural sector remains under-supported despite growing international attention. Small local venues and artists face challenges due to limited infrastructure and funding in the context of geopolitical changes.

GENDER & REPRESENTATION IN DATA

- 1. Gender Balance in Danish Repertoire (Denmark):** Denmark's biannual repertoire statistics show a gradual improvement in gender diversity within the programming of classical music performances.
More information: <https://artmusicdenmark.org/en/knowledge/publications/>

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

- 1. AI's Mixed Reception in Norway (Norway):** Norwegian composers are responding in various ways to the rise of AI in music, with reactions ranging from enthusiasm about its potential to concerns about its impact on the creative process.
- 2. Digital Networking Platforms in Sweden (Sweden):** A project under Musikcentrum Syd is exploring the use of Web3 and AI technologies to create new digital platforms connecting musicians, managers, and venues, facilitating communication and collaboration in the music industry.
- 3. Immersive Concerts in Malmö (Sweden):** Innovative concert formats are being tested at Wisdome Malmö, where immersive experiences utilizing dome-shaped screens and visual art are integrated with live music performances.
More information: <https://www.musikcentrumsyd.se/nyheter/samarbete-med-wisdome-malmo>

FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC DYNAMICS

- 1. Funding Crisis for Danish Ensembles (Denmark):** Athelas Sinfonietta faced a potential closure due to long-term funding cuts, though the ensemble was temporarily saved by intervention from the Danish Ministry of Culture. However, the broader funding crisis remains a concern for many ensembles in Denmark.
More information: <https://athelas.dk>
- 2. Private Investment Interest in Northern Sweden (Sweden):** Private sector interest in cultural investment is growing in northern Sweden, with major steel companies showing support for local cultural initiatives, including the arts.
- 3. Royalty Model Shake-up in Norway (Norway):** Changes to the royalty distribution model by TONO have sparked controversy, particularly among contemporary composers, who feel that the new system may disproportionately benefit certain groups over others.

PROMOTION, REACH & VISIBILITY

- 1. Export Growth of Icelandic Contemporary Music (Iceland):** Icelandic contemporary music is gaining recognition on the international stage, with artists performing at prominent festivals and cultural events across the world.
- 2. New Presentation Formats in Iceland (Iceland):** Iceland is exploring new ways to showcase music at the platform Podium in relation to the festival Dark Music Days and their delegates program that is coordinated by Iceland Music.
More information: <https://www.icelandmusic.is/en/news/podium-2025>
- 3. Music Ecosystems Study (Greenland):** A new research project is examining Greenland's place within broader music ecosystems, analyzing its role and potential for greater integration into international networks.

7. OPEN MEETINGS

Through its open meetings, STATUS brings together individuals committed to promoting change within the contemporary art music field. These meetings provide a platform for exchanging ideas and strategies, reflecting the diverse views and experiences of the professionals within the network, rather than presenting a unified perspective on any issue. By fostering cross-border dialogue, STATUS continues to build momentum towards a more inclusive, sustainable, and interconnected music scene.



Lydvandring Ultima 2023 | Photo: Henning Lefsaaker

STATUS & Northern Connection at Ultima Festival 2023

In September 2023, during Oslo's renowned Ultima Festival, STATUS collaborated with Northern Connection to host an open meeting. This gathering convened music professionals and cultural organizers to deliberate on sustainable practices in the art music scene. Key topics included strategies for reducing the environmental impact of touring, enhancing the longevity of artistic careers, and fostering deeper Nordic collaborations.



Ultima Festival 2023 | Photo: STATUS

Open STATUS Meeting at Nordic Music Days 2024

In October 2024, STATUS organized an open meeting during the Nordic Music Days festival in Glasgow. This session, titled Imagining Sustainable International Music Exchange, brought together artists and professionals from Norway, Finland, Iceland, Denmark, and Scotland. Discussions centered on culture in a world of crisis, inclusion and diversity, environmental sustainability, and the value of art music.



Nordic Music Days 2024 | Photo: STATUS

STATUS, Trends & Friends in Berlin 2025

In May 2025, STATUS held an event titled STATUS, Trends & Friends at Classical:NEXT in Berlin. This gathering will focus on global trends in art music, addressing themes such as inclusion, cultural responses to crises, and collaborative models. The event aims to extend dialogues beyond the Nordic region, fostering broader international collaborations in the art music field.

8. COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

While not all individuals or partners are involved in every collaborative project, the ongoing exchanges within the STATUS Network often give rise to initiatives that reflect the interests and ideas of those participating. These collaborations are the result of shared goals and mutual interests.

Nordic Music Days Delegates Program

At Nordic Music Days, STATUS partners collaborated on a delegates program that facilitated exchanges within the Nordic contemporary music scene. The program connected professionals from various countries, promoting networking and new collaborations. Through this initiative, STATUS strengthened international ties and helped highlight Nordic contemporary music on a larger scale.



Ultima Festival 2023 | Photo: STATUS

Northern Connection Project

The Northern Connection project is an innovative collaboration that links Nordic countries with Scotland, focusing on the contemporary music scene. This initiative aims to build and strengthen relationships between composers, performers, and festivals across these regions. By facilitating exchanges and supporting cross-border partnerships, Northern Connection helps to expand the reach of Nordic contemporary music and create new opportunities for collaboration.

Northern Connection

Classical:NEXT

At Classical:NEXT, STATUS plays a key role in organizing the Nordic shared stands, creating a platform for showcasing Nordic contemporary music and fostering connections with international music professionals. In addition to the shared stand, STATUS collaborates with the Nordic embassies to organize a reception at the event. While the embassies take the lead in organizing the reception, STATUS contributes to its execution. The reception provides an informal and welcoming space for networking, offering participants a chance to engage with one another and strengthen the Nordic presence at Classical:NEXT.



Classical:NEXT 2025 | Photo: STATUS

9. CONCLUSION

The STATUS Network has continued to foster meaningful collaboration among professionals in the Nordic contemporary and art music scene throughout 2023-25. By facilitating knowledge-sharing, providing platforms for dialogue, and supporting collaborative initiatives, STATUS has played a key role in highlighting the sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation of the region's music landscape. The findings and activities outlined in this report represent a snapshot of individual perspectives, offering insights into current developments and challenges, and serving as a foundation for future collaborations within the Nordic countries and beyond.

Prepared by: The STATUS Network
Date: June 10, 2025

10. MORE INFO AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED

STATUS is a collaborative network of music centres in the Nordic countries: Denmark, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden. Our Nordic representatives are all highly knowledgeable about their individual countries' music lives, especially when it comes to contemporary music. We encourage you to get involved and have a look at the services and counselling provided by each partner organisation.

The primary goal for STATUS is knowledge sharing. Do you have specific music related topics or insights you think could be relevant for STATUS to know about and discuss?

Please feel free to contact one of the partner organisations or write the STATUS Network.
Email: admin@nordicstatus.org
More information: nordicstatus.org



Nordic Music Days 2024 | Photo: STATUS



Lydvandring Ultima 2023 | Photo: Hennaig Lersaker

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