



2024 Annual Report

Re-Imagine What Is Possible

The past year at Vancouver Adapted Music Society (VAMS) was shaped by steady growth, meaningful collaboration, and thoughtful reflection. In 2024, we continued to support a wide range of musicians through studio sessions, mentorship, adaptive equipment, and performance opportunities.

We also marked an important moment in our history with the passing of Dave Symington, VAMS co-founder. Dave's commitment to accessibility in music remains central to our work, and his contributions were felt deeply throughout the year — in both memory and practice.

This report offers an overview of our activities in 2024, highlighting the people, programs, and partnerships that made it possible and looks ahead to what's next. Thank you to everyone who supported VAMS this year.

- The VAMS Team

Welcoming our new Executive Director

In 2024, the Disability Foundation network was in a period of transition as former Executive Director David Fong retired after years of dedicated service, and I stepped into the role. For those of you who do not know me, I have worked for the Disability Foundation, in one capacity or another, for over ten years — first starting with the Vancouver Adapted Music Society (VAMS) in the Winter of 2014. In 2021, I transitioned to working for the Foundation as a Program Manager with ConnecTra, the Disabled Independent Gardeners Association, and VAMS.

I am honoured to have the board's trust and, since taking on the role of Executive Director, I am continuously in awe — and grateful to work alongside — such a dedicated and passionate team who continue the Disability Foundation's legacy of serving our community. Lastly, I would like to thank the clients, volunteers, donors, and sponsors for their continued support. I am excited for the future and the opportunities the Disability Foundation and its affiliated societies have to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graeme Wyman".

Graeme Wyman, Executive Director

Our 2024 Board of Directors

We gratefully acknowledge the guidance and dedication of VAMS' Board of Directors, who help steer the organization with care, creativity, and a deep commitment to accessible gardening:



Art Jonker
Chair

A passionate advocate for disability rights and accessibility, Art brings decades of experience in community development and employment services. He supports the VAMS mission through lived experience and leadership across nonprofit boards.



Kristina Shelden
Director

A VAMS performer and dedicated community leader, Kristina brings creativity and lived experience as an artist and advocate. She supports inclusive music, disability representation, and arts programming that reflects diverse voices.



EJ Tremblay
Director

With a strong background in digital innovation and social entrepreneurship, EJ champions accessibility in the music industry and broader society. He brings fresh perspective and energy to VAMS's vision for the future.

2024 Staff Team

We're grateful to the dedicated staff who make VAMS possible through their creativity, care, and behind-the-scenes support:

David Fong — Executive Director

Graeme Wyman — Program Manager

Bryden Veinot — Senior Program Coordinator

Jordan Cripps — Communications and Fundraising Lead

Noah Stolte — Program Assistant

Madeline Liao — Communications
Engagement Assistant

Tanya Griffiths — Adler University
Practicum Student

2024 Highlights & Achievements

2024 was a dynamic year of creativity, collaboration, and remembrance for the Vancouver Adapted Music Society (VAMS). We delivered over 340 studio sessions, supported a wide range of emerging and established artists, and continued strengthening community partnerships. This year also marked a poignant moment as we **celebrated the life and lasting legacy** of VAMS co-founder Dave Symington.

- **Celebrated the life and legacy of VAMS co-founder Dave Symington**
- **Adaptive instruments provided:** guitar strummer, listening device, drumstick holders
- **Studio Sessions**
 - 679 client interactions
 - Continued remote sessions with clients in BC and Ontario
- **Album & Single Releases**
 - Turner Churchill: *Catamount*, "Half-Life," "Lift"
 - sylvi macCormac: *Brother Bear*, *Bent Boxes*, and "Evergreen"
 - Rachael Ransom's debut album *sixty seven ten*
 - Other featured artists: Chelaine McInroy, Mark Ash, Kristina Shelden, Joel Fafard and Glenn Loft

Events & Recognition

- Dave Symington's final performance at Harmony Arts Festival in 2023
- sylvi macCormac received the jef chippewa Award for her soundscape honoring Russell Wallace
- Featured in the *Vancouver Sun* for sylvi's "Wheels Soundscapes" project remastered at VAMS
- Participated in GF Strong's Rehab Equipment Expo and provided AV support for their 75th Anniversary
- Rachael Ransom was featured in the *Vancouver Sun* for the release of her debut album, *sixty seven ten*

Strong Sessions & Community Events

- Hosted **Strong Sessions concert** (Aug 26) featuring Rachael Ransom, Simon Paradis, Sylvi MacCormac, Kristina Shelden, and others
- Raised **\$1,365** and saw **increased audience turnout** from 2022
- Participated in Kerrisdale Days (Sept 7) with instrument sale at Green Thrift Stores
 - Raised **\$805** and built community connections
- Hosted Rachael Ransom's album release concert (Nov 15 at Blusson Centre)
 - Raised **\$350** and drew nearly **40 attendees**
- Supported Rachael Ransom's holiday performance at SCI BC's December event

Artist Impact

- Weekly lessons delivered in guitar, bass, piano, drums, ukulele, and recording
- Continued to support original songwriting and adaptive techniques



2024 Team Updates

- Bryden Veinot became a Senior Program Coordinator at the Disability Foundation, while continuing VAMS oversight
- Noah Stolte expanded his role to support more lessons and studio sessions
- Tanya Griffiths completed her practicum from Adler University, producing podcast episodes and creating a visual project showcased in the Dean's office
- Manisha Ramlu joined in the fall as our new Social Justice Practicum student

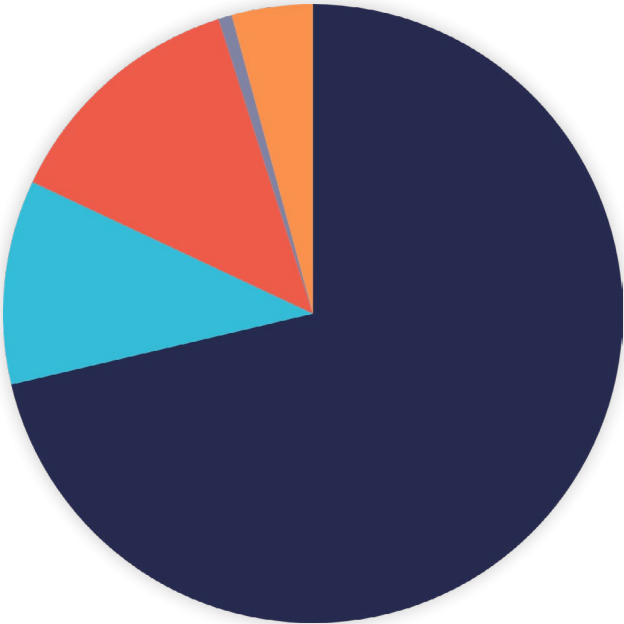
Fundraising and Financial Overview

We are deeply grateful to the individuals, organizations, and sponsors who supported us in 2024

Total Funds Raised

\$145,292.95

Total Grants	\$138,132.35	95.07%
Government Grants	\$103,626	71.3%
Foundation Grants	\$19,006.35	13.1%
Corporate Grants	\$15.5K	10.7%
Total Donations	\$6,135.60	4.22%
Other Revenue (Ticket Sales)	\$1,025.00	0.71%



Our Supporters

- Adler University
- Creative BC
- Disability Foundation and partner societies
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Green Thrift Stores
- Knight Road Legacy Association
- L Gillespie Holdings Ltd.
- Martha Lou Henley Charitable Foundation
- Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport
- Province of British Columbia
- SOCAN Foundation
- TELUS
- Vancouver Foundation



Digital Reach

92,979

Social media post impressions in 2024

1,443

Total combined Facebook and Instagram followers

3,093

YouTube video views

13.6

YouTube watch hours

13

New YouTube subscribers



Looking Ahead to 2025

In 2025, VAMS will:

- Expand Discover Stories podcast content
- Continue mentorship and support for emerging adapted artists
- Explore new partnerships for live events and artist promotion
- Deepen community connections and inclusive music experiences



Remembering Dave Symington

In March 2024, we were deeply saddened by the passing of Dave Symington, VAMS co-founder, mentor, and musician. Dave had shaped VAMS since its inception in 1988. His last public performance was at the 2023 Harmony Arts Festival. Dave was a champion of accessible performance and production, and his legacy will continue in every session, concert, and recording shared by the VAMS community.



Thank You!

To our artists, supporters, funders, and partners — thank you for your belief in accessible music and inclusive creative spaces. We look forward to another year of impact and creativity.

