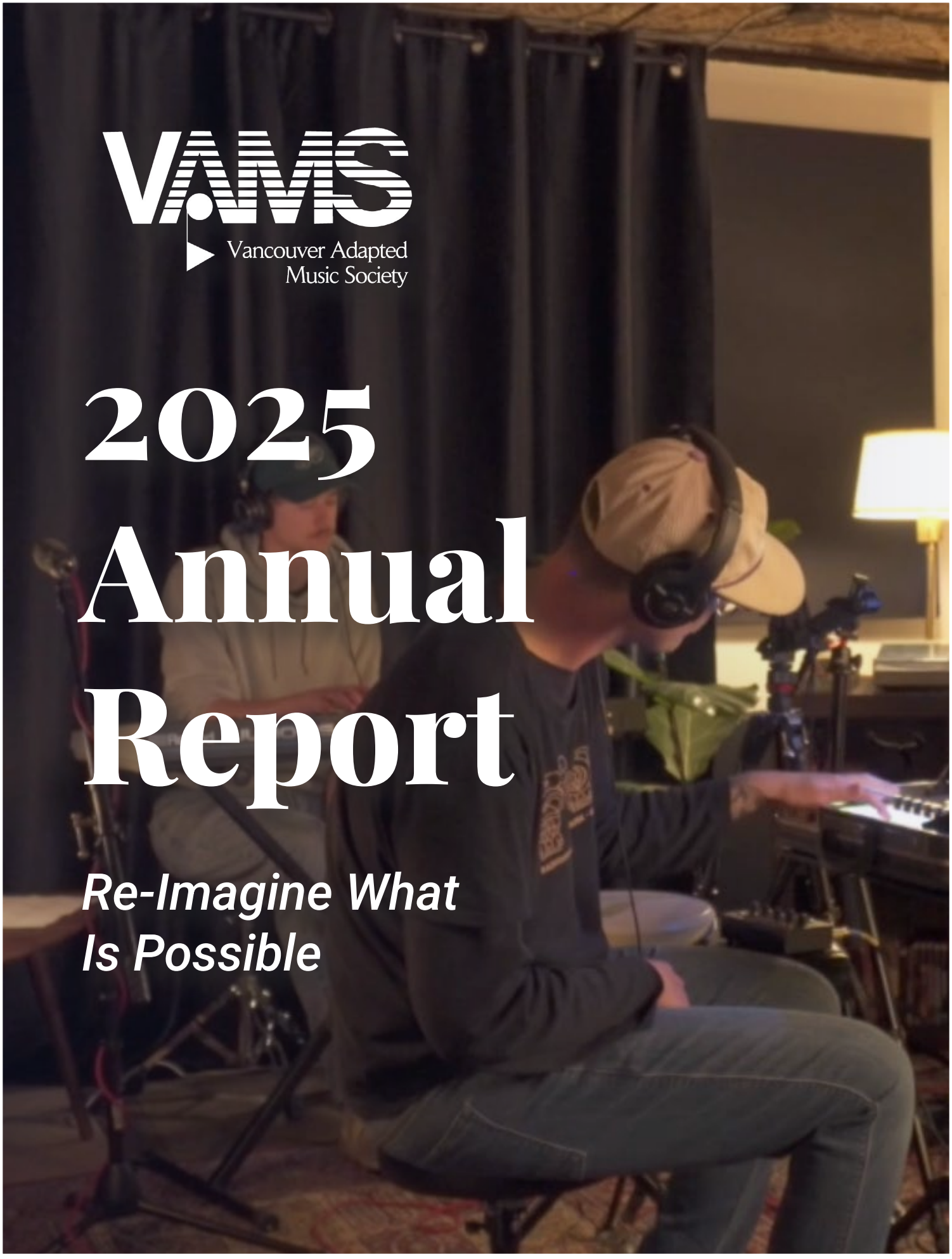
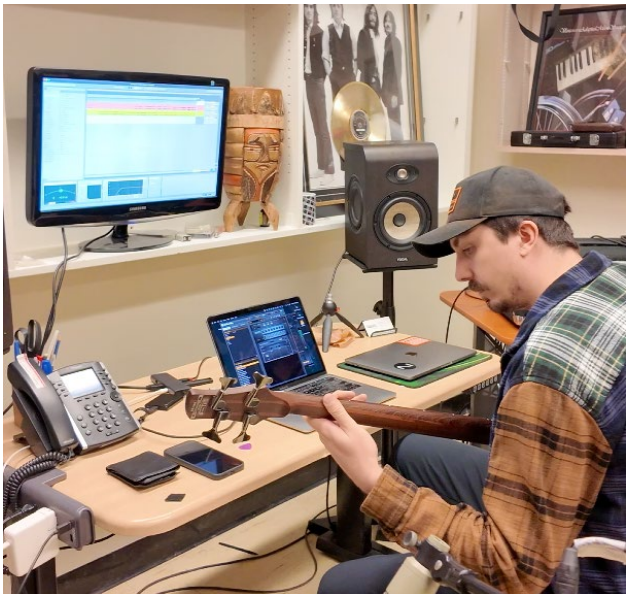


VAMS
Vancouver Adapted Music Society

2025 Annual Report

Re-Imagine What Is Possible



The past year at Vancouver Adapted Music Society (VAMS) was marked by growing participation, creative collaboration, and expanded access to music.

Throughout 2025, VAMS supported musicians through instrument lessons, recording sessions, adaptive equipment, mentorship, live performances, and digital storytelling.

Interest in VAMS programs continued to grow, including increased participation from GF Strong inpatients and new youth musicians. Artists worked on original albums and EPs, returned to live performance, explored adaptive music technology, and found new ways to create following life-changing injuries.

This report provides an overview of VAMS' activities and achievements in 2025, highlighting the artists, programs, partnerships, and supporters who made the year possible. Thank you to everyone who contributed to another meaningful year of accessible music.

- The VAMS Team

From Our Executive Director

2025 was a year of focusing on stability for the Disability Foundation Network.

All affiliated society programs had milestones to be proud of: Tetra closed the year with its highest number of Requests for Assistance in more than two decades; ASABC logged its best sail count since 2019; BCMOS surpassed 600 combined hiking, cycling, and paddling activities; ConnecTra celebrated 25 years with a record-setting Abilities Expo; DIGA filled nearly every community garden plot and expanded its accessible planter program; and VAMS delivered approximately 700 instrument lessons and 450 recording sessions to a growing roster of participants.

These achievements could not have been made possible without the support of approximately 600 volunteers who gave their time across our societies.

At the Foundation level, we co-led important climate-preparedness work through the Vancouver Disability Solutions Network, brought the BC Spinal Cord Injury Community Services Network's five member organizations together at VanDusen Botanical Garden, and reinstated our Community Engagement Committee to build a stronger, board-led fundraising future.

We closed the year on a high note, announcing at our International Day for Persons with Disabilities event that Mobility Cup is returning to Vancouver in September 2026 for its 35th anniversary—a milestone worthy of everything this Network has built over three and a half decades.

To our participants, volunteers, donors, sponsors, and partner organizations: thank you for another year of trust, accountability, and generosity. I am proud of what we accomplished together in 2025, and I am genuinely excited for what 2026—and Mobility Cup's landmark anniversary—has in store.

Graeme Wyman, Executive Director

Our 2025 Board of Directors

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

Art Jonker

Chair

A multidisciplinary artist and disability advocate, Art serves on the boards of both VAMS and ConnecTra. He brings lived experience, creativity, and a strong commitment to expanding inclusive social, artistic, and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Kristina Shelden

Director

A musician and VAMS performer, Kristina brings creativity, lived experience, and a deep understanding of adaptive music. She is committed to helping people discover or reconnect with music and to supporting the continued growth of VAMS' programs and capacity.

EJ Tremblay

Director

An executive coach, artist, and educator, EJ brings extensive experience in leadership, film, and community development. Drawing on his lived experience with vision loss, he champions inclusion, creativity, and the recognition of people's individual strengths and talents.

2025 Staff Team

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

Graeme Wyman — Executive Director
Bryden Veinot — Senior Program Coordinator
Noah Stolte — Program Assistant
Jordan Cripps — Development Manager
Aki Barabadi — Senior Communications Officer
Joy Hayden — Fund Development Coordinator
Madeline Liao — Communications Engagement Assistant
Manisha Ramlu — Adler University Social Justice Practicum Student

2025 Highlights & Achievements

- Delivered roughly **700 combined instrument lessons** and **450 recording sessions** across the year to a growing client roster, including new youth participants.
- Supported a range of albums, EPs, demos, and original recording projects, including:
  - sylvi macCormac's Evergreen
  - Rachael Ransom's second album
  - New releases by Turner Churchill
  - Projects by Glenn Loft, Chelaine McInroy, Kristina Shelden, and Daniel Ashworth
- Supported a musician recovering from a stroke in adapting his performance through looping, beatboxing, harmonica, and vocals.
- Helped Turner Churchill return to live performance, release a new album and EP, and record a filmed **virtual concert at Dogbowl Studios** using a modified synthesizer case designed for one-handed playing.
- Continued producing the Discover Stories podcast through Adler University's Social Justice Practicum and added episode transcripts to the VAMS website.
- Expanded the Music For Every Body video series, reaching approximately **10,000 YouTube views** and **nearly 6,000 Instagram views.**
- Continued the instrument loan program, providing guitars, keyboards, drum pads, and other equipment for participants to practise and create at home.
- Expanded VAMS' collection of adaptive equipment with drumstick grips, guitar slide grips, and modified microphone and music stands built by Tetra Society volunteer Robin

Community Events & Partnerships

- VAMS artists Rachael Ransom, Turner Churchill, and Kristina Shelden performed at GF Strong's first-ever Client and Staff Appreciation BBQ, introducing VAMS' work to more than **200 attendees**.
- Provided audio-visual and music support at additional GF Strong and Spinal Cord Injury BC events, including year-end celebrations.
- Participated in Kerrisdale Days for the third consecutive year, raising approximately **$900** through instrument sales with support from Chris Wright and Green Thrift Stores.
- Turner Churchill performed at the Disability Foundation's **International Day for Persons with Disabilities event on December 3**.
- Strengthened relationships with GF Strong recreational and occupational therapists, contributing to increased referrals and participation by GF Strong inpatients.

Artist Impact

- Delivered regular lessons focused primarily on piano, guitar, and drums.
- Supported nine active recording projects during the main 2025 program season, including albums, EPs, demos, and original songs.
- Helped musicians explore adaptive performance techniques, digital music production, songwriting, home practice, and live performance.
- Used a participant's original 1980s cassette recordings as the foundation for a new album.
- Continued supporting an out-of-town participant through online sessions, helping her create original music that she later performed live with her band.
- Introduced revised booking procedures and new lesson and recording-session lengths to improve access for both new and returning participants.

Adaptive Music & Accessible Equipment

- VAMS continued working with the Tetra Society to reduce physical barriers to music-making. Tetra volunteer Robin built several pieces of adaptive equipment for VAMS participants during 2025, including:
  - Drumstick grips
  - Guitar slide grips
  - A modified microphone stand
  - A modified music stand
- Turner Churchill also continued using his modified synthesizer case, designed to support one-handed playing. The equipment was featured in his filmed virtual concert and live performances.
- The instrument loan program provided guitars, keyboards, drum pads, and other equipment, enabling participants to continue practising and creating from home.

2025 Program Updates

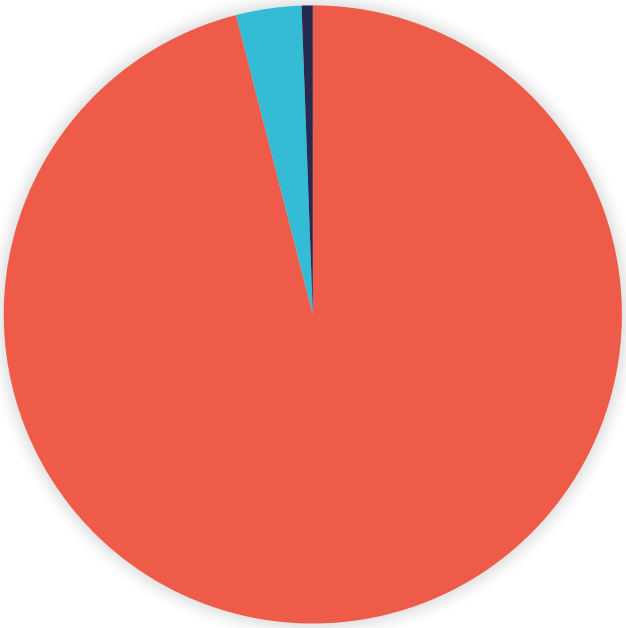
- Revised the studio booking system to improve access for new and returning participants.
- Limited participants to three active bookings at one time to support a more equitable distribution of studio availability.
- Updated availability monthly, with the next three months open for booking.
- Added:
  - 30-minute lesson options
  - Four-hour recording-session options
- Continued the Discover Stories podcast through Adler University's Social Justice Practicum.
- Used short-form video and social media storytelling to demonstrate the many ways VAMS makes music accessible.

Fundraising and Financial Overview

Total Funds Raised

$155,061.26

Total Grants	$148,866.26	96%
Total Donations	$5,295	3%
In-Kind Support	$900	1%



VAMS raised $155,061.26 in 2025 through 18 gifts, with an average gift size of $8,614.51. Grants provided $148,866.26, or approximately 96% of total funding, while direct donations contributed $5,295, and in-kind support added $900.

Funding came from government, foundation, corporate, and community partners. The City of Vancouver Cultural Services and the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch provided government support, while the Martha Lou Henley Charitable Foundation and Vancouver Foundation were among VAMS' foundation supporters. TD Bank Financial Group served as a key corporate partner, with additional support from MusiCounts and the Knight Road Legacy Association.

Digital Reach

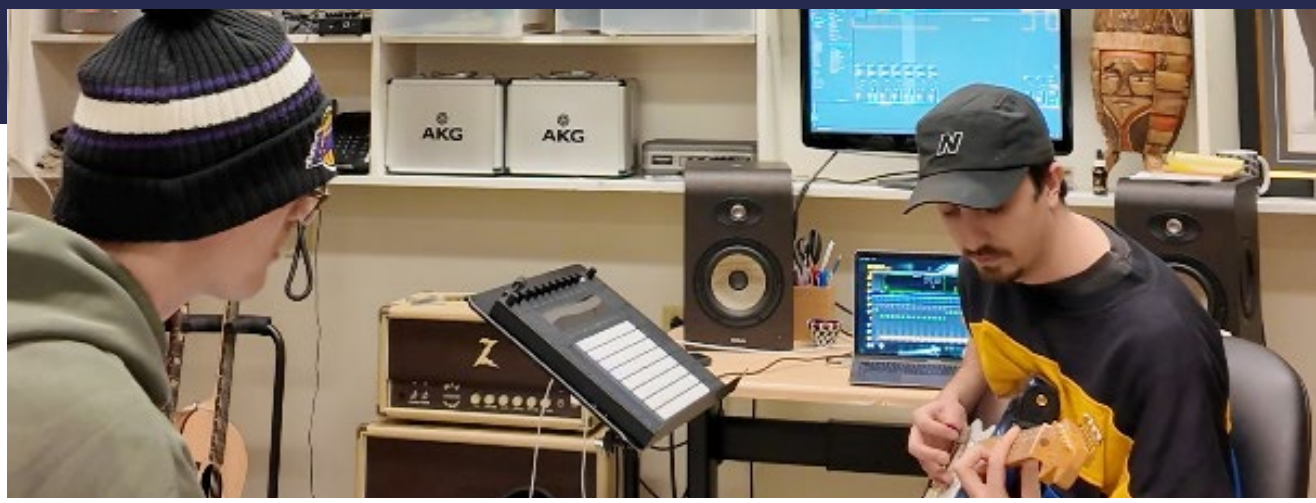
34,635
Social media post impressions

1,476
Total combined Facebook and Instagram followers

43
New YouTube subscribers

154.5
YouTube watch hours

22,374
YouTube video views

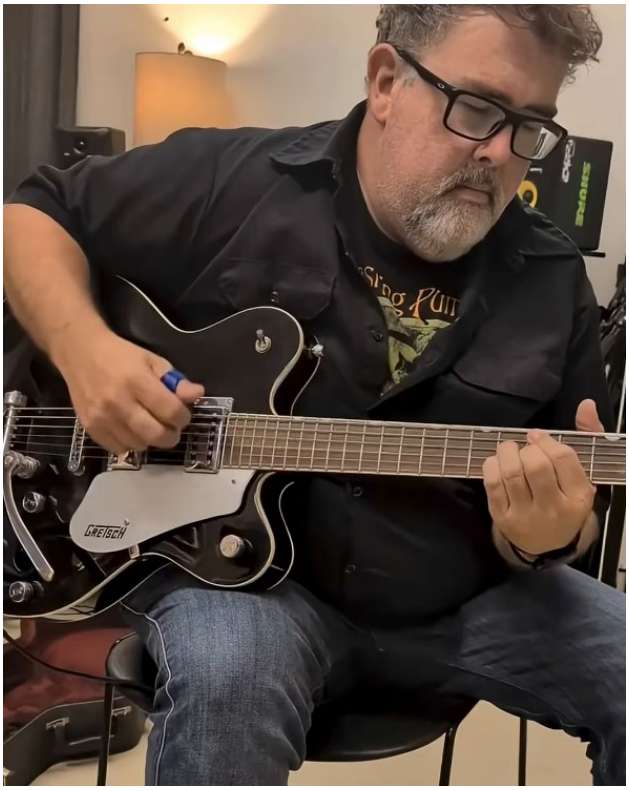


Looking Ahead to 2026

In 2026, VAMS will:

- Continue delivering accessible instrument lessons and recording sessions.
- Increase opportunities for youth participation in VAMS programs.
- Support artists in completing and releasing original albums, EPs, and digital projects.
- Continue expanding the educational video series
- Present the 2026 Strong Sessions concert, bringing together artists with disabilities to perform, connect with audiences, and celebrate accessible music.
- Strengthen partnerships with current and new community organizations.

Thank You!

To our artists, participants, volunteers, donors, funders, and community partners—thank you for supporting accessible music and inclusive creative expression throughout 2025.

Your time, encouragement, and support have helped make another meaningful year possible. We look forward to continuing this work together in 2026.