

Supported by Creative Ireland, YouthSing Ireland is a project for the development of group singing inside and outside of the formal education classroom in Ireland. Part of the work is a set of songs and resources in Irish or of Irish cultural heritage designed for use in formal and informal settings. The project introduces and fosters development of key music skills including pitch-matching, rhythmic security, independent part-singing, as well as listening and responding through classroom-based engagement with the songs and supporting online resources.

SingSpace

A SingSpace is a place where creative singing happens. Creative singing 'creates performance' and is both participatory and presentational. SingSpace participants come together with vocal and choral experts to **CREATE, PERFORM and DEVELOP** in a physical site dedicated to singing. SingSpaces are located in sites of cultural and/or educational importance and bring students beyond the classroom.

Multiple schools/classes/choirs/singing groups come to the SingSpace. Participants will have been singing YouthSing Ireland repertoire and engaging with the online resources in their classrooms and choral groups and a SingSpace is the next stage of their creative singing journey. In the SingSpace, the YouthSing Ireland songs will be the basis for

- development of musical knowledge, vocal technique and conducting skills
- creation of new music
- performance of the shared YouthSing Ireland repertoire as a massed choir
- performance of new music created in the SingSpace

What happens in a SingSpace?

In a SingSpace, children create original work, perform new YouthSing Ireland choral pieces, collaborate creatively with others and engage with the Primary School music curriculum.

A SingSpace is also a place of learning and practice for teachers and choral leaders.

A SingSpace is a local event but will also extend further to regional and national events. Everyone joins together for a day/ session/ half-day of creative singing in a SingSpace.

Before a SingSpace:

- 1** Participants will have ...engaged with the YouthSing Ireland Project repertoire & online resources
- 2** Participants may have ... participated in an online SingSpace
- 3** Participants may also have ... completed a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) session

After a SingSpace:

- 1 Participants will have ... accessed their improvisational and compositional ability, enhanced their performance practice and extended their curricular knowledge through creative singing.
- 2 Participants may go on to ... participate in additional local, regional and national SingSpaces which are designed to further develop these elements.
- 3 Teachers and leaders may go on to ... participate in SingSpace CPD such as EPV Courses, PDST events, workshops which fulfil Croke Park hours.
- 4 Participants may also go on to ... participate in the Singing Schools Programme

Sample SingSpace Structure: 2.5-hour Primary School SingSpace

Warm up	10 minutes
Icebreakers	20 minutes
YouthSing Ireland Repertoire	30 minutes
Break	20 minutes
Instant Choir	60 minutes
Presentational Performance	10 minutes



SingSpace CREATE

A SingSpace creates **improvisation:**

- 1 **Icebreakers** – these exercises are a starting point for composing, designed to promote playful, trusting and respectful groupwork. Icebreaker games and instructional videos will form part of the available online resources.
- 2 **Loop songs** – participants will create songs using a framework of repeated material or a loop. Loop material can also be created in individual schools, with practice extended through group composition in a SingSpace.
- 3 **Circle songs** – group improvisation and spontaneous individual creativity will be fostered through use of circle songs. Participants (teachers and children) will also learn how to lead and facilitate circle song singing in a SingSpace; they become the conductors and composers in practice. This improvisational song-writing also fosters cooperation, teamwork and community.
- 4 **Group composition** will also be stimulated by free improvisation and solfa improvisation in addition to other mixed methods.



A SingSpace creates **text, lyric and language:**



- 1 Group improvisatory techniques focused on language will explore memes, seanfhocail, limericks, as well as text and lyric generally.
- 2 Participants will create music for spoken choir using rhythm, texture, rap and layering.

A SingSpace creates **instant music:**

- 1 Vocal Painting (VOPA) – using a system of interactive hand signals, participants will engage in live composing and live arranging of choral music through improvising and creating. Jim Daus Hjernøe’s system of 75 hand signals is reduced to a palette of 10 in a SingSpace. VOPA is a new language for vocal art, the signals provide an easy and fast way to create ‘instant’ music.
- 2 The first 10 signals, or VOPA 5 (long notes/short notes/ energising/ externalising/ filter for ghost notes) and VOPA 10 (continue/this is/ tempo change up & down/ volume/ off) will complement and enhance conducting skills for SingSpace participants. The VOPA app provides for further learning and exploration beyond the SingSpace.

SingSpace **PERFORM**

A SingSpace creates **performance:**

- Participants will perform with and for each other.
- Participants will workshop, rehearse and perform selected YouthSing Ireland repertoire both as separate groups and as a massed choir.
- Through performance, fundamental elements of choral singing such as pitch, rhythm, sound, blend, interpretation and expression will be enhanced.
- Performance-based practice will enhance improvisatory and conducting skills.
- Participants will perform the music they have created through improvisation, Icebreakers, loop songs, circle songs and for spoken choir both as individual groups and as a massed choir.
- Performance in a SingSpace houses multiple levels of ability and experience and can accommodate a full school community.
- Participants will perform Instant music created with VOPA hand signals.



Children will:

- Develop their curricular knowledge including rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo and expression.
- Develop their ability to sing in independent parts.
- Develop improvisational and compositional skills
- Develop their knowledge and understanding of text setting in song-writing
- Develop interpersonal and team-building skills
- Develop their understanding of Irish cultural heritage and language
- Develop their sense of self

Teachers will:

- Develop their musicianship skills
- Develop their ability to lead classroom-based and whole-school singing
- Develop their ability to lead improvisation in the classroom
- Develop their practice through the flipped classroom model through engagement with online resources in advance of the SingSpace
- Develop their practice in placing singing at the heart of cross-curricular thematic planning
- Develop links to a community of practice and CPD

Schools will:

- Develop their sense of community and identity
- Develop engagement with the music curriculum through creative singing
- Develop singing-based strategies which target cultural heritage, an Ghaeilge, well-being, inclusion and collaborative practice
- Develop supported whole-school engagement with creative singing through CPD
- Develop the creativity of every child

