

ØVERIET IMPACT ASSESSMENT Kulturrom

Øveriet



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SOUND
DIPLOMACY

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Foreword

Øveriet didn't start as a plan. It started because Oslo needed rehearsal rooms, and the need kept growing. A handful of rooms became 67, built out over twenty years, one room at a time, until it became one of the largest rehearsal facilities in the country, serving more than 1,300 musicians. Scale like that is hard to build, and hard to replicate.

It is also more fragile than it looks. Øveriet does not own its building. It runs on a lease from a private landlord, at a rent its community can still afford, with a grant from Kulturrøm to cover a small part of the costs in soundproofing and acoustics. Change any part of that arrangement and the whole model is at risk.

The days when bands rehearsed in illegal basements, with no requirements for safety or working conditions, are over. Regulation and cost mean musicians now need someone in between, an operator like Øveriet, so they can focus on playing instead of having to meet building and safety requirements themselves. That is part of why this infrastructure matters, and part of why it is expensive and difficult to get right.

It is worth saying who actually rehearses here. Many of Øveriet's users belong to no organisation and appear in no statistics on the voluntary cultural sector. They are not children or youth. They are adults who rehearse with friends after work, who may fill a stage one day or may never, and who find meaning in making something and in meeting other people who want to create. This report captures them too, not only the professional end of the music chain.

This is why Kulturrøm commissioned it. Øveriet, like most rehearsal spaces, is an invisible part of the cultural city. It appears in no municipal plan or budget. It is not a stage, a concert hall, or anything with a ribbon to cut. But it is essential infrastructure for the music scene in Oslo and in Norway. Every time a rehearsal space elsewhere in the city closes, Øveriet's waiting list grows longer. As this report is written, it stands at 439 names. We wanted evidence, not assumptions, about what is actually at stake when spaces like this disappear.

A functioning cultural ecosystem needs more than stages. The places where things are made, before anyone sees them, are just as much a part of it, and the numbers bear that out. Of those who use it, 94.3% say Øveriet adds value to the surrounding neighbourhood, 85% report a real improvement in their wellbeing from having access to the space, and almost 90% rehearse more regularly because of it.

We have not tried to calculate an invented spillover effect: turnover, value creation, money spent in the area. With a large number of respondents, this report documents what a rehearsal community actually means to the people in it. It documents the (not economic) value they themselves experience, in their neighbourhood and in their own lives. We hope it gives others a reason to start to see the need and value: operators, municipalities, and the people who plan cities.

We hope this report is useful to municipalities early in their planning work. Not only for what a culture department chooses to facilitate, but for how a neighbourhood is built to work in the first place.

It is also relevant to property developers who want to build good residential areas, with room for different activities and space for creativity and meeting places. Music has a particular advantage here: demand is large, and when many musicians share a room, their combined willingness to pay is often high enough to make that space work commercially on today's market terms. And with a little goodwill, the music community can offer more than making an area attractive before being kicked out.

We also hope this report shows that facilitating cultural production includes more than rooms for children and youth. A rehearsal space can be documented to have real value for a neighbourhood, and real social value for the individuals who use it. That is a case worth making in sustainability reporting too.

The cultural sector is also unusually good at putting existing space to use. With a good dose of creativity, volunteer effort and sweat equity, it arrives at usable premises at a lower cost than either the property industry or municipalities could manage on their own. Collaboration across several parties is often the key to making it work.

We hope it becomes possible for more operators like Øveriet, at whatever scale, to establish cultural production spaces in our cities in the years ahead. Kulturrøm will keep contributing both expertise and funding to make that possible.

Thank you for reading. We hope you find it useful.

On behalf of Kulturrøm,

Karen Sofie Sørensen, Daglig leder

1. Introduction

Music in a place is part of an ecosystem, and for music ecosystems to thrive all agents need to be in place. A fundamental layer of infrastructure of music ecosystems are those that provide spaces for creation: rehearsal rooms, recording studios and production rooms where artistic careers start and nurture. Beyond their physical function, these spaces generate essential value, acting as hubs for professional collaboration, talent retention, and industry development, and sustain the creative pipeline on which the entire music value chain depends.

Healthy music ecosystems are vital drivers of urban development and economic growth for cities. Yet, across urban contexts, cultural infrastructure is increasingly threatened by real estate market dynamics. Rising land values, redevelopment pressure and insecure, short-term leases make these spaces financially unsustainable, and the pressure is most acute precisely in central, well-connected areas where musicians can establish relationships with other musicians, industry agents and audiences. When market pressures displace all these spaces, pushing them to the urban periphery, artistic and audience development is limited and the health of the ecosystem as a whole is eroded. Norway, despite its vibrant music culture, is no exception.

In this context, Øveriet has become a crucial benchmark for music creation infrastructure in Norway. Serving over 1,300 musicians, Øveriet provides more than just rehearsal rooms: it offers a model for a stable, purpose-built, and sustainable creative community building and demonstrates the socioeconomic profitability of long-term cultural investment. Øveriet is proof of how dedicated music spaces can be successfully integrated into the urban fabric.

Sound Diplomacy aims to provide evidence of the importance of these spaces, focusing on Øveriet as a success case by documenting its role as an essential cultural asset. In order to do so, this report includes an assessment of Øveriet's social value, an analysis on how it's aligning with local government priorities, and primary evidence from its user community.

1.1 About the Project

Sound Diplomacy has been commissioned by Kulturrøm to advocate for the significance of rehearsal spaces in Norway, with Øveriet as a benchmark case study. Oslo's vibrant artistic community is restricted by escalating real estate costs and reliance on short-term leases, a critical issue despite the city hosting 10,000 concerts annually. To counter this, the project focuses on documenting and proving the tangible social value of Øveriet.

1.2 About Kulturrom

Kulturrom is a Norwegian organisation that supports the development of cultural infrastructure by funding venues, rehearsal spaces, technical equipment, and acoustic improvements for music and performing arts. Founded in 2009 (formerly Musikkutstysrordningen), its mission is to ensure that artists, both professional and amateur, have access to high-quality, inclusive spaces for creative work and live performance. In addition to grants, Kulturrom provides training and educational resources for technicians and cultural workers, helping build expertise in sound, lighting, and equipment maintenance. The organisation also promotes greater gender diversity by encouraging more women to enter technical stage professions.²

1.3 About Sound Diplomacy

We are a global music, culture and creative economy consultancy. We use research and data to demonstrate the economic and social value of the creative industries, and provide strategic planning for cities, places and communities to maximise their impact. Our work unlocks new opportunities, fosters sustainable development and builds more dynamic, inclusive environments.

Composed of consultants and experts worldwide, Sound Diplomacy has advised over 190 clients in over 35 countries, including the public sector such as cities, municipalities, governments, and international governmental organisations, and private entities in the real estate, investment and cultural and creative sectors.

We are creating the global standard demonstrating how investing in culture and the people who make it is the best path to economic and social growth. We provide world-class data and evidence so that culture, in all its forms, is incorporated into how we build, govern, and make decisions to invest in ourselves and our communities.

For more information, please visit www.sounddiplomacy.com.

1.4 Scope and Methodology

The research for this report was completed in the following stages:

Desk research: Sound Diplomacy conducted research into the role of music ecosystems in urban development, with a particular focus on the social, cultural and economic contribution of music creation spaces. As part of the analysis, the local context was also defined, including Oslo's cultural space landscape and identifying the

² Kulturrom, "About", accessed July 20, 2026, <https://kulturrom.no/about-kulturrom/>

pressures faced by rehearsal spaces in Norway, with the aim to position Øveriet's role within the local music ecosystem.

Case studies: Sound Diplomacy analysed other music creation spaces in Oslo and across Norway including TOU Lyd, Musikkbyen Trondheim, Bergen Kjøtt, Røvtoll Kunstnerkollektiv and Tanken, positioning Øveriet and other rehearsal spaces as proven examples of the need for long-term cultural infrastructure in Oslo and Norway.

Strategic alignment: Sound Diplomacy reviewed four relevant strategies: Norway's Music Policy (Norges offentlige utredninger, Musikklandet – Flerstemt musikkpolitikk for framtiden); Oslo's Culture Act; Oslo's Municipal Plan 2025; and Oslo's Cultural Infrastructure report (Oslo Kulturelle Infrastruktur). Policy priorities were identified in relation to culture, community development, and creative industries, to contextualise the role of rehearsal spaces within wider music ecosystem development. Øveriet's activities and strategic outcomes were also analysed in connection to their alignment with national and municipal objectives. The detailed analysis can be found as an appendix to this report.

Interviews and survey: Sound Diplomacy conducted three in-depth interviews with Øveriet users, representing a varied range of music agents, from full-time professional practice to music as a core personal practice. In addition, a user survey was distributed to Øveriet's broader community between 29 May and 23 June 2026, available in both Norwegian and English, yielding 419 valid responses (352 complete and 67 partial).

Social value assessment: To assess the social value generated by Øveriet, Sound Diplomacy applied a four-dimensional framework drawing on established approaches to cultural and community infrastructure evaluation. The framework draws on evidence from both the three in-depth interviews and the user survey to build as complete a picture as possible of the value Øveriet generates for its users and for Oslo's creative ecosystem.

2. Key Findings

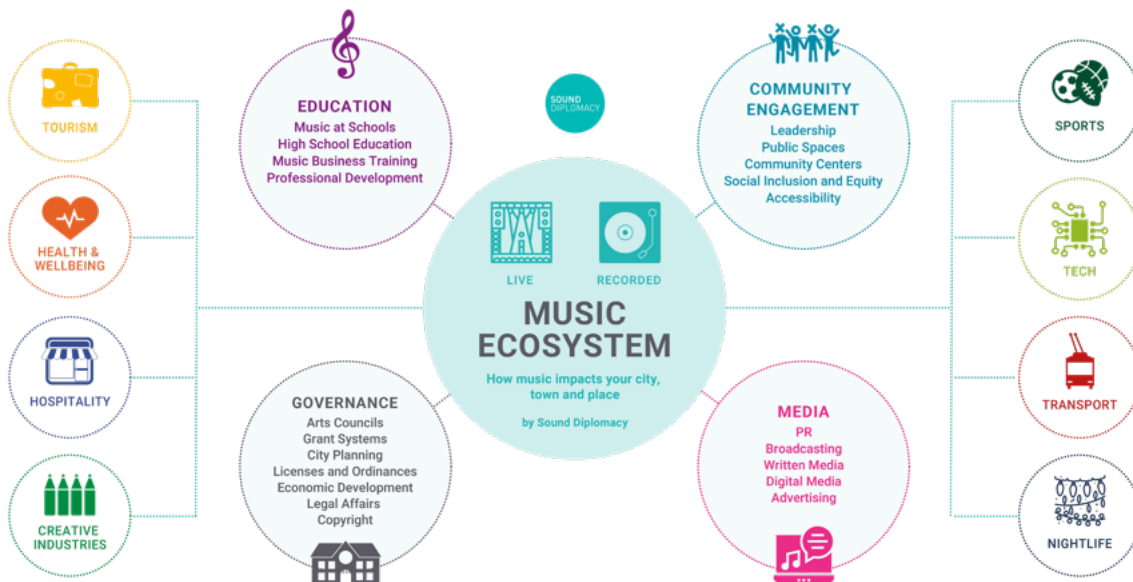
- Rehearsal spaces sit at the start of the music value chain, driving major social, cultural, and economic value. Yet, these essential creation and production spaces remain severely undersupplied, both in Oslo and more broadly across Norway.
- Øveriet is recognised as a long-term asset to the local community: in the user survey, 94.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that its presence adds value to the neighbourhood.
- There is high demand for these spaces in Oslo, highlighted by Øveriet's long waiting list.
- Oslo's rehearsal spaces are under growing pressure from gentrification, rising costs, and poor facilities.

- Within this constrained landscape, Øveriet stands out as one of only three 25+ room rehearsal facilities in Oslo and the second most-used, addressing a longstanding shortage of affordable, purpose-built spaces.³
- Comparable spaces (Musikkbyen Trondheim, Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, Tanken, OLYP) rely on long-term leases and varied governance models (municipal, non-profit, cooperative) to resist market pressure; all report full occupancy, reflecting sector-wide excess demand for this type of space.
- Other organisations analysed, including Øveriet, do not own the buildings they operate in, which makes financing particularly challenging and may require personal financial involvement, with significant personal risk for those involved. Bergen Kjøtt owning their own building and TOU Lyd where the building is owned by the municipality and secured for long term provides exceptions rather than the norm.
- Øveriet operates as a rehearsal community without any public operating support.
- Øveriet functions as scarce, hard-to-replace urban infrastructure: interviewees and 86%+ of survey respondents describe it as essential to sustaining Oslo's music ecosystem and cultural identity, with deeper engagement correlating with stronger endorsement of this civic role.
- Access to the space delivers measurable wellbeing value (85% of users report meaningful wellbeing benefit), driven by a combination of environmental quality, routine, and psychological stability against the uncertainty of independent artistic careers.
- A shared sense of belonging is well established, as around 56% of survey respondents feel motivated by others' presence, and 42% see Øveriet as a genuine community hub.
- Access to Øveriet is strongly associated with concrete professional outcomes: almost 90% of survey respondents report more regular practice, ~68% report skill improvement and increased confidence, and over 81% used the space to prepare public/professional performances in the past year.

³ According to the Oslos kulturelle infrastruktur report from 2018, Øveriet is one of only two 25+ room rehearsal facilities in Oslo. However, in 2026 and according to local stakeholders, three spaces have over 25 rooms: Øveriet (67), Øvingshotellet (49) and OLYP (32). Kulturetaten, "Oslos kulturelle infrastruktur", accessed June 5, 2026, <https://www.oslo.kommune.no/get-file/466046/609088254b5a00f27394ba2829fb80c8f4bd36fa4fc94a0a833d214c507b6876> and Øveriet, "Homepage", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/> and "About ØverietAbout the Upper Room", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/om-overiet>

3. The Impact of Music Ecosystems

Figure 1: The Music Ecosystem⁴

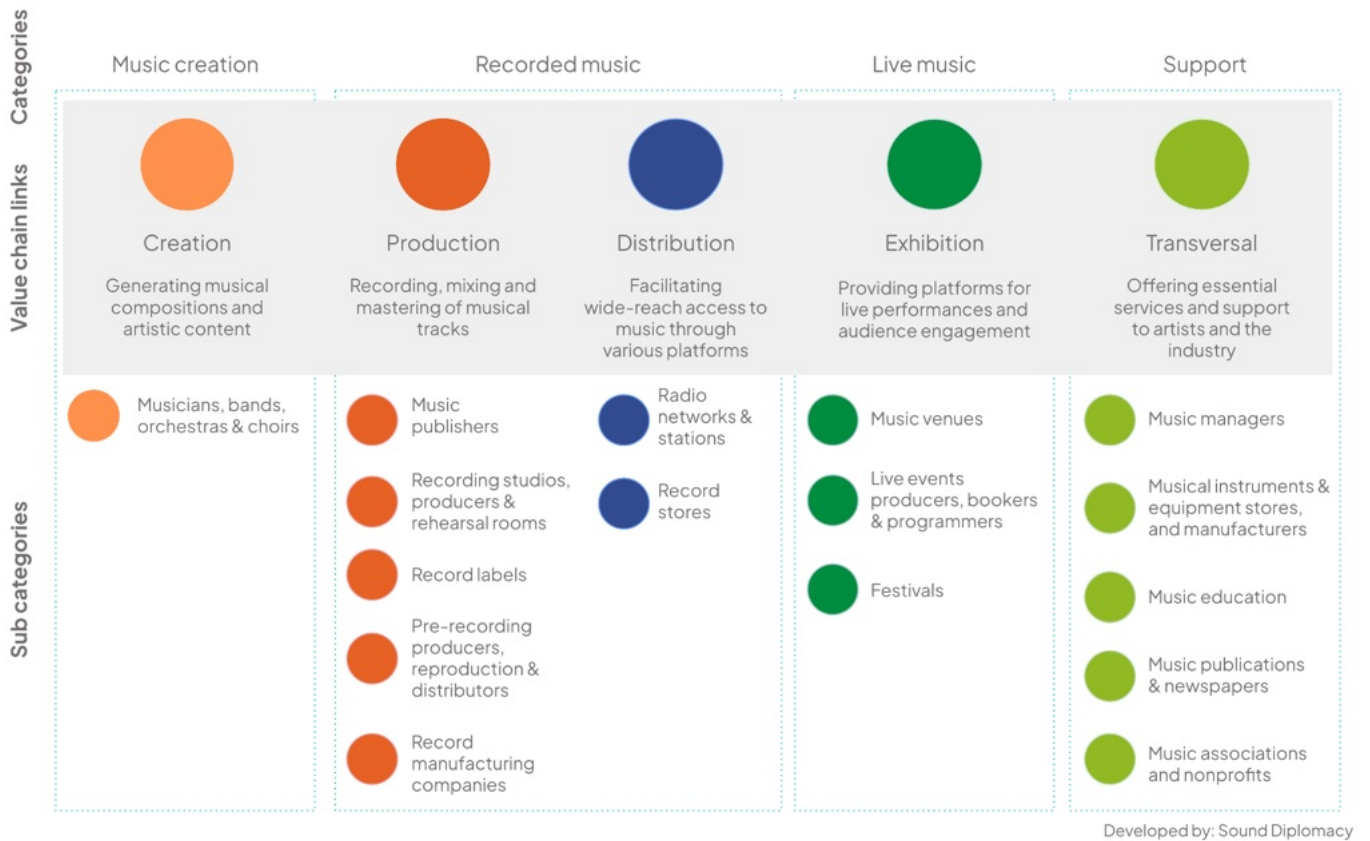


Like in all ecosystems, the relationships between stakeholders, resources and their environment are interdependent. For a music ecosystem to be healthy and thriving, all the actors within it — artists, publishers, producers, recording studios, distributors, venues, managers, music educators and more — must be adequately resourced, meaningfully connected, and actively supported. This is done by developing plans and strategies and implementing them through support systems, policies and regulations that take into account every step of the chain, ease the operations, and facilitate the relationships between all of them. A key to the sustainability of a healthy local music ecosystem is having a healthy music industry value chain, which is at the core of it as shown in Figure 1.

The music industry value chain has as its main purpose the creation, production, reproduction, promotion, distribution, and commercialisation of goods, services, and activities relating to all aspects of music. Figure 2 below depicts the agents that intervene in the music industry value chain.

⁴ Sound Diplomacy

Figure 2: The Music Value Chain⁵



Rehearsal spaces, recording studios and production workspaces intervene in the creation, production and distribution stages of the value chain and, as such, are essential assets of a music ecosystem, contributing to the sustainability of local music scenes.

Yet this essential cultural infrastructure is increasingly under threat in urban contexts. When rising land values render these spaces financially unsustainable, the effects ripple across the entire music value chain, weakening the health of the ecosystem as a whole.

3.1 The Role of Music in Urban Development

Music plays a proven role in shaping thriving, equitable cities. A vibrant music ecosystem drives economic value through job creation, economic growth and urban regeneration, stimulating consumer spending, and spurring growth in complementary sectors such as hospitality, tourism, technology, education and the wider creative industries.⁶ Beyond

⁵ Sound Diplomacy

⁶ Sound Diplomacy, "Music Cities Manual", accessed May 20, 2026, <https://www.sounddiplomacy.com/reports/the-music-cities-manual> and WIPO Magazine, "How cities benefit from helping the music industry grow", accessed May 20, 2026,

its economic contribution, a well-functioning music ecosystem also improves health and wellbeing conditions, enhances social inclusion, and advances global sustainable development goals.⁷

The social benefits of music in a place are equally significant. Regular engagement with music, such as attending live concerts, can boost feelings of wellbeing by 21% and a study has found that “fortnightly gig attendance could extend life expectancy by nine years”.⁸ Participating in synchronised musical activities actively reduces social barriers and fosters empathy, communication and cooperation, making music a powerful tool for building resilient, inclusive communities.⁹ Through music, marginalised groups can connect, gain agency, and challenge systemic inequalities.¹⁰

To maximise a music ecosystem's economic, social and cultural value, it must be assessed and managed like all other forms of infrastructure, and considered in land use, regeneration, tourism and economic development policies. A growing number of cities, including Oslo, have recognised this over the past decade, embracing the concepts of music urbanism and music cities. These are places that deliberately integrate music into urban planning and public policy, and understand that music can be a means to achieving other social, economic and cultural goals.

<https://www.wipo.int/en/web/wipo-magazine/articles/how-cities-benefit-from-helping-the-music-industry-grow-39336>

⁷ Elsevier “The transformative power of music: Insights into neuroplasticity, health, and disease”, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10765015/> and “Music, mental health, and immunity”, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8566759/> and Harvard Health Publishing, “Can music improve our health and quality of life?”, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/can-music-improve-our-health-and-quality-of-life-202207252786>

⁸ Virgin media O2, “Science says gig-going can help you live longer and increases wellbeing”, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://news.virginmediao2.co.uk/archive/science-says-gig-going-can-help-you-live-longer-and-increases-wellbeing/>

⁹ Elsevier “The transformative power of music: Insights into neuroplasticity, health, and disease”, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10765015/> and Norway Music Policy, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/324fa3fcf33a45569fbe585e553ae90e/no/pdfs/nou202520250007000dddpdfs.pdf> and Harvard Health Publishing, “Can music improve our health and quality of life?”, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/can-music-improve-our-health-and-quality-of-life-202207252786> and The Guardian, “Consuming arts and culture is good for health and wellbeing, research finds”, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2024/dec/17/consuming-arts-and-culture-is-good-for-health-and-wellbeing-research-finds>

¹⁰ Transnational Legal Theory, “Beyond international human rights law – music and song in contextualised struggles for gender equality”, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/20414005.2022.2081906#d1e97>

3.2 Social, Cultural, and Economic Contributions of Music Rehearsal Spaces

Rehearsal spaces are the very first links in the music industry's value chain, making them essential infrastructure for thriving music ecosystems, including performances, recordings, and cultural life in general. They can also enhance wellbeing, social connection and a sense of belonging among creative practitioners.¹¹

Music rehearsal spaces are at the core of a city's cultural infrastructure. They provide artists with the dedicated environments needed to create, experiment and develop new work, supporting artistic careers and spurring innovation across genres. In these spaces, emerging talent meets established professionals, nurturing careers, fostering collaboration and ensuring a continuous pipeline of new music, performances and cultural experiences. By supporting diverse voices and creative expressions, they strengthen local cultural identity, enrich the city's cultural offer and help ensure that music remains an accessible and vibrant part of a city's life.¹²

Their economic and wellbeing impact is equally powerful. While there is a lack of studies about the economic contributions of music creation spaces, a Vista analysis published by Norsk Musikkkrad establishes a socio-economic valuation of the self-perceived benefit of practicing and playing, whether professionally or as a hobby, at approximately NOK 11.4 billion annually. The public benefit is estimated at just over NOK 500 million annually. Vista Analyse also estimates the value of life years gained by practicing music at NOK 440 million annually. If better health through participation in music results in increased work participation and fewer sick leaves, conservative estimates of the possible production gains are NOK 60–603 million and NOK 36–145 million per year, respectively.¹³

Music rehearsal spaces play a vital role in socialisation amongst the artistic scene, bringing together creatives of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels, opening pathways into creative life for those who might otherwise be left behind. In this sense, they contribute to promoting cultural rights, ensuring access and participation and reducing exclusion of historically marginalised communities. In a context where Oslo Economics estimates the total socioeconomic cost of early exclusion and marginalisation at

¹¹ Samfunns-økonomisk Analyse, "Kulturfeltets plass i samfunnsutviklingen", accessed June 5, 2026, <https://www.ks.no/contentassets/0f82dd3655334aa9891905c547a7c1ff/ks-fou-rapport--2024-kulturfeltets-plass-i-samfunnsutviklingen.pdf>

¹² Cornell University, "Cultural transmission modes of music sampling traditions remain stable despite delocalization in the digital age", accessed June 1, 2026, <https://arxiv.org/abs/1810.11900> and NOU, "Miskkländet", accessed June 6, 2026, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/324fa3fcf33a45569f5e585e553ae90e/nou202520250007000dddpdfs.pdf>

¹³ Norsk musikkkrad Musikkens studieforbund, "Music is also life and health", accessed June 26, 2026, <https://www.musikk.no/prosjekt/musikkens-samfunnsnytte>

roughly NOK 73 billion per year, rehearsal spaces and music studios can contribute to reducing this systemic urban challenge¹⁴.

Music rehearsal spaces are behind much of this value, supporting employment for musicians, producers, and technicians while driving spending across local businesses and services. Without affordable and accessible spaces to create, rehearse and collaborate, there is a risk of weakening the entire pipeline that supports artistic innovation, cultural participation and economic development.

¹⁴ Samfunns-økonomisk Analyse, “Kulturfeltets plass i samfunnsutviklingen”, accessed June 5, 2026, <https://www.ks.no/contentassets/Of82dd3655334aa9891905c547a7c1ff/ks-fou-rapport--2024-kulturfeltets-plass-i-samfunnsutviklingen.pdf>

4. Local Context

This section situates Øveriet within Oslo's cultural sector and music ecosystem, including its role as one of the country's most significant rehearsal space communities.

4.1 At a Glance: Oslo's Cultural Spaces

With a history dating back to around 1,000 AD, Oslo is the capital of Norway and the country's creative sector hub, hosting the largest portion of its creative economy. Its infrastructure is influenced by its natural surroundings (68% of the municipal area consists of publicly accessible green spaces, including the Marka forest that extends both within and beyond the city limits), but also characterised by innovative and modern urban architecture that harmonises with the environment.¹⁵

Oslo is home to a variety of cultural spaces, from venues and museums to arts centres and workspaces, making it a must-visit destination for art lovers. It also houses two of the biggest art museums in Europe – MUNCH and the National Museum. Its other key cultural spaces include the Oslo Opera House, Oslo Concert Hall, and Rockefeller Oslo, among others. Across the city's varied cultural spaces, Oslo hosted nearly 10,000 music events in the 2024/25 period.¹⁶

The Norwegian Agency for Culture is Oslo Municipality's department for arts and culture which facilitates diverse cultural offerings in the city, provides spaces for the cultural sector, and administers the rental of studios and premises.¹⁷ This reflects a strong municipal commitment to supporting cultural production and maintaining long-term cultural infrastructure within the city.

A survey of Oslo's cultural infrastructure focusing on production and exhibition spaces for the arts was commissioned by the City Council Department for Culture, Sport and Volunteering (KIF) in 2018. The survey identified a total of 447 premises in Oslo that serve a production and/or exhibition function within the fields of visual arts, music and performing arts. The majority of venues are dedicated to music (201) and visual arts (179), with the fewest being for performing arts (64). Of the 201 premises within the

¹⁵ World City Forum, "Cultural Policy in Oslo", accessed May 21, 2026, <https://worldcitiescultureforum.com/city/oslo/>

¹⁶ Visit Norway, "Oslo", accessed May 21, 2026, <https://www.visitnorway.com/places-to-go/eastern-norway/oslo/> and Art and Travel Guide, "Oslo", accessed May 21, 2026, <https://artandtravelguide.com/oslo/> and Visit Norway, "Oslo Opera House", accessed May 21, 2026, <https://www.visitnorway.com/places-to-go/eastern-norway/oslo/oslo-opera-house/> and Oslo Concert Hall, "homepage", <https://oslokonserthus.no/> and Rockefeller Oslo, "homepage", <https://www.rockefeller.no/> and Broadcast App, "Oslo-Breakfast 2025 by:Larm presentation 2025", accessed August 12, 2026, <https://app.slidebean.com/sbp/0f1ce8c363/Oslo-Frokost-2025-byLarm-presentation-2025#1>

¹⁷ Oslo, "Cultural Affairs", accessed May 21, 2026, <https://www.oslo.kommune.no/etater-foretak-og-ombud/kulturetaten/>

music sector, 56 are categorised as performance-only, 66 as both rehearsal and performance, 21 as production/rehearsal only, and 58 listed as unknown. Survey results also indicate that there is a geographical cluster of venues in the city centre, with the majority of them for production and performance located in Sentrum, St. Hanshaugen, Gamle Oslo, Grünerløkka, Sagene, and Frogner, and fewer in the outer city.¹⁸

4.2 Pressures Facing Rehearsal Spaces

Financial and economic pressures

Rehearsal spaces often face significant financial and economic pressures that threaten their long-term viability. The most commonly cited barrier in the abovementioned survey for musicians in Norway is cost: high rents, rising utility bills, and the ongoing expense of maintaining acoustically suitable facilities make it increasingly difficult for operators to stay financially sustainable, and for musicians to access them at all.¹⁹

These economic pressures are a result of the contemporary urban development challenges, including densification and gentrification. In Norway's major cities, rehearsal spaces have traditionally depended on older office blocks and industrial premises where rents are low enough to make cultural use viable.²⁰ Yet the presence of creative activity tends to revitalise these areas, making them more attractive to developers and contributing to rising rents, creating a phenomenon where cultural actors gentrify themselves out of their own spaces. Private developers rarely have incentives to accommodate this kind of use, and so as neighbourhoods become more desirable, rehearsal spaces are among the first casualties, displaced to the urban periphery or lost entirely.²¹

When rehearsal spaces close, the effects extend beyond the loss of individual facilities to the wider music ecosystem. Reduced access to rehearsal space can limit opportunities for artistic development, collaboration, and informal knowledge exchange, while weakening the infrastructure that supports local music communities. Rising costs and declining availability also create barriers to participation, making it more difficult for emerging and independent musicians to access suitable rehearsal facilities and potentially reducing the diversity and vitality of grassroots music activity.

¹⁸ Kulturetaten, "Oslos kulturelle infrastruktur", accessed June 5, 2026, <https://www.oslo.kommune.no/get-file/466046/609088254b5a00f27394ba2829fb80c8f4bd36fa4fc94a0a833d214c507b6876>

¹⁹ Norges offentlige utredninger, Musikklandet – Flerstemt musikkpolitikk for framtiden, accessed June 30, 2026, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/324fa3fcf33a45569fbe585e553ae90e/no/pdfs/nou202520250007000dddpdfs.pdf>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

Operational and facility challenges

Rehearsal spaces also face a range of operational and facility-related challenges that affect daily operations and long-term viability. As previously mentioned, many studios in Norway are located in older office blocks and industrial premises that were not originally designed for music use.²² This can result in compromise in acoustics, spatial layout and sound isolation.

The scale of this problem is significant: research by Norsk musikkråd found that over 10,000 rooms are used weekly for rehearsal and performance across the country, yet approximately 85% fail to meet recommended acoustic criteria. Only about four in ten users feel their rehearsal venues are suitable in terms of acoustics or technical equipment. This gap prompted the development of the NS 8178:2014 Acoustic Criteria for Rooms and Spaces for Music Rehearsal and Performance, the first standard of its kind in the world, which has since informed similar frameworks internationally, including in Japan, Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom.²³

In the previously mentioned KIF survey, musicians reported significant shortfalls in the size, acoustics, equipment and ventilation of existing spaces. The average musician requires around 34 square metres; two-thirds of surveyed premises offer less than 20.²⁴

Additionally, many amateur music groups, such as local bands and choirs, rely heavily on schools and community centers for rehearsal space. However, artists frequently face challenges in gaining access to school buildings outside of teaching hours. Even when policy guidelines encourage shared use, access is often hindered by capacity limitations, lack of key access, and the fact that granting access is often left to the discretion of individual headteachers. Furthermore, those who do rehearse in schools often report dissatisfaction with the lack of storage capacity for their instruments and equipment.²⁵

Moreover, a majority of private rehearsal spaces do not own the building they operate in. This can make it difficult for rehearsal spaces to access bank loans or any type of financing and can make them vulnerable to continually rising rental costs.²⁶

²² Ibid.

²³ European Acoustics Association, "New Norwegian standard on the acoustics of rooms for music rehearsal and performance", accessed June 12, 2026, https://www.odeon.dk/pdf/RehearsalRooms_ForumAcusticum2014_Rindel.pdf

²⁴ Kulturretaten, "Oslos kulturelle infrastruktur", accessed June 5, 2026, <https://www.oslo.kommune.no/get-file/466046/609088254b5a00f27394ba2829fb80c8f4bd36fa4fc94a0a833d214c507b6876>

²⁵ NOU, "Musikklandet", accessed June 6, 2026, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/324fa3fcf33a45569fbe585e553ae90e/nou202520250007000dddpdfs.pdf> and Kulturretaten, "Oslo Kulturelle Infrastruktur", accessed June 3, 2026, <https://www.oslo.kommune.no/get-file/466046/609088254b5a00f27394ba2829fb80c8f4bd36fa4fc94a0a833d214c507b6876>

²⁶ Musikkkontoret "leiekontrakt for musikkrom og produksjonslokaler", accessed August 12, 2026, <https://www.musikkkontoret.no/ressurser/leiekontrakt-for-musikkrom-og-kulturproduksjonslokaler>

Lack of policy support and planning

For music ecosystems to thrive, comprehensive municipal land-use planning that explicitly incorporates culture is essential. However, cultural needs often receive less attention in planning processes, as priority is given to statutory services such as housing, schools, and care homes.²⁷ For instance, seven in ten municipalities in Norway cut their cultural offering in 2024.²⁸ To counter the previously discussed economic pressures and facility challenges, comprehensive spatial planning, public support, funding, and secure, long-term leases are required.²⁹

Despite several national initiatives to support and fund all links of the music value chain, and although organisations such as Kulturrom have worked to reframe rehearsal spaces as a core part of the music ecosystem, this shift in recognition is not yet fully reflected in local or national policy and funding schemes. As a result, the sector remains characterised by underinvestment and a lack of long-term strategic protection.³⁰

4.3 Øveriet

Øveriet is one of the most significant creative collectives and rehearsal facilities in Oslo and the broader Norwegian music ecosystem. Established in 2006, it combines rehearsal spaces with an active role in Oslo's cultural ecosystem and has a mission to provide stable and predictable rehearsal conditions for bands and musicians.³¹ The musicians who participated in the previously mentioned KIF survey ranked Øveriet as the second most frequently used rehearsal venue.³²

When Øveriet was first established, a waiting list for rehearsal rooms of approximately 50 people and bands had already formed, with demand for rehearsal spaces from Oslo-based artists outstripping the number of rehearsal spaces at Øveriet. In the first 10 years, the list grew by an average of two names every week. 20 years on, Øveriet reports that they have not yet had a vacant rehearsal room, and the waiting list currently stands at 439 names. Furthermore, the closure of other rehearsal spaces in Oslo has a ripple effect across the music sector, resulting in new enquiries at Øveriet from musicians who

²⁷ NOU, "Musikklandet", accessed June 6, 2026, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/324fa3fcf33a45569fbe585e553ae90e/no/pdfs/nou202520250007000dddpdfs.pdf>

²⁸ Telemarksforsking, "Kutt, kutt, kutt over hele linja", accessed June 6, 2026, <https://www.noku.no/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Kutt-kutt-kutt-over-hele-linja-Kommunal-kultursektor-2025-.pdf>

²⁹ NOU, "Musikklandet", accessed June 6, 2026, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/324fa3fcf33a45569fbe585e553ae90e/no/pdfs/nou202520250007000dddpdfs.pdf>

³⁰ Kulturrom, "The organization", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://kulturrom.no/om-oss/organisasjonen/>

³¹ Øveriet, "Homepage", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/>

³² Kulturretaten, "Oslos kulturelle infrastruktur", accessed June 5, 2026, <https://www.oslo.kommune.no/get-file/466046/609088254b5a00f27394ba2829fb80c8f4bd36fa4fc94a0a833d214c507b6876>

have lost a rehearsal space.³³ The continually full waiting list highlights the need for such a space in Oslo's music ecosystem.³⁴

Øveriet concert³⁵



Purpose-built rehearsal spaces

With 67 rehearsal rooms, Øveriet is one of Oslo's largest rehearsal facilities, addressing the previously mentioned shortage of suitable music creation space in Oslo and Norway.³⁶ By providing acoustically appropriate, purpose-built facilities that support music creation, collaboration and professional development, Øveriet represents the kind of long-term, musician-centred infrastructure that national bodies such as Kulturrøm – Norway's national funding body for cultural spaces – have identified as critically undersupplied.³⁷ Kulturrøm's support places Øveriet within Norway's wider model of publicly supported cultural development, in which rehearsal spaces are recognised as essential infrastructure for a healthy and sustainable music ecosystem.

³³ Information provided by Øveriet

³⁴ Kontekst, "Vi har til enhver tid 200 på venteliste", accessed August 12, 2026, <https://www.kontekst.no/de-har-til-enhver-tid-200-pa-venteliste/> and Journalen Oslomet, "Sentrumsnære øvingslokaler", accessed August 12, 2026, <https://journalen.oslomet.no/nb/2020/10/sentrumsnaere-ovingslokaler>

³⁵ Øveriet

³⁶ Øveriet, "Homepage", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/>

³⁷ Kulturrøm, "The organizations", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://kulturrum.no/om-oss/organisasjonen/> and Øveriet, "About Øveriet", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/om-overiet>

Membership

A core element of Øveriet's model is the provision of predictable, long-term access through transparent contracts and the ability for tenants to remain in their spaces for as long as they wish.³⁸ This stability enables musicians to invest in equipment, establish regular rehearsal routines and focus on artistic development without the disruption of frequent relocation.

Its membership structure and long-term access model can play a significant role in supporting artist development and retention within Oslo. Unlike many rehearsal facilities that operate on short-term or hourly bookings, Øveriet offers a variety of arrangements, from flexible monthly access to permanent 24/7 rehearsal rooms allowing musicians at different stages of their careers to access space that matches their needs and financial capacity. This lowers barriers to participation for emerging artists while providing more established musicians and bands with the stability required for long-term creative development in Oslo.³⁹

³⁸ Øveriet, "Homepage", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/>

³⁹ Øveriet, "About Øveriet", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/om-overiet> and Kulturrom, "Press release: 4.3 million allocated to Oslo's music scene. 10 new rehearsal rooms are being built.", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://kulturrom.no/2012/06/12/pressemelding-43-millioner-tildelt-oslos-musikkliv-10-nye-ovingsrom-bygges/>

Øveriet practice room⁴⁰



Øveriet's musicians are selected through an open, yet competitive, approach. Vacancies are rare: only one or two of their 67 rooms turn over per year, since departing tenants' spots are first offered to others in their existing collective. When a room does open up, the whole waiting list is notified, typically drawing 25–30 applications for 5–6 invited viewings. Selection is then based upon holistic judgement, weighting several factors including current rehearsal situation, time spent on the waiting list, fit within the existing community, commitment to diversity and inclusion, and balance across genres with a preference for underrepresented styles.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Øveriet

⁴¹ Øveriet



Creative community

Beyond providing physical infrastructure and being one of only three venues in Oslo that report having more than 25 rooms in total, Øveriet functions as a creative community hub that connects approximately 1,300 musicians across more than 300 bands.⁴³ Through shared facilities, workshops, industry events, listening sessions and networking opportunities, it creates an environment where artists can build professional relationships, find collaborators and access knowledge from peers and industry practitioners. The organisation's communal spaces are intentionally designed to encourage interaction and collaboration, strengthening social and professional ties within Oslo's music ecosystem.⁴⁴

As one of the largest music creation hubs in Oslo and Norway, Øveriet contributes not only to music creation but also to the retention of creative talent within the city and

⁴² Øveriet

⁴³ According to the Oslos kulturelle infrastruktur report from 2018, Øveriet is one of only two 25+ room rehearsal facilities in Oslo. However, in 2026 and according to local stakeholders, three spaces have over 25 rooms: Øveriet (67), Øvingshotellet (49) and OLYP (32). Kulturetaten, "Oslos kulturelle infrastruktur", accessed June 5, 2026, <https://www.oslo.kommune.no/get-file/466046/609088254b5a00f27394ba2829fb80c8f4bd36fa4fc94a0a833d214c507b6876> and Øveriet, "Homepage", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/> and "About Øveriet About the Upper Room", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/om-overiet>

⁴⁴ Øveriet, "Homepage", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/> and "About Øveriet", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/om-overiet>

country. The team helps ensure that musicians can continue to develop their careers in Oslo by filling the gap for purpose-built rehearsal spaces in the city.⁴⁵

Øveriet creative community⁴⁶



⁴⁵ Øveriet, "Build your own distortion pedal at Øveriet", accessed June 2, 2026, <https://www.overiet.no/news/bygg-din-egen-vrengpedal>

⁴⁶ Øveriet

Øveriet's positive impact: sustainability, health and access

Øveriet establishes itself as more than a rehearsal facility: it is an active contributor to Oslo's cultural, social and environmental sustainability. While this is not a public mandate or formal requirement, Øveriet's commitments towards cultural, social and environmental sustainability stem from their founding motivation to create a positive and lasting community impact. Through a growing portfolio of initiatives, the organisation is demonstrating how music infrastructure can generate positive impact beyond its walls.

This is most visible in its plans for the Green Practice Rooms pilot project ("Grønne øvingsrom"), developed with support from Kulturrøm and industry partners. Still in its planning phase, Øveriet has invested in low-carbon, nature-based and circular building materials, including clay, seaweed, wood fibre and recycled textiles, in rehearsal space construction, documenting both the environmental and economic outcomes. The project reflects Øveriet's ambitions to become a leading organisation in sustainable cultural infrastructure, generating knowledge that can shape future development across Oslo and Norway.⁴⁷

Øveriet is also taking direct action on the health and wellbeing of music professionals. In partnership with hearing specialists, the organisation delivers educational workshops and practical services to raise awareness of hearing loss and improve access to custom hearing protection.⁴⁸ Alongside this, Øveriet has worked with national organisations including MØST and Kulturrøm to open up conversations on mental health in the cultural industries, addressing stress, burnout, isolation and work-life balance in an environment designed to be genuinely supportive.⁴⁹

A further initiative, launching in autumn 2026, will make music more accessible to young people by collecting, repairing and lending donated instruments and equipment, alongside a free rehearsal space for young musicians. In doing so, Øveriet is simultaneously reducing financial barriers to music participation and extending the life of instruments that would otherwise go unused, linking circularity directly to community benefit.⁵⁰

Taken together, these programmes reflect Øveriet's ambition to function as a platform for positive impact: advancing climate action, inclusion, professional wellbeing and circular practice as integral parts of what it means to run cultural infrastructure in a modern city.

⁴⁷ Øveriet, "Green Practice Rooms", accessed June 2, 2026,

<https://www.Overiet.no/news/gronneovingsrom>

⁴⁸ Øveriet, "Take care of your hearing with "HØR" at Øveriet April 22-23", accessed June 2, 2026,

<https://www.Overiet.no/news/hoer-paa-oeveriet>

⁴⁹ Øveriet, "The industry went to a psychologist", accessed June 2, 2026,

<https://www.Overiet.no/news/bransjengikktilpsykolog>

⁵⁰ Øveriet, "Do you have instruments or equipment you don't use?", accessed June 2, 2026,

<https://www.Overiet.no/news/innsamling-av-instrumenter-for-ungdom>

Øveriet events⁵¹



⁵¹ Øveriet

5. The Social Value of Øveriet

"For me, Øveriet is the sanctuary that gave me back my spark, and the community that gave me the courage to step out of my comfort zone and go for it."

"It is getting harder to find available space as most buildings that are not in use are being converted to residential space rather than work space."

— Survey respondent

Beyond their function as physical infrastructure, spaces like Øveriet shape the lives and careers of the people who use them, build communities, sustain creative practices, and contribute to the development of the urban music ecosystem in ways that are difficult to capture with numbers alone. Capturing this value in its full breadth requires a multi-dimensional lens, one that holds individual experience, social relationships, community life and urban dynamics in view simultaneously. The framework developed by Sound Diplomacy is organised around four such dimensions, each capturing a distinct but interrelated aspect of the value that Øveriet generates for its users and for Oslo as a creative city:

- Urban Resilience and Ecosystem Value
- Health and Well-being
- Interpersonal Relationships and Community
- Individual Development and Identity.

Further details on the framework can be found in Appendix 2.

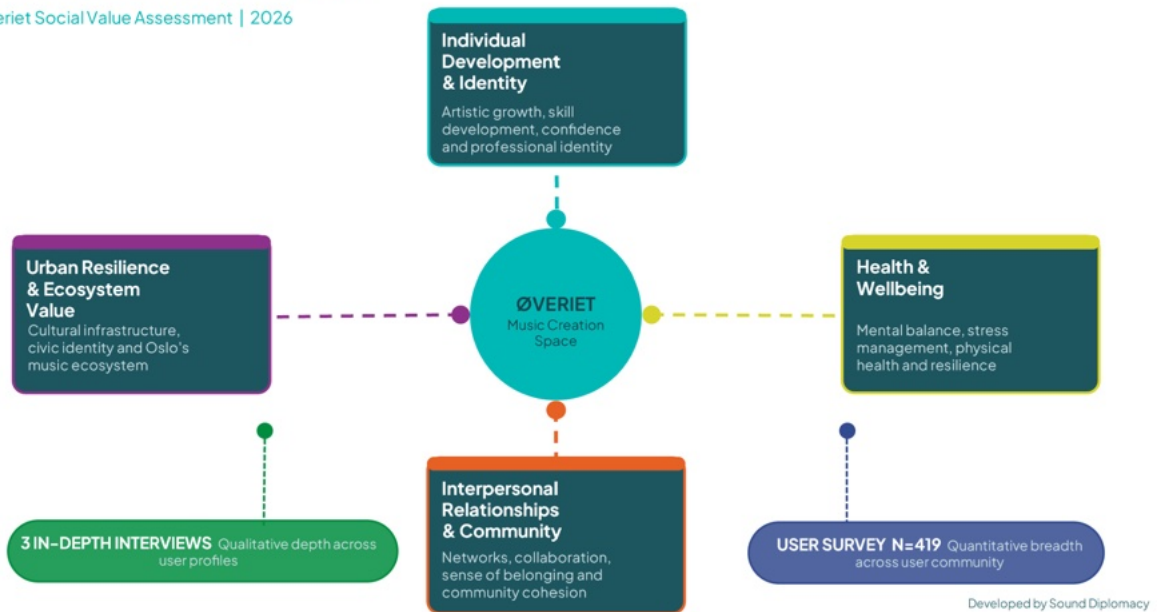
The evidence presented in this section draws on three in-depth interviews conducted with musicians and users of Øveriet at different stages of their careers and with different relationships to music: some pursue it as a full-time profession, others as a part-time activity or personal practice. A survey was also distributed to the broader community of users at Øveriet to capture a wider range of perceptions and experiences. The survey was conducted between 29 May and 23 June 2026 using the Alchemer platform and was available in both Norwegian and English. A total of 419 valid responses were collected and retained for analysis, following the exclusion of 24 incomplete or abandoned submissions.

Together, these two sources provide the empirical basis for the assessment, which examines each dimension in turn, building a cumulative picture of the social value that Øveriet generates for its users, for the community it sustains, and for Oslo's broader creative ecosystem.

Figure 3: The Social Value Framework

Social Value Framework

Øveriet Social Value Assessment | 2026



5.1 Urban Resilience and Ecosystem Value

Details at Øveriet⁵²



As mentioned above, rehearsal spaces are part of the connective tissue of the urban creative ecosystem. They function as environments where musicians at different stages of their careers can practise, experiment, network, and grow. This is particularly true for emerging musicians, who depend on affordable rehearsal facilities, places to network with peers and industry professionals, and access to smaller performance spaces in order to develop their skills and establish themselves within the local music scene.⁵³

Creative Spaces Under Pressure

One of the most pressing threats facing urban music ecosystems is the displacement of creative spaces as cities gentrify and affordable and dedicated music spaces become increasingly scarce.⁵⁴ As the interviewees put it, in Oslo the scarcity of such spaces is felt concretely in daily professional life. Tor-Arne Berg, a part-time musician

⁵² Øveriet

⁵³ Van der Hoeven, A., & Hitters, E. (2019). The social and cultural values of live music: Sustaining urban live music ecologies. *Cities*, 90, 263–271.

⁵⁴ Van der Hoeven, A., & Hitters, E. (2020). The spatial value of live music: Performing, (re)developing and narrating urban spaces. *Geoforum*, 117, 154–164.

who has used Øveriet for band rehearsal and recording since 2007, was unequivocal: **"none of this would be possible if this room was situated out of town or didn't exist."** Susanna Wallumrød, a professional singer, composer and songwriter who has rented a room at Øveriet since 2014, pointed directly to the broader urban dynamic driving that scarcity: **"it is getting harder to find available space as most buildings that are not in use are being converted to residential space rather than work space,"** adding that without Øveriet she would likely have had to relocate outside the city centre entirely.

Future Nostalgia Rehearsal at Øveriet⁵⁵



Location, Scarcity and Professional Viability

The centrality of Øveriet's location emerges as a recurring and emphatic theme. For Carsten Omholt, a freelance drummer who moved to Oslo from Kristiansand in 2022 immediately after completing his master's degree in music performance, securing a room at Øveriet was a deliberate and strategic first step in establishing himself professionally in the city. Oslo, he explained, is the centre of the Norwegian music industry, and its concentration of musicians, venues, booking agents and collaborators makes it the natural destination for young and aspiring professionals. Yet this concentration also creates a need for structured infrastructure to support those musicians once they arrive. Carsten identified only two spaces in Oslo, one of them being Øveriet, that function as reliable, recognised hubs for professional

⁵⁵ Future Nostalgia

music-making. The scarcity of such spaces gives each of them a significance that goes far beyond their function as rooms to practise in; they are nodes in a network that makes a professional music career in Oslo viable. As Carsten put it, when asked what would happen if Øveriet were to disappear: **"places like this, people don't know how important it is before it's gone."**

Rehearsal space at Øveriet⁵⁶



Infrastructure Beyond the Rehearsal Room

Susanna Wallumrød, articulated a similar understanding of the space's role within Oslo's music ecosystem, but from the perspective of an established career rather than an emerging one. Before renting at Øveriet, she had worked from shared and improvised spaces in older buildings without adequate ventilation or soundproofing, which she described as **"a totally different work environment."** The move to Øveriet represented not just an improvement in conditions but a qualitative shift in what was professionally possible: she was able to establish her own record label, store instruments and merchandise, and build a stable base for her practice as an independent artist. This multi-functional use of the space, as rehearsal room, production space, storage facility and professional address, reflects the extent to which Øveriet functions as creative infrastructure in a full sense, not simply as a place to play music.

⁵⁶ Øveriet



An Incubator Across Career Stages

The ecosystem dimension is further illustrated by the way Øveriet operates as an incubator across career stages. Tor-Arne Berg described how he and his bandmates used their room to record and produce singles for his children's bands, who could not afford professional studio time. The space thus functions as a production resource that benefits not only its direct tenants but a wider circle of emerging musicians connected to them. Tor-Arne also noted that he spent roughly ten years searching for a suitable rehearsal space before finding Øveriet, and that he was unaware of comparable alternatives in the city. This points to a genuine gap in Oslo's music infrastructure that Øveriet fills, and whose loss would leave musicians across the career spectrum, from hobbyists to emerging professionals to established artists, without a viable alternative.

Taken together, the interview evidence positions Øveriet as a form of urban infrastructure whose contribution to Oslo's music ecosystem is both significant and difficult to replace. Its central location, good transport connections, professional-standard facilities and density of musicians across genres and career stages make it a space that actively sustains the creative life and talent development of the city. Its scarcity value, acknowledged by all three interviewees, suggests that its loss would not simply inconvenience individual musicians but would materially weaken the

⁵⁷ Ida Fiskaa

conditions that make Oslo a city where music can be made, learned and shared across a wide range of genres and career stages.

A Space the City Cannot Afford to Lose

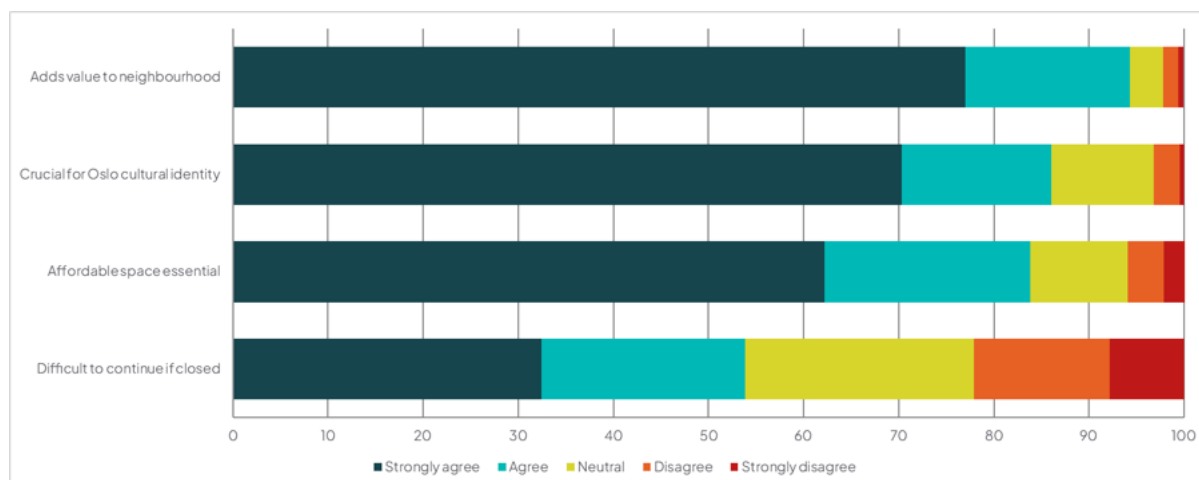
These individual accounts are echoed at scale in the survey conducted among Øveriet's broader user base. A total of 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that spaces like Øveriet are crucial for sustaining Oslo's cultural identity, and 83.8% agreed that affordable, centrally located rehearsal space is essential for remaining active as a musician, while 94.3% recognised its contribution to the neighbourhood and local area.

"Øveriet is much more than just a rehearsal space; it is the very heartbeat of Music-Oslo."

— Survey respondent

More frequent users show significantly higher endorsement of the view that affordable, centrally located rehearsal space is essential for remaining active as a musician and that spaces like Øveriet are crucial for sustaining Oslo's cultural identity, with the strongest scores among those visiting two to three times a week and four or more times a week. This suggests that deeper engagement with the space sharpens users' awareness of its broader cultural and civic function.

Figure 4: Users' perceptions on Øveriet's ecosystem value



The scarcity users would face if the space were to close is not merely logistical, it is cultural. Data from Broadcast, a Norwegian concert platform, recorded almost 10,000 concerts in Oslo in 2024 alone.⁵⁸ The figure speaks to the vitality of the city's live music scene, but also to a striking imbalance: a city with nearly 10,000 concerts a year and only a handful of dedicated professional rehearsal spaces to prepare them. Survey respondents were unambiguous about what Øveriet means in this context: as one put it, **"Oslo would not be the same without it."**

"If Øveriet disappeared there would be significantly fewer concerts on Oslo's rock stages. It would tear apart the music community and scatter a load of bands to the outskirts of the city."

— Survey respondent

⁵⁸Broadcast, Oslo Frokost 2025, byLarm presentation, 2025, accessed August 17, 2026
<https://app.slidebean.com/sbp/0f1ce8c363/Oslo-Frokost-2025-byLarm-presentation-2025#12>

5.2 Health and Wellbeing

A rehearsal at Øveriet⁵⁹



Active engagement in music and the arts contributes to improved mental health outcomes, reduced stress, and enhanced quality of life across different population groups. Critically, these benefits extend beyond clinical settings and professional contexts to encompass every day and amateur musical practice.⁶⁰

The benefits of musical practice are not reducible to the act of playing alone, but emerge from the combination of creative engagement, social interaction, and access to a stable, conducive environment in which music can be made regularly and sustainably.⁶¹ The evidence from this study's three interviews illustrates this dynamic, revealing how the physical environment, operational features, and social atmosphere of Øveriet together constitute a significant resource for the mental health and life satisfaction of users across very different profiles of engagement.

⁵⁹ Øveriet

⁶⁰ Fancourt, D & Finn, S. (2019). What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe

⁶¹ Sheppard, A. & Broughton, M. (2020). Promoting wellbeing and health through active participation in music and dance: a systematic review. International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being, 15.

A rehearsal by Blå måne at Øveriet⁶²



Routine, Proximity and the Physical Environment

The most direct articulation of Øveriet's contribution to wellbeing came from Tor-Arne Berg, who described the space in unambiguous terms: **"it's critical. I think it's crucial for me. If someone took this room away from me, they would take away a crucial part of my life. My life would be completely different and I would miss it immensely."** For Tor-Arne, a part-time musician with a demanding day job, the value of the space and the ritual it enables are inseparable. Every Wednesday, he and his bandmates meet at a nearby pizza restaurant before rehearsal, a fixed weekly structure that, as he put it, serves "busy men with a lot of responsibility" as a genuine refuge: **"I think we're quite privileged to have a whole afternoon and night every week where we just go into this other space."** The combination of social time and musical practice functions here as a compound wellbeing resource, addressing both the need for meaningful social connection and the need for creative expression within a single, reliable routine.

The geographic proximity of the space to Tor-Arne's home and workplace is itself a wellbeing factor, enabling forms of musical engagement that would otherwise be impossible. He described taking singing lessons on his way to work: **"it takes me 15 to 20 minutes to get there and I can rehearse for half an hour, 45 minutes and then get to work. This wouldn't be possible otherwise."** These spontaneous engagements with

⁶² Øveriet

the space, made possible by its central location and drop-in availability, extend the wellbeing benefits of musical practice into everyday life in a way that a distant or more rigidly scheduled facility could not. Tor-Arne also noted the importance of the physical environment specifically: he contrasted Øveriet's ventilation favourably with other rehearsal spaces where "you cannot breathe after an hour, if you have six grown men in a small room for three hours, it's important the fans are working." The quality of the physical environment directly shapes the comfort, health and sustainability of the musical experience.

Stability, Sustainability and Stress Reduction

For Susanna Wallumrød, the wellbeing dimension of Øveriet is framed primarily through the lens of stress and career sustainability. The life of an independent artist, she explained, is inherently precarious: "you never know how much money you're going to make that year, that month, that semester. It is a stressful way of living." In this context, having a dedicated space that she can rely on unconditionally provides a form of psychological stability that offsets, at least in part, the chronic uncertainty of independent artistic work. **"To have that place where I can do whatever I need to do, that for sure reduces stress and worries."** The space functions here as a structural counterbalance to the instability built into the economics of professional music-making.

Susanna's account also highlights the practical dimension of well-being: the ability to leave instruments and equipment set up between sessions, rather than constantly packing and unpacking, reduces the cognitive and physical friction of daily creative work. This has a cumulative effect on how sustainable and enjoyable the work feels over time. Conversely, the prospect of losing the space is experienced not as an inconvenience but as a threat to her capacity to continue: **"I can't really picture myself continuing to do this without staying at Øveriet, because I have so many instruments and so much gear from different projects. I don't know where I would have to move, maybe somewhere out in the countryside."** The space is, in this sense, structural to her wellbeing as a professional.

Carsten Omholt, the youngest of the three interviewees and the most recently established in his professional career, offered the most granular account of how the physical environment of Øveriet specifically shapes his psychological state and his capacity to work. **"This place really reduces my stress levels and feels more like an office,"** he said. **"The professional surroundings make it much easier to take everything seriously and focus on the creative process and not the logistics."** For Carsten, the space functions as an external structure that supports internal discipline: by creating an environment that signals seriousness and professional purpose, it helps him approach his work with the focus and commitment that a freelance career, without the external structures of employment, otherwise makes difficult to sustain.

Carsten Omholt rehearsing at Øveriet⁶³



Several specific features of the physical environment were identified as contributing to this effect. Soundproofing addresses an anxiety that is specific to the urban context: **"in Oslo very few people have big houses. You can't buy a big house and soundproof it, that's too expensive. So now I don't have to worry about neighbours, noise complaints, or practical limitations."** The elimination of this ambient worry has a direct impact on the quality of attention and creative freedom he brings to his work. Ventilation, similarly, is not merely a comfort issue: "I don't get tired here," Carsten noted, pointing to its direct effect on the quality and duration of productive work. The aesthetic qualities of the space, the neutral colours of the walls and the upkeep of the cafeteria, were also described as having a subtle but real effect on mood and motivation: **"the color on the walls, it's important that it's not red or yellow. If the cafeteria was messy and had ugly walls and nobody made an effort for it to be nice, I think people would go elsewhere."**

Perhaps most significantly, Carsten framed access to Øveriet as a factor in the long-term sustainability of his career, and through that, in his sense of wellbeing as a professional: **"many musicians leave (Oslo) because of poor working conditions and they don't feel like their time is valued or that their work is not important enough."**

⁶³ Øveriet

Having Øveriet makes it feel sustainable, it reduces daily friction and makes me see a future in the music industry."

A Refuge, Confirmed at Scale

Access to Øveriet should be available on prescription."

— Survey respondent

These experiences are not unique to the three interviewees. Survey respondents described their relationship to the space in strikingly similar terms. **"Regularly going to Øveriet has been an important process for me in terms of mental health and general quality of life. There is nothing else in the world that gets me more focused"**, wrote one respondent. Another captured the cumulative, restorative quality of the weekly routine: **"Having a dedicated rehearsal space and time slot fosters a sense of belonging and wellbeing that is important in a stressful and hectic everyday life. I look forward to rehearsing there and feel a deep sense of calm in body and soul afterwards."**

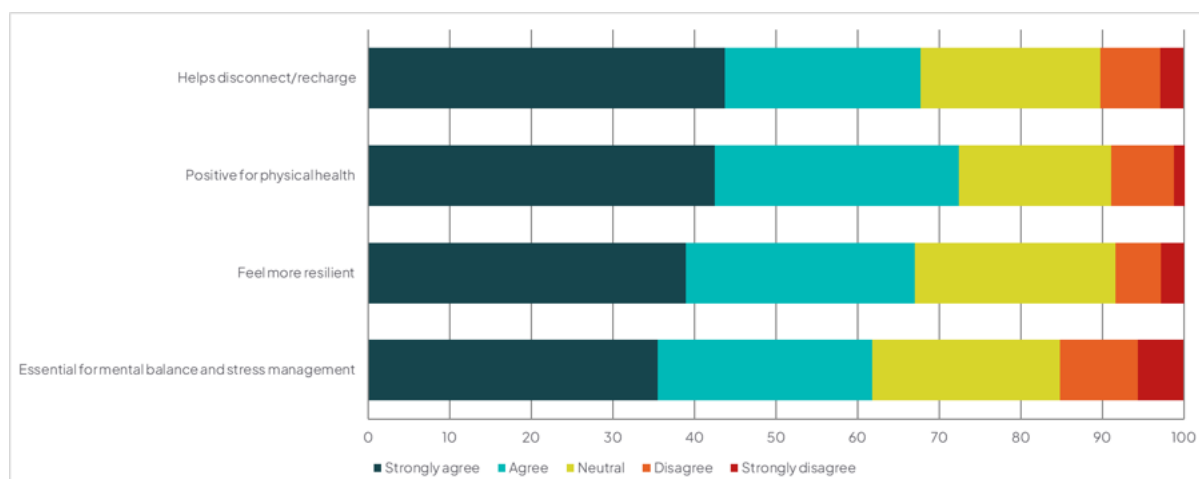
"Music and creativity in general is among the best things we can do for our mental health; having the space and support to cultivate this has been absolutely vital to our wellbeing, both as musicians and as people."

— Survey respondent

Among Øveriet's users, a total of 72% agreed or strongly agreed that the physical quality of the space has a positive impact on their health, and more than two thirds (67.7%) reported using their time at Øveriet to disconnect and recharge from daily pressures, echoing Tor-Arne's description of the space as an "other space" apart from work and Carsten's account of reduced stress. In turn, 62% agreed that rehearsing plays a role in their mental balance and stress management, and 67% said that having a stable, safe place to rehearse makes them feel more emotionally resilient, resonating with Susanna's account of psychological stability amid the precarity of independent artistic work. Overall, 85% of users attribute meaningful wellbeing value to their time at Øveriet: 54.2% of respondents described their time there as essential or very important

to their overall wellbeing and quality of life and a further 30.8% considered it somewhat important.

Figure 5: Users' perceptions on Øveriet's health and wellbeing impact



5.3 Interpersonal Relationships and Community

The value of Øveriet extends well beyond what happens inside individual rehearsal rooms. Across all three interviews, a consistent picture emerges of the space as a site of community life: a place where musicians meet, exchange knowledge, build professional relationships, support one another, and develop a sense of shared belonging that would be difficult to replicate in more isolated or dispersed settings. This community dimension operates on several levels simultaneously, from the spontaneous and informal to the deliberate and career-defining, and it manifests differently depending on the profile and career stage of the user.

A Gravity Point for Musicians

For Tor-Arne Berg, the space functions as what he called a "gravity point": **"to have this kind of gravity point where we can just fall into and be creative and have fun, explore and create not only music but good times."** The community that Tor-Arne describes is not built on formal collaboration alone but on the accumulation of small acts of mutual recognition and support. He describes attending other bands' concerts, advertising each other's shows, and the gradual process of getting to know neighbours through proximity and shared spaces. Even where formal musical collaboration has not yet materialised, the social infrastructure for it is being built. A particularly telling example is the neighbourly exchange that arose during a late-night recording session: a band in the adjacent room was playing at full volume while Tor-Arne's group was recording vocals.

He asked them to wait; they agreed, and afterward received a case of beer in thanks. "Now we are the best of friends," he said. **"We take care of each other."**

Tor-Arne also observes that the community at Øveriet is unusually diverse in its composition. During daytime hours he encounters professional musicians working on arrangements and scores, "people you don't see late at night," a reminder that the space brings together users across genres, career stages and levels of professionalism that would rarely mix in more segregated settings. Øveriet also hosts community programming that deepens the social interactions: regular waffle events, seminars on intellectual property rights, talks by industry organisations. Tor-Arne acknowledges that as a part-time musician he does not fully capitalise on these opportunities but recognises their value for those at a different career stage: **"if this was my day job I would capitalise more on the common facilities."** The community is there, active and available; the degree to which any individual draws on it depends on where they are in their musical life.

Professional Networks and Creative Exchange

For Susanna, the community dimension of Øveriet is experienced primarily through the lens of professional life and creative collaboration. She describes the space as facilitating a kind of ongoing social contact that complements and deepens the networking that happens at concerts or industry events.

"if you meet people at a concert, or you see someone play, and then you meet them at Øveriet, it facilitates the possibility to say hello and grab a coffee or just start a conversation. It has been a way to both get new contacts but also stay in contact with people on a more regular basis."

— Susanna Wallumrød

Susanna notes that much of her collaborative output has involved people who also rent rooms at Øveriet, and that even where the space was not the original reason for a collaboration, it made the logistics of working together significantly easier: **"it has certainly made it much easier to just switch from room to room, move gear, because you are there on a regular basis."** She also describes a culture of informal peer listening that has developed naturally from the density of musicians working in close proximity: she has been invited into other people's rooms to hear works in progress, and describes the broader atmosphere as **"a dynamic exchange of knowledge and techniques and**

how to do things," adding that "we are very dependent on that type of working, that we do things together."

A Meeting Point Across Traditions

For Carsten Omholt, the community function of Øveriet is understood as a continuation of, and in some ways a replacement for, what university provides. "At university you get a degree in performance but you can't get any job out of a performance degree," he observed. "The most important thing from university is all the contacts you get. And in Norway we don't do auditions for bands: if I'm going to set up a band, I pick those I know and those I know are good." In this professional context, where personal relationships are the primary currency of career development, a space that facilitates the formation and maintenance of those relationships has direct and considerable professional value.

Common room at Øveriet⁶⁴



Carsten provided a concrete example: the previous Saturday he had played a gig substituting for a drummer who rents a room upstairs at Øveriet. "That would never have happened if I wasn't here," he said.

⁶⁴ Øveriet

The professional value of co-location is also felt in the immediacy of peer support. Carsten describes being able to call on a fellow drummer for advice during a recording session and have him physically present within a minute: "instead of waiting hours for support." This kind of frictionless access to expertise is only possible because the people with that expertise are in the same building, and it has a direct impact on the quality and efficiency of his work.

Beyond individual interactions, Carsten identifies a structural dimension to the community Øveriet creates that has implications for Oslo's musical culture as a whole. Norway's music conservatories, located in Trondheim, Kristiansand and Oslo, each have distinct musical cultures and genre focuses. When graduates converge on Oslo after their studies, they bring those different traditions with them, and Øveriet provides one of the few spaces where those traditions actually meet.

"Someone is studying in Trondheim, someone in Oslo, someone in Kristiansand, and all those universities are really different. When we finally meet after everyone has been educated, a lot of different genres will connect and start to collaborate and make music together. I don't think that would have happened if places like Øveriet weren't here."

— Carsten Omholt

Carsten also describes the learning that takes place through everyday interactions at the building as continuous and cumulative: **"I'm learning all the time through all the interactions I do here and all the conversations in the cafeteria. It could be everything from recording technique or drumming technique to how we think about music and which choices we would make in a certain situation."** The impact of this, he suggests, extends outward into the music itself: **"the impact may be indirect but it influences recordings, concepts, concerts and projects and careers over time. A meeting point like this affects how the music will sound in the end."**

Community Runs Deep

Survey respondents echoed this sense of Øveriet as a space where relationships are both formed and sustained. **"There is great value in being in a place where other musicians are. You get to know people you might not otherwise have got to know. And running into people here and there also helps generate work"**, noted one respondent.

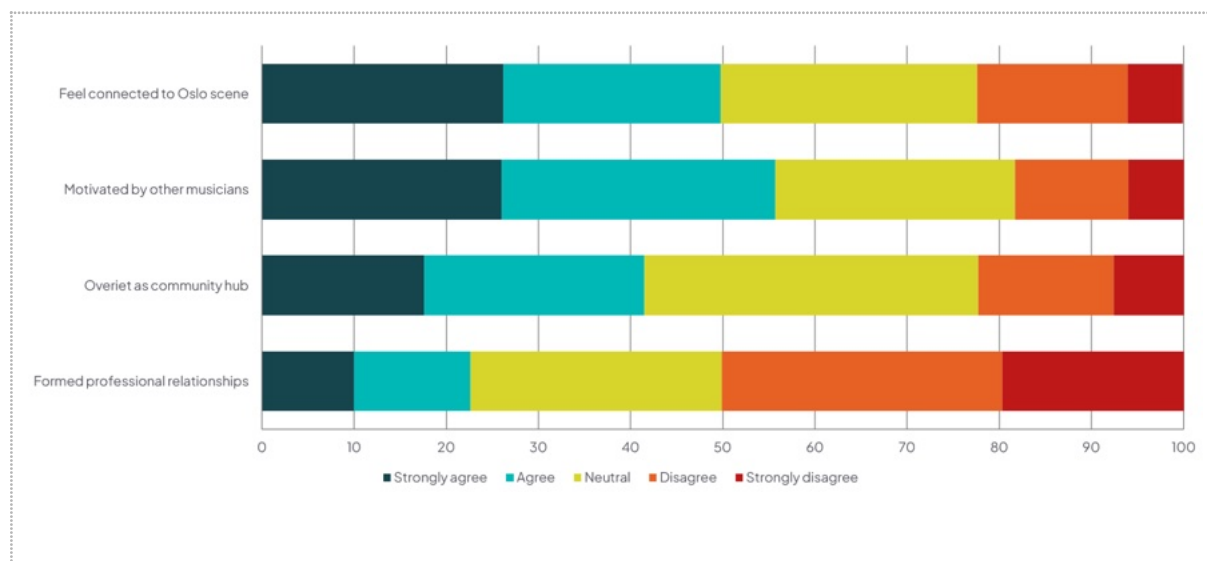
"Being part of an active environment makes you more visible as a musician and leads to new playing jobs and collaborations."

— Survey respondent

For others, the value lies less in new connections than in the steady maintenance of existing ones: **"connections are kept alive with a hello in the corridor or at Waffle Wednesday, which I think is very important for further relations and collaboration"**.

The survey data situates these individual accounts of community within a broader pattern across Øveriet's user base. More than half of respondents (55.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that the presence of other musicians in the building motivates them and strengthens their sense of belonging, and around half of them (49.8%) said that being part of Øveriet makes them feel connected to Oslo's broader music scene. In turn, 42% confirmed Øveriet's identity as a genuine community hub. Notably, the formation of meaningful professional relationships or collaborations scored lower, at 22.6%, suggesting that while a shared sense of community atmosphere is broadly felt, as described by Tor-Arne's "gravity point" and Susanna's everyday professional contact, deeper collaborative partnerships of the kind Carsten describes develop more selectively and over time. This is consistent with survey findings on musical encounter: close to half of respondents (48.9%) met at least one new musical collaborator at Øveriet in the past 12 months, 20.3% have already collaborated creatively with someone they met there, and a further 30.5% expect this to happen in the future, pointing to Øveriet's growing role as a site of creative exchange.

Figure 6: Users' perceptions on relationships and community cohesion outcomes



These findings point to a concrete opportunity for Øveriet to build on the community infrastructure it already provides. While informal contact and a shared sense of belonging are clearly established, deeper professional exchange does not yet emerge organically for the majority of users. Two targeted initiatives could help bridge this gap: a regular open-session format such as a monthly cross-genre jam or co-writing evening to create structured occasions for users who currently only interact in passing, and a simple peer directory where tenants can advertise their skills, availability and projects. Both build directly on what already makes Øveriet valuable: the density and diversity of musicians sharing the same space.

5.4 Individual Development and Identity

The interviews reveal different relationships between music, identity and professional development, reflecting the two distinct user profiles this study set out to examine: those for whom music is a vocation and livelihood, and those for whom it is a deeply meaningful but non-professional pursuit.

Music as Identity

For Tor-Arne Berg, a lifelong musician who has never pursued music professionally but for whom it has always been a natural and central part of his identity, what Øveriet makes possible is the sustained, social and creative expression of that identity in a form that grows rather than stagnates. Since finding Øveriet, he has released four albums, plays regularly with multiple bands, and has built a multigenerational musical life that includes his three children. The space has also enabled him to contribute to the development of the next generation in concrete ways, recording and producing singles for his children's bands at no cost: **"they can't afford to go to a studio, so we also used our rehearsing room as a studio for the other bands."** His daughter, now studying music professionally, uses the space almost daily.

"There's a lot of impact this little room has: three bands, all the kids, their bands, I get to rehearse there with my kids, with my family. My daughter can just drop in to and from school."

— Tor-Arne Berg

A Decisive Turning Point

Susanna Wallumrød's account of individual development and identity is rooted in a professional trajectory of more than two decades, and the story she tells about Øveriet

is one of a specific and decisive turning point. Moving into the space in 2014, after years of working from shared and improvised facilities in old buildings without adequate infrastructure, she describes the experience as a qualitative shift in what was possible for her as an artist: **"that was a big leap for me, to move in there and for the first time in my professional work life have a place of my own. The flexibility and the freedom that it gives for the work has been just essential."**

An event at Øveriet⁶⁵



The most concrete expression of this development is the album *Triangle*, released in 2016 and identified by Susanna as the most important milestone of her career. "That was part of that big leap," she said. **"I got my own room and it was also the first album I produced myself. I did a lot of recordings for it there. I also had some co-producers on some of the tracks and they had a room there too, so it made it very easy to collaborate. That was a very important album for me, a very important writing and recording process. I learned a lot through that process. And that wouldn't have been possible if I hadn't had that space."** The album thus stands not only as a creative milestone but as evidence of what becomes possible when a professional musician has access to a stable, dedicated, and fully available workspace.

⁶⁵ Øveriet

Building a Career from the Ground Up

Carsten Omholt's account of individual development and identity is the most forward-looking of the three, shaped by the fact that he is at the beginning of a professional career. In this sense, he sees Øveriet as the professional step and the environment in which the contacts, skills and opportunities that a degree alone cannot provide will be developed. Importantly, Carsten mentions that the learning that takes place at Øveriet is continuous and cumulative: **"the knowledge everybody has, which comes to this meeting point, makes me accelerate my learning a lot more than it would if I was at another place."**

The question of professional identity and how it is communicated to the world was particularly relevant in Carsten's testimony. He described using his rehearsal room to produce Instagram videos showcasing his drumming and noted that the professional aesthetics of the space make the content look credible: **"when people look at my Instagram page, they feel like I'm doing this seriously and not just in a garage at my parents' house."** Øveriet therefore contributes to professional identity not only through what it enables internally but through what it signals externally.

A concert at Øveriet⁶⁶



⁶⁶ Øveriet

Carsten also described Øveriet as having shaped his sense of himself as a musician in ways that go beyond specific skills or opportunities: **"my identity has also been shaped from the place and the people who rent the place, because of the professionalism that is here. I think I'm just more secure in my field of work because of Øveriet."**

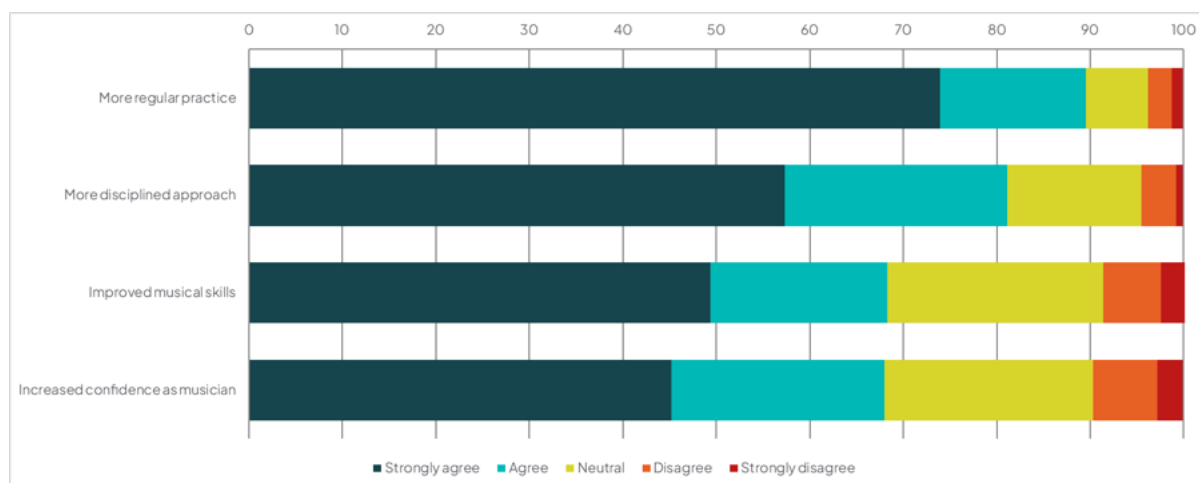
The transformative potential of the space is not limited to those at the beginning of a professional career. Survey respondents at different stages of musical engagement described comparable turning points. **"Øveriet has been a large and important part of the transition from making music for myself to playing live and recording music professionally. Eternally grateful for what Øveriet offers,"** wrote one respondent.

"Having access to a place like Øveriet strengthens my love of music and gives me the opportunity to work on and develop my art form. I would never have had the growth as a musician that I have had without Øveriet."

— Survey respondent

These individual trajectories of development are mirrored in the survey results, which point to a clear and measurable effect of access to Øveriet on musicians' practice habits and professional discipline. Almost 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that access to Øveriet allows them to practise more regularly and consistently, and 81.1% reported that the quality of the facilities helps them approach their work in a more structured and disciplined way, consistent with Carsten's description of the space helping him "take everything seriously." The impact on artistic growth is similarly strong: around two-thirds of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had noticed a direct improvement in their musical skills (68.2%) and that access to a professional rehearsal space had strengthened their confidence as a musician (68.0%). This translates into concrete professional output: over half of respondents (58.2%) prepared between one and nine public performances at Øveriet in the past 12 months, and a further 23.2% prepared ten or more, meaning that more than four in five active users (81.4%) used Øveriet to prepare for professional or public-facing work, a pattern that echoes Susanna's account of the album *Triangle* and Tor-Arne's ongoing output of albums and recordings with his bands.

Figure 7: Users' perceptions on Øveriet's impact on individual and professional development



What Would Be Lost

The depth of this individual investment in the space is reflected in what users say they would stand to lose if it were to close. At the individual level, 53.8% said they would find it very difficult to continue their musical activities: 19.8% would fall back on home or informal spaces, 7.9% would significantly reduce or stop making music altogether, and 7.2% would move their rehearsals outside Oslo entirely. Even among the 46.5% who said they would look for another rehearsal space in the city, closure would impose real costs in time, effort and uncertainty, given how scarce comparable spaces are. These figures reflect, at a population level, the kind of personal and professional embeddedness that Susanna, Tor-Arne and Carsten each described in their own terms and they sit alongside the high overall satisfaction reported by users: 80.9% describe themselves as satisfied or very satisfied with Øveriet as a rehearsal space.

"It is places like this that make a diverse and broad cultural life possible."

— Survey respondent

6. Norway's Music Creation Spaces Landscape

This section showcases other comparable rehearsal and artist workspace models across Norway, demonstrates the significant infrastructure that exists and, should they not exist anymore, would seriously impact the landscape of the country. The spaces analysed include:

- TOU Lyd, Stavanger
- Musikkbyen Trondheim
- Bergen Kjøtt
- Rotvoll kunstnerkollektiv, Trondheim
- Tanken, Bærum
- Oslo Lydproduksjon (OLYP)

While their specific operational focuses and locations vary, all serve as vital hubs for artistic production across Norway. Much like Øveriet, Bergen Kjøtt and OLYP function as a large production and recording hub that stands as a model for long-term cultural investment (though Bergen Kjøtt owns its building). TOU Lyd in Stavanger and Rotvoll kunstnerkollektiv (RKK) in Trondheim differentiate themselves by fostering highly interdisciplinary environments, integrating music with visual arts, dance, and film. Musikkbyen Trondheim and Tanken in Bærum act primarily as industry co-location projects and incubators, intentionally bridging the gap between musicians and commercial creative businesses. The following table summarises the information for each space.

6.1 TOU Lyd

TOU Lyd is part of the larger TOU cultural complex in Stavanger and functions as a professional environment for music production, rehearsal, and artistic collaboration.⁶⁷ The complex is the product of Urban Sjøfront, an urban redevelopment project that transformed the Tou Bryggerier premise, an obsolete brewery, into a facility for artistic activities and events.

⁶⁷ TOU, "Rent", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.touofficial.com/leie-tou/>

TOU Lyd rehearsal space⁶⁸



6.1.1 Facilities

TOU Lyd offers premises of over 14,500 square meters including 18 newly built rehearsal rooms and 4 studios connected to a large live room, workspaces and production rooms for visual artists, musicians, filmmakers and organisations.⁶⁹ TOU also offers rent opportunities for conferences and private events.⁷⁰ All studios are soundproofed, with extra ceiling height, muted ventilation, sloping walls, internet, and a sound system. Tenants must provide additional furnishing.⁷¹

6.1.2 Rent/Membership

At the complex, 220 tenants work in TOU spaces across 7 artistic disciplines.⁷² For Tou Lyd's rehearsal and studio space, allocation of space is made by a separate committee based on the applicants' professionalism, artistic activity and motivation.⁷³ Student discounts are offered for most events when a student ID is provided.⁷⁴

The standard rental period for studios is 5 years, with the option of a 5-year extension upon documentation of artistic activity. Shorter leases can be arranged between artists

⁶⁸ TOU, "Tou Lyd", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.touofficial.com/tou-lyd/>

⁶⁹ TOU, "About TOU", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.touofficial.com/om-tou/>

⁷⁰ TOU, "Rent", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.touofficial.com/leie-tou/>

⁷¹ TOU, "Two vacant practice rooms at Tou", accessed June 24, <https://www.touofficial.com/ledge-ovingslokaler-pa-tou-2/>

⁷² TOU, "About TOU", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.touofficial.com/om-tou/>

⁷³ Information provided by Kulturrom.

⁷⁴ TOU, "Practical Information", accessed June 23, <https://www.touofficial.com/praktisk-info/>

and the landlord. In 2025, rent for studio and rehearsal space was NOK 2,500 per square meter net per year and is subject to annual index adjustments. This price includes all shared facilities and utility costs. Storage space is available for an additional price.⁷⁵

6.1.3 Governance

The building is owned by the Stavanger municipality but operated by TOU as a nonprofit limited liability company. Profits go straight back into providing more and better cultural experiences for the residents.⁷⁶

6.1.4 Community Impact

By combining production facilities with a broader interdisciplinary arts environment, TOU Lyd contributes to collaboration across artistic fields and strengthens Stavanger's position as a cultural city. The initiative is built around the idea that long-term access to affordable and professionally equipped spaces is essential for sustaining a vibrant local music scene.⁷⁷ TOU also presents a self-curated programme within a variety of art forms. With 400 annual activities and events, TOU's programme is broad-ranging and has put the space on the map as one of Norway's most forward-looking cultural arenas. TOU collaborates with regional, national and international partners to host events.⁷⁸

6.2 Musikkbyen Trondheim

Musikkbyen Trondheim is a co-location project for the music industry in Trondheim, established by Musikkontoret Tempo, Trondheim Calling, and Polar Artist. The facility functions as a collaborative business cluster, supporting the growth and development of start-up and established music companies.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ TOU "Available practice rooms at Tou", accessed June 24, <https://www.touofficial.com/ledige-ovingslokaler-pa-tou/>

⁷⁶ TOU, "Rent", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.touofficial.com/leie-tou/>

⁷⁷ Information provided by Kulturrom.

⁷⁸ TOU, "About TOU", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.touofficial.com/om-tou/>

⁷⁹ Information provided by Kulturrom.

Musikkbyen Trondheim studio⁸⁰



6.2.1 Facilities

The office wing consists of 12 offices, a co-working space with 8 workstations, conference rooms, and meeting rooms for music industry businesses. The studio wing includes 12 soundproof studios ranging from 9 to 26 square meters for songwriters, producers, and musicians. The studios have associated large common areas. Together, the two organisations comprise 1,000 square meters. Tenants are responsible for furnishing and bringing their own technical equipment.⁸¹

6.2.2 Rent/Membership

Tenants invest in premises they do not own, and the low price per square meter is what makes this sustainable over time. Most tenants do not operate VAT-liable businesses. Musikkbyen is a voluntarily VAT-registered business, allowing it to deduct input VAT on investments in the premises. This deduction ratio depends on how many of the tenants operate VAT-liable businesses. The composition of tenants can therefore have direct

⁸⁰ Musikkbyen Trondheim, "Become a part of the Music City of Trondheim", accessed June 23, <https://www.musikkbyentrondheim.no/>

⁸¹ Ibid.

consequences for which VAT deductions are available, something that is worth investigating early in the planning of a co-location project.⁸²

6.2.3 Governance

Musikkbyen is located on the fifth floor of Havnelager B at Pir 2 in Trondheim, a combined warehouse and office building from 1957 owned by Trondheim Havn IKS, a company jointly owned by 14 municipalities in the Trøndelag region that manages port areas on behalf of the municipalities. Musikkbyen is organised as two separate non-profit associations operated by Tempo: Musikkbyen Trondheim Samlokalisering and Musikkbyen Trondheim Studioby. Musikkbyen Trondheim Samlokalisering was established in 2018 and rents out the office wing. Musikkbyen Trondheim Studioby was established in 2020 and rents out the studio wing. The studios were built using a room-within-a-room construction method by Musikkbyen Trondheim Studioby itself, with support from Trondheim Municipality, the Norwegian Arts Council, and Kulturrør. Trondheim Havn leases the premises to Musikkbyen on favourable terms. The studio wing is rented for NOK 473,519 per year excluding VAT for 487 square meters. Strong communication with the landlord, combined with active collaboration with municipal cultural politicians and officials, has been key to securing the project's long-term continuity.

Musikkbyen⁸³



⁸² Information provided by Kulturrør.

⁸³ Kulturrør, "Musikkbyen Trondheim", accessed August 18, 2026, <https://kulturror.no/2026/06/10/musikkbyen-trondheim/>

6.2.4 Community Impact

The project brings together songwriters, producers, and musicians in the same building as music industry businesses such as publishers, booking agencies, and event organisers. This proximity creates collaboration and new opportunities across both creative and administrative functions in the industry. The Trondheim Song: Expo programme is one of the world's largest songwriting camps and is held annually on site, fostering collaboration, sharing networks, and the export of talent worldwide.⁸⁴

6.3 Bergen Kjøtt

Located at a former factory, Bergen Kjøtt is one of Norway's leading production and recording hubs for music, art and music for film, TV and radio, standing as a model for how to invest in culture. The facility is the only cultural centre serving the Skuteviken and Sandviken neighbourhoods in Bergen.⁸⁵

Bergen Kjøtt recording and mixing studio⁸⁶



6.3.1 Facilities

The 2,000 square meter building offers 28 sound and art studios for around 110 resident musicians and artists.⁸⁷ Two venues are available for rent. The 250 m² stage

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Information provided by Kulturrom and Bergen Kjøtt, "Rent", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.bergenkjott.org/leie>

⁸⁶ Bergen Kjøtt, "Studios", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.bergenkjott.org/studioer>

⁸⁷ Information provided by Kulturrom and Bergen Kjøtt, "Studios", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.bergenkjott.org/studioer>

“Fabrikkhallen” located on the second floor can be rented for music and/or audiovisual events and performances.⁸⁸ It has a capacity of 130 seated to 230 people standing. The first floor contains the Bergen Kjøtt Bar, a multipurpose room which can be rented for workshops, exhibitions and meetings.⁸⁹

6.3.2 Rent/Membership

Bergen Kjøtt aims to offer safe, secure, affordable and accessible working conditions for its studio tenants, partners and users, including studios, rehearsal spaces, workshops and project areas. The foundation has ensured predictable rental prices and long-term contracts, allowing tenants to know they can remain for as long as they need. This stability encourages tenants to invest in their studios and helps foster the next generation of superstar artists. Maintenance has been integrated into the core operation of the building, with investments totaling NOK 17 million, doubling the activity in the building. It houses 110 artists, producers, filmmakers, and other cultural practitioners. Most of the studios are occupied by permanent long-term tenants working in music production, composition, songwriting, recording, and DJing.⁹⁰

6.3.3 Governance

Bergen Kjøtt is owned and operated by the Bergen Kjøtt Foundation. The Bergen Kjøtt Foundation is a nonprofit foundation that works to make Bergen Kjøtt an accessible hub in Bergen. It supports an experimental, diverse and inclusive cultural environment – both on stage and behind the scenes.⁹¹

The former factory building, dating from 1903, was established as a music production centre in 2010 by Bergen Contemporary Art Project. In 2019, the Bergen city government intervened to prevent the building from being sold for office or hotel development by establishing a non-profit foundation to own and operate it. As a result, the building was saved from being sold or demolished. The municipality contributed NOK 9 million in capital and the foundation borrowed NOK 21 million to purchase the building at a total value of NOK 23.5 million. By owning the building itself, the Foundation is shielded from market-rate rents and can keep prices low for tenants over time.⁹²

In three years, the building’s value increased by NOK 8.5 million, approximately equal to the municipality’s original investment. When the Foundation took over the building in 2019, annual interest expenses on the loan were NOK 800,000. As market interest rates rose, this cost increased to NOK 1.6 million by 2024, placing greater pressure on the

⁸⁸ Bergen Kjøtt, “About”, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.bergenkjott.org/omoss>

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Information provided by Kulturrom and Bergen Kjøtt, “Studios”, accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.bergenkjott.org/studioer>

⁹¹ Information provided by Kulturrom

⁹² Information provided by Kulturrom

foundation's finances. However, the foundation has since negotiated a new loan deal, securing better terms.⁹³

6.3.4 Community Impact

Through the operation of studios, public events (club events, concerts, conferences, exhibitions, workshops) and collaborations, Bergen Kjøtt supports artists, musicians, cultural workers and organisations at different stages in their careers and practices to develop and experience a wide range of cultural activities.⁹⁴ Bergen Kjøtt has offered additional training programmes such as GRIP, a course on sound engineering and DJ courses. GRIP is a targeted programme that aims to increase the proportion of female, non-binary and transgender sound engineers in Norway.⁹⁵

Bergen Kjøtt also demonstrates how an old building can be transformed into a vibrant cultural centre. The project is about maintaining and building a sustainable society, environment, and cultural ecosystem. It demonstrates that investing in historic cultural buildings is socioeconomically profitable in the long term, provided that maintenance is understood as a value-adding part of operations.⁹⁶

6.4 Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, Trondheim

Situated in Rotvoll, Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv (RKK) serves as an interdisciplinary working community for professional artists in Trondheim, with a focus on visual arts, music and performing arts. Previously used as a psychiatric hospital, Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv is located just outside the centre of Trondheim, boasting natural surroundings, including green forests and views of the nearby fjord, offering an inspiring setting for artists.⁹⁷

⁹³ Information provided by Kulturrom

⁹⁴ Bergen Kjøtt, "Homepage", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.bergenkjott.org/>

⁹⁵ Bergen Kjøtt, "Training", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.bergenkjott.org/opplaering>

⁹⁶ Information provided by Kulturrom.

⁹⁷ Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, "About", accessed June 8, 2026, <http://rotvollkunst.no/>

Performance space at Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv⁹⁸



6.4.1 Facilities

44 studios are available, used daily by around 80 artists across music, performing arts, dance, visual arts, and literature. The premises contains both project rooms and common areas that are available to all artists in the house. Facilities include:⁹⁹

- 2 soundproof ensemble rooms with professional equipment. One equipped with an acoustic piano, the other with a complete backline for bands, as well as a small PA.
- Media lab with equipment for photo, video, scanning and audio editing.
- Chapel room with piano for performances, workshops, social gatherings, rehearsals and concerts.
- Gallery/project space for exhibitions, installations or workshops.
- Visual shared workshop of 38 m², equipped with a printing press.
- A 132 m² room is available for rent for rehearsals, events, meetings or as an exhibition space for performing arts. This room can be rented by both resident and external artists, upon prior reservation and for a rental fee.

⁹⁸ The Music Office, "How does a cooperative work?", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.musikkontoret.no/artikler/hvordan-virker-et-samvirke>

⁹⁹ Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, "Premises", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://rotvollkunst.no/lokaler>

6.4.2 Rent/Membership

All tenants hold individual contracts directly with AHA Eiendom, but are required to be members of RKK SA in order to rent space. This structure was chosen because it would have represented too great a financial risk for the cooperative itself to lease the entire building complex as a single entity. The cooperative therefore functions as the organisational hub connecting the artists, without bearing the full rental risk alone.¹⁰⁰

RKK operates a waiting list, contacting the top of the list when a studio space becomes vacant.¹⁰¹ Exclusive of VAT, studios of about 10–32m² rent ranges from NOK 2,900 to NOK 5,500 per month. The one studio, about 40 m², rents for NOK 7,500 per month. The rent includes free access to the shared spaces and joint utilities prices.¹⁰²

6.4.3 Governance

The premises are rented by AHA Eiendom AS, and the joint workshop is organised as a cooperative with a general manager and board.¹⁰³ The purpose of the cooperative is to operate and develop a shared workplace for professional artists, with emphasis on supporting the commercial activities of its member businesses.¹⁰⁴

6.4.4 Community Impact

RKK has its own dissemination programme, with the festival Kunstfest Rotvoll, the exhibition series Rotvoll Kunstscene and the sound art series This Sonic Planet.¹⁰⁵ The Kunstfest Rotvoll summer festival offers unique art and music experiences curated by RKK's resident artists and guest artists.¹⁰⁶ During Sonic Planet, an experimental art series, RKK sound artists presented distinct public events focused on nature and sustainability.¹⁰⁷

Additionally, the Rotvoll Residency, in collaboration with Lademoen Kunstnerverksteder (LKV), hosts one artist or artist group from LKV for one month. The artist will have access to a studio and all shared facilities at RKK, engaging in interdisciplinary approaches to art and fostering collaboration.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁰ Information provided by Kulturrom

¹⁰¹ Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, "FAQ", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://rotvollkunst.no/fag>

¹⁰² Ibid

¹⁰³ Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, "About", accessed June 8, 2026, <http://rotvollkunst.no/>

¹⁰⁴ Information provided by Kulturrom.

¹⁰⁵ Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, "About", accessed June 8, 2026, <http://rotvollkunst.no/>

¹⁰⁶ Kunstfest, "About", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://rotvollkunst.no/kunstfest>

¹⁰⁷ This Sonic Plant, "This Sonic Planet", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://rotvollkunst.no/this-sonic-planet>

¹⁰⁸ Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv, "Residency", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://rotvollkunst.no/residency-1>

6.5 Tanken

As one of Bærum Kulturhus' extensive facilities, Tanken is an incubator and cultural industry network consisting of music companies and entrepreneurs in film and photography. Located at Hamang in Sandvika, the facility was once used to house the machinery and equipment of a paper mill. It now is home to music production spaces and workrooms.¹⁰⁹

Tanken production space¹¹⁰



¹⁰⁹ Baerum Kulturhus, "The Cultural Center", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.baerumkulturhus.no/kulturhuset/tanken/>

¹¹⁰ Sandvika by, "The studio's idea takes shape", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://sandvikaby.no/byutvikling/tanken-studios-tar-form/>

6.5.1 Facilities

Tanken is home to 37 music production rooms and workplaces (2,884 m² in total). Notable amenities include:¹¹¹

- Tanken Studios: 800 m² of music production space. The production rooms are soundproof and versatile, enabling a diverse range of music production.
- 12 office spaces ranging from 6 – 14 m², rented out to the music industry.
- Rondo: a meeting place for the businesses on and around Tanken (open for catering, smaller events and rental of premises for meetings, events and parties).

6.5.2 Rent/Membership

Tenants at Tanken Studios are local businesses with international potential, registered as limited companies (AS), including music companies and producers who facilitate recordings, music productions, podcasts, music camps, residencies and other activities.¹¹²

6.5.3 Governance

Tanken is a department under Bærum Kulturhus and Bærum Municipality. Tanken Studios is funded by Bærum Municipality, Andenæs Eiendom, Kulturrom and the Desentralisert ordning for kulturbygg.¹¹³ The municipality itself acts as the driving force and operates the premises, while tenants pay rent. The project demonstrates how municipalities can play an active role in building infrastructure for creative industries by facilitating affordable and professionally adapted production spaces for music and cultural entrepreneurs.¹¹⁴

The total investment budget for Tanken's 16 new production studios was NOK 25 million. It was the result of a joint venture between Andenæs Eiendom and Bærum Municipality, with support from national and regional support schemes. Kulturrom and Bærum Municipality granted a total of 8 million NOK for new music production spaces.¹¹⁵

6.5.4 Community Impact

¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹² Baerum Kulturhus, "The Cultural Center", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.baerumkulturhus.no/kulturhuset/tanken/>

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Information provided by Kulturrom.

¹¹⁵ Baerum Kulturhus, "Just over 8 million for 18 new music studios", accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.baerumkulturhus.no/aktuelt/211217-tanken-droy-8-mll/>

Tanken's goal is to create the best framework conditions for the development of a strong and sustainable cultural industry in Sandvika, safeguarding the interests and rights of music industry stakeholders, and increasing profitability and value creation. One of its main objectives is to create 300 new jobs related to cultural industries. The objective is to make Norwegian music a professional, sustainable and value-creating industry with international recognition.¹¹⁶ International successful music groups including Sassy009, Ary, CLMD and Baya used Tanken studios as launching points for their careers.

6.6 Oslo Lydproduksjon (OLYP)

Oslo Lydproduksjon (OLYP) is a music collective located at Carl Berner in Oslo, located in former warehouses and workshops. Founded in 2013 by four musicians who themselves needed high-quality production spaces, OLYP has grown steadily to be considered as critical infrastructure for Oslo's music environment and plays an important role in solving Oslo's shortage of affordable production space.¹¹⁷

6.6.1 Facilities

OLYP began as 10 sound studios across 448 square meters of the first floor of an old warehouse. The organisation has grown following successive expansions in 2018, 2020 and 2022, and today, OLYP operates 3,000 square meters consisting of 32 sound studios/rehearsal rooms and two pre-production rooms, and extensive shared facilities. The facility also features large common areas, deliberately built into the building to provide a space for tenants to meet, fostering a collaborative environment.

¹¹⁸

6.6.2 Rent/Membership

OLYP's rehearsal rooms are rented out by professional musicians of all genres and stages of their career. 30 of the rooms are leased under fixed, long-term contracts, and each room is shared by between 3 and 10 musicians. The two largest rooms are rented out on an hourly or daily basis and are frequently used for pre-production ahead of concerts and tours.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Baerum Kulturhus, "The Cultural Center", accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.baerumkulturhus.no/kulturhuset/tanken/>

¹¹⁷ Kulturrom, "Oslo Lydproduksjon", accessed August 18, 2026, <https://kulturrom.no/2026/06/10/oslo-lydproduksjon/>

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

OLYP rehearsal studio¹²⁰



6.6.3 Governance

OLYP is operated as a limited company without employees, running on a voluntary basis by a small working group. The business receives no public operating subsidy and its running costs are covered through studio rental and pre-production project income. Although OLYP is registered as a joint-stock company, all revenue is directly reinvested back into operations, maintenance and the ongoing expansion of the premises. The renovation and soundproofing of the facilities was financed through rental income, some grants from Kulturrådet, and private loans secured against the founders' own homes.¹²¹

The premises are leased from private property owner Ragde Eiendom who purchased the building in 2020. Investment in OLYP's facilities have totalled over NOK 30 million. Following negotiations in 2019, both the original and newly acquired areas of the building were consolidated into a single lease agreement structured as 20.5 + 10 + 10

¹²⁰ Facebook, "OLYP", accessed August 18, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/oslolydproduksjon/photos/>

¹²¹ Information provided by Kulturrådet and Kulturrådet, "Oslo Lydproduksjon", accessed August 18, 2026, <https://kulturradet.no/2026/06/10/oslo-lydproduksjon/>

years. This unusually long lease agreement has provided a stable foundation to continue to invest in the facility over time.¹²²

However, such an ownership model has created challenges for OLYP. Namely, the building has changed ownership multiple times during OLYP's history, resulting in a continuous effort to re-establish a positive relationship with the new owner and ensure they understand the significant cultural value the facility represents to the local area. With each change of ownership, OLYP's rent has typically increased. Furthermore, as OLYP does not own the building they are investing in, banks are less willing to offer mortgages or security.¹²³

6.6.4 Community Impact

Collaboration is positioned as central to OLYP. Several large common rooms are deliberately integrated into the facilities. These are designed to foster a collaborative community environment between musicians, creating space for enhanced creativity.¹²⁴

OLYP is widely regarded as critical infrastructure for Norway's professional musicians, producers and composers, and together with Øveriet these two private initiatives provide an important part of the answer to Oslo's shortage of affordable production space, without any public capital going into subsidising rent or financing operations.¹²⁵

¹²² Kulturrom, "Oslo Lydproduksjon", accessed August 18, 2026, <https://kulturrom.no/2026/06/10/oslo-lydproduksjon/>

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

OLYP common area¹²⁶



6.7 Music Creation Spaces Landscape Conclusion

All the spaces studied prioritise purpose-built environments. Their scales and specific offerings vary. Øveriet offers 67 soundproofed practice rooms of various sizes and features a communal living room that functions as a self service café, office, and concert venue. TOU Lyd operates on a large scale with over 14,500 square meters, including 18 new rooms and 4 studios. Tanken provides 37 music production rooms. To support interdisciplinary work, Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv offers specialised spaces like a media lab, a printing press workshop, and a chapel room. While Musikkbyen Trondheim features both office and studio wings, it requires studio tenants to furnish and equip the rooms themselves. Bergen Kjøtt provides 28 sound and art studios. OLYP offers 30 sound studios, 2 large pre-production rooms and several large common areas across three floors and 3,000 square meters. Across spaces, all studios and rehearsal rooms remain occupied, reflecting strong demand, with new leasing opportunities happening infrequently.

¹²⁶ Facebook, “OLYP”, accessed August 18, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/oslolydproduksjon/photos/>

The spaces employ diverse rental models to balance affordability, stability, and curation. Øveriet emphasises predictable, long-term access through transparent contracts alongside flexible memberships, serving approximately 1,300 musicians across more than 300 bands. This stability allows musicians to invest in equipment and sustains their long-term creative development. Bergen Kjøtt and OLYP similarly prioritise long-term, predictable contracts so tenants can invest in their studios without fear of displacement. Access is managed differently elsewhere: TOU Lyd uses a committee that allocates space based on professionalism and artistic activity, whereas Tanken specifically targets local limited companies (AS) demonstrating international potential. Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv mitigates collective financial risk by requiring artists to hold individual contracts with the property owner while maintaining mandatory cooperative membership. Musikkbyen Trondheim relies on a low price per square meter and the strategic inclusion of VAT-registered tenants to ensure financial sustainability.

Governance models highlight various strategies to protect cultural infrastructure from market volatility. Øveriet and OLYP are both private companies that fund capital investments such as construction and equipment purchases through a mix of rental income, private loans, loans secured against the private homes of the owners, and critical support from national funding bodies like Kulturrådet. Bergen Kjøtt, TOU Lyd, and Musikkbyen Trondheim rely heavily on non-profit structures; Bergen Kjøtt, for example, was established as a non-profit foundation by the municipality to shield the historic building from commercial hotel or office developers. While not an established non-profit, OLYP follows a similar structure, reinvesting all surplus income into the facilities. Municipalities play a direct, hands-on role in spaces like Tanken, which operates as an actual department of Bærum Municipality. Rotvoll Kunstnerkollektiv functions as a cooperative that leases its space from a private real estate company, acting as an organisational hub for its artists.

Beyond providing square footage, these spaces actively drive local culture, industry growth, and social wellbeing. Øveriet has a strong commitment to sustainability and health. OLYP, together with Øveriet, is widely regarded as critical cultural infrastructure for Oslo, meeting a significant share of the city's demand for affordable production space without any public capital subsidising rent or operations. Tanken and Musikkbyen Trondheim are highly focused on developing the creative economy, with Tanken aiming to create 300 new cultural industry jobs and Musikkbyen facilitating major international events like the Song:Expo. TOU Lyd and RKK act as major cultural output engines, hosting hundreds of annual public events and festivals. Bergen Kjøtt further proves the socioeconomic profitability of sustainably transforming historic buildings into accessible, long-term cultural hubs.

7. Conclusion

Music ecosystems are essential drivers of urban development, contributing significantly to a city's economy and identity, and to its residents' social inclusion and wellbeing. Music creation spaces are vital components of those ecosystems, representing the crucial first step in the music value chain. However, despite generating significant cultural, social, and economic value, rehearsal spaces operate under financial and operational pressures. Rising rents, increasing utility costs, the high expense of maintaining acoustically suitable facilities, and urban redevelopment constantly threaten to displace creative communities. Furthermore, a lack of comprehensive municipal planning often forces these independent entities to compete with highly capitalised, tech-driven chains and statutory municipal services, resulting in a fragmented sector suffering from underinvestment and a lack of long-term strategic protection.

By combining purpose-built rehearsal infrastructure, long-term and predictable access arrangements; a strong culture of collaboration and professional development; and a commitment to advancing sustainability, wellbeing and industry best practices, Øveriet has developed into one of Norway's most significant music creation hubs. Its model addresses both local and national infrastructure needs by providing high-quality rehearsal facilities that support music-making, while also fostering the networks, knowledge exchange and support systems necessary for artists to develop sustainable careers. Through its continued investment in research, innovation and community-building, Øveriet demonstrates how rehearsal spaces can function not only as places of music production, but as essential cultural infrastructure that strengthens the resilience and long-term development of the wider music ecosystem.

Beyond its role as physical infrastructure, Øveriet generates substantial measurable social value for the musicians who use it. Users consistently describe the space as scarce and effectively hard to substitute, with the large majority linking it directly to Oslo's cultural identity and viability as a city where music can be made. Access to the space also delivers measurable wellbeing benefits, through routine, environmental quality, and psychological stability, and is closely associated with concrete professional development, including more regular practice and greater confidence and skill. A strong sense of community and belonging is well established among users, though deeper professional collaboration does not yet emerge organically for most of them. This points to a clear opportunity: targeted, low-cost interventions such as structured co-writing sessions or a peer directory could help convert the density and social capital already present at Øveriet into more substantial creative and professional partnerships.

The necessity of a long-term approach is echoed by other successful benchmark models across Norway, highlighting diverse strategies to protect cultural spaces from market pressures. Municipalities and non-profits play a crucial role, as seen with Bergen Kjøtt (a non-profit foundation established by the municipality to shield a historic

building from developers), TOU Lyd (a city-owned, non-profit-operated space), and Tanken (a direct department of Bærum Municipality). Furthermore, cooperative structures like Rotvoll kunstnerkollektiv (RKK) highlight another model. By functioning as an organisational hub, RKK mitigates the financial risk of leasing from a private real estate company, preventing individual artists from bearing the full burden alone while fostering interdisciplinary arts. Protecting these spaces helps artists while driving significant economic, environmental, and social outcomes. Musikkbyen Trondheim receives little public operational support, yet its businesses generate annual revenues exceeding NOK 100 million, while Tanken specifically aims to create 300 new cultural industry jobs. Beyond economic growth, these spaces enable a focus on community wellbeing. Øveriet leads the "Green Practice Rooms" pilot and hosts health programmes focusing on hearing protection and mental health in the industry. Similarly, Bergen Kjøtt proves the socioeconomic profitability of sustainably transforming historic buildings into accessible cultural hubs.

Ultimately, the case of Øveriet proves that music creation spaces require ongoing public investment, secure leases, and integration into municipal land-use planning. To sustain a vibrant, diverse, and economically viable music ecosystem, cities must recognise and protect these spaces as foundational social and cultural infrastructure, ensuring that local artists have the permanent environments they need to innovate, collaborate, and thrive.

