

Media Release

For immediate release

Showcase Scotland celebrates 25th birthday by shining spotlight on Scottish and Irish musical talent at Celtic Connections

Showcase Scotland, the music industry event held as part of **Celtic Connections** in partnership with **Innis & Gunn**, is celebrating its 25th birthday with a five-day programme at this year's festival.

The showcase introduces delegates from around the world to the Scottish music sector and encourages international cultural collaboration.

The aim is to help Scottish-based artists raise their international profile and provide opportunities to perform and promote their work overseas.

The programme of networking events and special performances will start on Wednesday 22 January, and run until Sunday 26 January.

Showcase Scotland has welcomed over 5,000 delegate attendances over the past 25 years. During that time, delegates from 30 nations across six continents have taken the time to experience the best talent in Scotland at the industry event.

Similarly, more than 1,500 talented artists at all stages of their careers have been featured as part of the showcase. From intimate spaces in front of less than 100 people to the OVO Hydro with audiences of over 10,000, these musicians have performed at a variety of venues across the festival.

Artists who have taken part in Showcase Scotland have gone on to have incredible careers as world-class performers. They have sold out large venues and collaborated with other artists during Celtic Connections as part of the festival's ambitious programme.

Each year, Showcase Scotland invites an international partner to the festival. The partnership encourages cultural collaborations and links with industry contacts. It also celebrates the connections between the musical cultures of Scotland and the partner. Past partners have included the likes of Norway, Wales, Brittany, New Zealand, India, and Australia.

International partnerships have numerous benefits and often result in continued working and collaboration.

Ireland is the international partner for the 2025 edition of Showcase Scotland. It's the second time Scotland's closest Celtic cousins have been the partner having previously done so in 2018.

With support from Culture Ireland, the very best in traditional and contemporary Irish music will be celebrated across the festival's stages. Selected Irish artists will also perform as part of the Showcase Scotland event on Friday 24 January.

The featured acts from Ireland include folk singer-songwriter **Niamh Bury**, veteran performers **Nuala Kennedy and Eamon O'Leary**, the Belfast-based **Córas Trio**, four-piece Irish traditional band **Fíárock**, contemporary Irish nu-folk singer-songwriter **Gráinne Hunt**, and **Leonard Barry Trio** who are touring as a three-piece officially for the first time.

The showcase is the largest annual gathering of the international music community in Scotland. The industry event provides a valuable platform for promoters, record labels, agents, and festival organisers to connect with the Scottish industry and each other.

Lisa Whytock, Executive Producer of Showcase Scotland, said: “It has been a privilege to produce Showcase Scotland at Celtic Connections since 2001. Now approaching our 25th edition, we have seen the benefits of collective partnership working and the results it achieves for artists, many of whom began their careers as Danny Kyle Open Stage winners and have gone on to grace international stages around the world.

“The international partnerships are of key importance, with Ireland in 2025 being the 21st partner. Launched in 2005, these partnerships not only bring direct benefits to showcasing artists but also enable the industry from around the world to learn about each other's cultures and to collaborate on international ideas.

“In 2025, delegates from 23 nations are attending, and they comprise some of the leading music festivals, venues and industry from around the world. Over five days they will see some of the best Scottish and Irish artists performing at Celtic Connections, attend daytime showcases and hatch plans and ideas for the future.

“We are particularly pleased to celebrate our 25th edition with Ireland as our partner.”

Sharon Barry, Director, Culture Ireland said: “There is an unmistakable vibrancy across the Irish trad and folk scene at the moment - whether it's new and emerging artists or more experienced musicians creating innovative and exciting work. We are delighted to play our part in presenting six of the finest to showcase here in Glasgow.”

Culture Secretary Angus Robertson said: “Congratulations to Showcase Scotland on 25 years of championing Scotland's world-class music scene on a global stage. This celebrated event at Celtic Connections highlights Scotland's outstanding talent and builds lasting cultural links worldwide.

“It is also fitting that Showcase Scotland's international partner for this year's event is Ireland and gives us an opportunity to celebrate our rich Celtic connections that continue to inspire artists and audiences on both sides of the Irish Sea.”

Alan Morrison, Head of Music at Creative Scotland says: “For 25 years, Showcase Scotland has opened doors to the world's most prestigious venues and festivals for Scotland's traditional and folk music artists. There's no better way to win over top agents and promoters than through the energy of live performance, face to face in the same place at the same time. That's the essential strength of

16 Jan – 2 Feb 2025

Showcase Scotland, offering an exceptional opportunity for acts who are ready for the world to play in front of the very people who can take them there. And it's a door that opens both ways, bringing incredible artists from partner countries to audiences in Scotland and onto the stages of Celtic Connections. At a time when celebrating and respecting the art and culture of other countries is of vital importance, Showcase Scotland is a role model for collaboration and exchange that is a credit to us all."

Bailie Annette Christie, Chair of Glasgow Life and City Convener for Culture, Sport and International Relations, said: "For 25 years, Showcase Scotland has brought the world's music industry to Glasgow and helped homegrown artists to engage with promoters, record labels, agents, and festival organisers from around the world. Talented Scottish-based musicians have also been given the chance to share and promote their work overseas thanks to this wonderful programme.

"The showcase encourages international collaboration and shines a spotlight on some of the best musical talent from other countries. This year is no exception, as we will be treated to some outstanding performances from a selection of artists from our closest Celtic cousins, Ireland."

Delivered by Glasgow Life, Celtic Connections is the world's leading folk, roots and world music festival. The 2025 festival takes place from Thursday 16 January to Sunday 2 February, and features a diverse programme of around 300 events at music venues across Glasgow.

Showcase Scotland was piloted in 2000 by British Council Scotland and the Scottish Arts Council at Celtic Connections. Its continued success has led to it being an annual part of the festival.

Showcase Scotland is produced by Active Events on behalf of Glasgow Life.

ENDS

For media accreditation, please apply [here](#).

The festival will run from Thursday 16 January to Sunday 2 February 2025. Follow the conversation at [@ccfest](#).

For further information, images, or to request an interview, please contact: Corrie Campbell, Innes and Campbell Communications, corrie@innesandcampbell.co.uk, 07900 981 073.

Notes to Editors

Celtic Connections began in 1994, when it offered 66 events at one venue. Since then, it's grown more adventurous, experimental and diverse each year and now offers thousands of events in locations across Glasgow.



Celtic Connections is delivered with funding from **Glasgow City Council** through **Glasgow Life**. **Creative Scotland** and **The Scottish Government Festivals Expo Fund** continue to provide invaluable support to Celtic Connections.

Glasgow Life is a charity working for the benefit of the people of Glasgow. We believe everyone deserves a great Glasgow life and we find innovative ways to make this happen across the city's diverse communities.

Our programmes, experiences and events range from grassroots community activities to large-scale cultural, artistic and sporting events which present Glasgow on an international stage.

Our work is designed to promote inclusion, happiness and health, as well as support the city's visitor economy, in order to enhance Glasgow's mental, physical and economic wellbeing.

For more information, see www.glasgowlife.org.uk

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen, and creative industries across all parts of Scotland distributing funding provided by the Scottish Government and The National Lottery. Further information at creativescotland.com. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Learn more about the value of art and creativity in Scotland and join in at www.ourcreativevoice.scot.