

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

## **UMO Helsinki Jazz Orchestra – The Greatest Feats since 1975.**

The year 2025 marked the beginning of the UMO Helsinki Jazz Orchestra's 50th anniversary season and a significant transition toward the next 50-year journey.

The orchestra's activities were extensive, with a strong presence in its hometown Helsinki and across 16 different municipalities around Finland. This reflects a core part of UMO's mission: bringing music close to the audience.

In honour of the anniversary season, UMO launched a series of club concerts in collaboration with the Helsinki Music Centre. Other new initiatives of the year included the Culture Kids program, aimed at babies born in Helsinki in 2025, and the Sydämen soinnut ("Chords of the Heart") tour, which brought over 20 concerts to senior centres and assisted living facilities across the capital region.

### **Highlights and numbers**

Successful programming choices combined with effective communication led to several sold-out concerts and a record number of concert visitors since the foundation's founding in 2008 (note: the orchestra itself was founded in 1975).

UMO performed in 146 live concerts which had a total of 41,571 visitors. This significant figure shows that UMO is of interest and reaches people all over Finland.

UMO is a promise of new music: the orchestra premiered 5 compositions and performed 97 arrangements for the first time.

UMO Helsinki Jazz Orchestra aims to be an international, agile and networked operator and a sought-after partner both in Finland and worldwide. In 2025, international activities included bringing foreign guest conductors and soloists to Finland, as well as ordering new compositions and arrangements also from abroad.

The customer satisfaction of UMO was extraordinary: during the year 2025, the overall rating was 4.4 (on a scale from 1 to 5). The recommendation index is high: 91 % of customers would recommend concerts to others.

UMO contributes to the implementation of the cultural political objectives of the Helsinki city and strengthens the attractiveness of Helsinki by producing versatile and innovative concerts of high quality for different target audiences. UMO's position as a nationally important jazz orchestra – the only one receiving central government transfers (VOS) – is also important.

In its operations, UMO takes into account the ambitious emission reduction targets of the City of Helsinki and the guidelines of the Helsinki Climate Program.

### **Organisation**

The UMO Helsinki Jazz Orchestra is a big band with a default setup of sixteen musicians. At the end of the year 2025 the orchestra had 14 permanently employed musicians with a monthly salary. The remaining 3 seats were filled by freelancer musicians with production specific contracts. Each year, the UMO Foundation employs a substantial number of musicians on a project basis: conductors, soloists, arrangers, composers and other professionals in the event industry. In 2025 the orchestra co-operated with 141 professionals altogether.

In addition to the orchestra and the freelancers, the UMO Foundation has four employees in charge of the administration, concert production, audience development as well as marketing and communications. Ed Partyka worked as the artistic director of the UMO Foundation until June, and the managing director is Henriika Steidel-Luoto.

### **Funding and Finances**

The orchestra is funded by the UMO Foundation, which in turn is funded by its owner, the City of Helsinki (46.5 %), and the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland (35 %). The self-financed part of the funding (18 %) comes from ticket sales as well as commissioned concerts and festival performances. The personnel costs account for two-thirds of the total expenses.

The result of the foundation was +90 117 euros.