



Underpinning Hubs for the Future: Partnership Innovation Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who can apply?

A partnership covering at least two English local authority areas and led by a Music Education Hub Lead Organisation or music service. You may have other partners, e.g. National Youth Music Organisations, but there must be at least two Hubs or music services. The money comes from the Department for Education for stabilising Music Education Hubs, so applicants do not need to be members of Music Mark.

2. Who can't apply?

NYMOs, NPOs, music education organisations, except where they are an additional partner and the project clearly benefits the areas represented by the Hub or music service partners. Music services in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland are also ineligible (sorry: it is the English Department for Education's money).

3. What is the maximum amount you can apply for?

The total fund is £90,000 and there are 122 Music Education Hubs in England. We have set a maximum of £1,000 per local authority area.

4. Is it only Hub leads who can apply?

No. Music services who are part of a multi-area hub (e.g. individual music services within Greater Manchester, Tri-borough) or any similar arrangement may apply. Where a commissioning Hub lead works with an established delivery partner for a substantial element of the Hub's activity, this partner would be eligible as the lead or main partner in the project, although note that the £1,000 limit still applies to each local authority area.

5. When can we apply?

By Friday 18th June for work starting around 1st September.

By Friday 22nd October for work starting around 1st January.

6. When does a project have to start by?

Actual start dates are flexible and work may begin once we confirm funding.

7. When does a project have to be completed by?

The end of the 2021/22 academic year.

8. Do we need to have match funding?

It's not an absolute requirement but as this funding is quite modest, it is likely that you will be putting other funding in and/or contributing in-kind.

9. What if we don't spend all the money we've been offered?
We may recover unspent project funding and put it back into the 'pot' to enable other areas to apply.
10. Can you apply more than once?
We will only accept one application from a lead partner. If a Hub or service is a named partner in more than one application, they will still only be allocated £1,000 per local authority area.
11. What if you get more than one similar application?
We may ask you work together to maximise the outcomes that can be achieved for the funding.
12. Does the money need to be spent on activity relating to the Core and Extension roles or can we look at innovative ways to develop our wider work?
This is not just about delivering Core and Extension roles and it is not primarily a project fund. We are interested in innovations in all areas including delivery channels, recruitment of students, digital, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, administration...
13. Is there anything the money cannot be used to cover?
This is meant to be a straightforward fund to pump-prime innovation. Hubs and services are best placed to judge what innovations are likely to be beneficial and what funding is needed to make them happen. That said, we would not expect the funding to cover significant salaries or overheads (there isn't enough money for that). You may pay a partner or other third party but we wouldn't expect you to devolve the money, e.g. to a school.
14. Who will assess our application?
Applications will be shortlisted by Music Mark and the shortlist will be reviewed by an independent assessor. This may or may not be the same person for both rounds but will be someone with experience of the sector and (as far as possible) without an explicit geographical allegiance. We will run funding decisions by the project manager at Arts Council England but not so they can exercise a veto.
15. How long will it take to get an answer?
We expect to announce decisions within a month of each closing date.
16. Can we start the project before we hear whether we have the funding?
You would not normally expect to. Starting early will not make your proposal invalid but Music Mark will not be bound to fund your proposal if you commit to spending before the decision is announced.

If you have other questions, please contact [Rosie](#) or [Gary](#).