



National Foundation for
Youth Music

Guidance for applying to Funds A and B

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About Youth Music

Youth Music is a national charity investing in music-making projects for children and young people (aged 0-25) experiencing challenging circumstances.

Our vision is that one day, all children and young people can make music. In order to achieve this, we're working collaboratively to transform music education in England. Our funding is focused on supporting projects for children and young people who face barriers to music-making as a result of who they are, where they live, or the circumstances they are facing.

About Youth Music's grants programme

We support around 350 projects across England each year, reaching more than 75,000 children and young people.

Youth Music takes an outcomes approach. Projects we invest in support the musical, personal and social development of children and young people, and we also support positive outcomes for organisations and their workforce.

Every Youth Music project measures its impact, allowing organisations to reflect on their learning from successes and challenges, and helping us to build a unique national overview.

If you work for an organisation and you have an idea for a music-making project, you'll find all the information you need about applying for a Youth Music grant in this document.

Projects should be centred on either or both of the following:

- Music-making for children and young people in challenging circumstances
- Strategic work supporting the development of the workforce, organisations, and/or the wider sector

Youth Music is supported by the National Lottery, awarding funding via Arts Council England. Right now, we can only support around a third of projects applying to us for funding - we fundraise so that we can help even more children and young people nationwide.

Overview of Youth Music grants application process

1. Suitability	2. Preparation	3. Submission	4. Assessment	5. Notification
<p>Check your organisation and project meet our eligibility criteria and whether your proposals fit with our funding priorities.</p>	<p>Download “Guidance for applying to Funds A and B” from the Youth Music Network. Investigate match funding options, and plan your project.</p>	<p>Create an account on our Grants Application System. Complete your application and submit before 5pm on the deadline date.</p>	<p>Applications are assessed against set criteria and a portfolio-balancing process. Our assessment panel makes the final decisions.</p>	<p>Notification email sent to lead applicant. This includes feedback on your application and next steps if you are offered funding.</p>

PART 1: Deciding whether to apply for Youth Music funding

Is my project eligible for Youth Music funding?

We fund organisations that:

- ✓ are based in the UK
- ✓ are delivering work in England for participants resident in England
- ✓ are registered charities or not-for-profits (e.g. Companies Limited by Guarantee, constituted community groups). Companies limited by shares are only eligible to apply if the grant is treated as restricted and will not make profit for the organisation
- ✓ are legally constituted and have been providing activity for a minimum of one year (if you are not registered with the Charity Commission or Companies House you must supply evidence of this through your constitution)
- ✓ can provide their most recent set of accounts, no more than 18 months old
- ✓ have an Equal Opportunities Policy and Child Protection Policy in place
- ✓ have Employers' and Public Liability Insurance in place
- ✓ comply with all statutory laws and regulations relating to the work they will deliver
- ✓ are up-to-date with all current grant management and reporting requirements if they are an existing Youth Music grantholder
- ✓ will pay people the [real Living Wage](#) with any Youth Music grant received.

We don't fund:

- × individuals and Sole Traders
- × profit-making projects
- × activities that promote party political or religious beliefs
- × activities that have taken place before you have received confirmation of grant award
- × costs incurred in making your application
- × significant capital costs (over 10%)
- × the purchase of land or buildings
- × reserves, loans or interest payments
- × VAT costs that can be recovered
- × art forms that are not related to music
- × activities that other statutory bodies would be expected to fund
- × projects unable to provide evidence that they will achieve the minimum match funding requirement
- × projects using Arts Council or National Lottery funding as their minimum match funding requirement
- × GCSE Music or A Level Music
- × Schools-based projects for music curriculum activities that could be supported through Department for Education funding
- × Schools-based projects for whole class instrumental tuition.

Projects working in and with schools

If you are applying for a schools-based* project for pupils at KS1 or above, your project must demonstrate:

- a significant element of innovative and genuine partnership working
- benefits to the wider community
- a high quality, musically-inclusive approach
- a targeted focus on reaching and engaging children and young people in challenging circumstances embedded within the whole project.

* “schools-based” refers here to projects in mainstream schools rather than projects working in special schools or pupil referral units.

Music Education Hubs

If you are applying as a Music Education Hub lead organisation, your project must demonstrate:

- a significant element of innovative and genuine partnership working
- a high quality, musically-inclusive approach
- a targeted focus on reaching and engaging children and young people in challenging circumstances across the whole application and project
- a strong workforce development offer
- a significant legacy within and beyond the Music Education Hub and the life of the grant
- plans to pilot innovative ways of delivering hub core and extension roles more inclusively, embedding this into the business model of the Music Education Hub. (For more information on please see our [Guidance for Music Education Hubs](#).)

What kinds of projects does Youth Music fund?

Youth Music has five priority areas. You should choose which of our priority areas your project best fits into (we understand that many projects could be relevant to more than one priority area):

1. Early years

Children aged 0-5 who face barriers to accessing music-making as a result of their circumstances or where they live.

2. Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEN/D)

This includes children and young people who:

- have moderate to profound and multiple learning difficulties
- have sensory impairments
- are disabled.

3. Not in education, employment or training

Young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or who are at risk of becoming NEET due to circumstances affecting their educational engagement. This includes children and young people who:

- are aged 16-24 and not in education, employment or training
- experience disruption in their education due to family related difficulties (e.g. young people who are looked after, are young carers, or are suffering from neglect or domestic violence)
- experience disruption in their education due to issues around transience (e.g. young people who are travellers, asylum seekers, refugees, who have English as an additional language, or attend a PRU).

4. Youth justice

Children and young people who are, have been, or are at risk of being in contact with the youth justice system. This includes children and young people who:

- are in or leaving young offender institutions
- are in contact with a Youth Offending Team
- are at risk of offending as a result of emotional and behavioural difficulties.

5. Coldspots

Projects for children and young people who face barriers to accessing music-making opportunities as a direct result of where or who they are. This may be due to:

- living in an area of high deprivation, and/or a geographically isolated area
- low cultural activity, engagement, investment or infrastructure in their area
- demographic factors, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, cultural practice or age
- lack of opportunities in their preferred genre or musical practice, and lack of progression opportunities
- physical or mental ill health resulting in temporary or long-term contact with a hospital or other healthcare setting.

Which fund should I apply for?

	Fund A	Fund B
Description	Fund A awards smaller grants for high-quality projects that will help to achieve a musically inclusive England.	Fund B awards medium-sized grants for high-quality, sustained projects that expand and embed musically inclusive practice within and beyond your organisation.
Amount	£2,000 - £30,000	£30,001 - £150,000 <i>In exceptional circumstances, we may award grants of £150,001 - £200,000 for cross-regional or national strategic programmes. See page 13 for more information.</i>
Application process	One-stage online application process. There are application deadlines three times a year. You will hear the outcome of our decision around three months after the application deadline.	Two-stage online application process. There are application deadlines twice a year. You will hear whether you have been invited to stage two of the application process within three months of the application deadline (if so, you will have approximately one month to make your stage two application). You will hear whether you have been awarded a grant within six months of the initial application deadline. <i>If you wish to apply for funding in excess of £150,000 you must contact Youth Music to discuss your proposal at least six weeks before the application deadline. See page 13 for more information.</i>
Application deadlines	The Youth Music Network has full information about application deadlines and notification dates.	
Grant duration	6 - 24 months	<p>£100,000 or under 18 - 36 months</p> <p>£100,001 - £150,000 24 - 36 months</p> <p><i>£150,001 - £200,000 36 months</i></p>

Outcomes	Projects are required to set and work towards achieving three outcomes, from any of the outcome areas.	<p>Projects are required to work towards achieving five outcomes, from any of the outcome areas.</p> <p><i>Projects in excess of £150,001 are required to work towards five outcomes, across all five outcome areas. The workforce outcome is set by Youth Music. See page 13 for more information.</i></p>
Match funding	10% (at least 5% must be cash match funding)	<p>£100,000 or under 15% (at least 7.5% must be cash match funding)</p>
		<p>£100,001 to £150,000 25% (at least 10% must be cash match funding)</p>
		<p>£150,001 to £200,000 30% (at least 15% must be cash match funding)</p>
Funding agreement restrictions	<p>Only one Fund A grant can be held by an organisation at any one time.</p> <p>Fund A grantholders are eligible to apply to Fund B.</p> <p>Organisations can hold a maximum of two Youth Music funding agreements at any one time.</p> <p>Organisations cannot hold more than £350,000 of active Youth Music grants at any one time.</p>	<p>Only one Fund B grant can be held by an organisation at any one time.</p> <p>Fund B grantholders are eligible to apply to Fund A.</p> <p>Organisations can hold a maximum of two Youth Music funding agreements at any one time.</p> <p>Organisations cannot hold more than £350,000 of active Youth Music grants at any one time.</p>
Repeat funding	<p>Organisations seeking repeat funding to develop their project will be required to submit a new online application. This will be considered alongside all other applications received in that round. Applications must demonstrate that learning from the previous grant has been applied to further develop the work.</p> <p>Previous grant management and reporting will inform funding decisions.</p>	<p>Organisations seeking repeat funding to develop their projects will be required to submit a new online application. This will be considered alongside all other applications received in that round. Applications must demonstrate that learning from the previous grant has been applied to further develop the work.</p> <p>Repeat Fund B projects are required to contribute 30% match funding (minimum 15% cash match).</p> <p>Previous grant management and reporting will inform funding decisions.</p>

Fund C

Fund C awards larger grants for projects with a dual role of delivery and strategic work; expanding and embedding high quality, inclusive music-making.

Fund C is currently closed for applications until further notice.

PART 2: Preparing to apply for Youth Music funding

Note to applicants

- The need for Youth Music funding is high: on average we are only able to fund around a third of the applications we receive.
- We would like you to take this into consideration and have a plan in place for your project if you are unsuccessful on this occasion, or we are unable to offer you the full amount of funding you have requested in your application.

Deciding on your intended outcomes

Youth Music takes an outcomes approach. Projects we invest in support the **musical, personal** and **social** development of children and young people, and we also support positive outcomes for **organisations** and their **workforce**.

Every Youth Music project measures its impact, allowing organisations to reflect on their learning from successes and challenges, and helping us to build a unique national overview.

- Fund A projects must set and work towards three outcomes, from any of the outcome areas.
- Fund B projects must set and work towards five outcomes
- Fund B projects of £150,001 must work towards 5 outcomes, including one workforce outcome set by Youth Music.

*Please see our resource **Taking an outcomes approach: from planning to evaluation** for detailed advice on how to define your intended outcomes and design your evaluation plan.*

Embedding Youth Music's Quality Framework

A quality framework is a tool to help you understand, measure and evaluate quality in your work. Youth Music's quality framework - [Do, Review, Improve](#) - gathers together all the criteria we believe demonstrate quality in a music-making session. We also have a version for use in SEN/D settings.

We ask all organisations funded by Youth Music to use *Do, Review, Improve* to reflect on their practice. And we ask anyone applying to us for funding to show how they would build it into their project.

You can use *Do, Review, Improve* for planning, peer observation or self-reflection. It's not intended to be a test, and you don't need to score yourself or rank yourself against others. Instead, the quality framework is designed to help you think about your practice and the principles behind it, and to identify areas you may wish to develop.

Planning your project activities

Projects should be centred on either or both of the following:

- Music-making for children and young people in challenging circumstances
- Strategic work supporting the development of the workforce, organisations, the wider sector

Your project plan must contain the following activities:

	Fund A	Fund B
Youth voice and participation	Young people should be active participants in planning the project activities.	Young people should be active participants in planning the project activities. The project team must include at least one young person (aged 25 or under).
Progression	If you are planning a music-making project, we encourage you to consider the use of Arts Award or other suitable accreditation when planning your project. If you are planning a strategic project you must demonstrate how your work will support progression environments for children and young people.	If you are planning a music-making project, it should support young people's progression through individual learning plans, and provision of information, advice and guidance. Arts Award and/or other accreditation frameworks should be embedded within delivery structures. If you are planning a strategic project you must demonstrate how your work will support progression environments for children and young people.
Sharing practice	Grantholders are expected to actively engage with the Youth Music Network, for example by posting articles, music or video content or engaging in discussions.	Grantholders are expected to actively engage with the Youth Music Network, for example by posting articles, music or video content or engaging in discussions. Projects should influence musically inclusive practice beyond your organisation.
Quality	Mechanisms for reflecting on and improving quality of the music-making activity work should be built into delivery plans. This should include use of Youth Music's quality framework and reflecting on progress towards your outcome indicators. We expect to see all elements of Youth Music's Quality Framework embedded in your application.	

Workforce development	Projects are encouraged to offer training and professional development activities to their staff.	Projects should offer training and professional development activities to their staff (including administrative staff).
Working in partnership	Projects are encouraged to work with appropriate partner organisations.	Projects should involve a range of partners who make a clear contribution to the work.
Sustainability	Projects are encouraged to consider how the work will be sustained beyond the life of the Youth Music grant.	When your project finishes, it should leave your organisation and the musical landscape in your area stronger in relation to Youth Music's goal to create a musically inclusive England.

Large grant requests (Fund B only)

For grant requests of £100,000 or more you should be able to meet all of the following criteria:

- The project will raise match funding equivalent to a minimum of 25% of the Youth Music grant request (at least 10% must be cash match funding).
- The project will run for 24 to 36 months.
- The proposed project is operating at a significant scale (i.e. operating beyond one setting, perhaps at a regional or national level).
- There are a wide range of partner roles within your project, including a mix of strategic and delivery partners who are making a clear contribution to your work (including match funding contributions as appropriate).
- Plans for continuing professional development extend beyond your own organisation and there is a strategy for sharing and disseminating learning from your project to the wider sector.
- There is a clear plan to embed elements of the programme beyond the life of the grant from Youth Music.
- The grant request is proportionate to your organisation's annual turnover.

For grant requests of £150,000 or more you should be able to answer 'yes' to all of the above, plus the following additional criteria:

- The programme will raise match funding equivalent to a minimum of 30% of the Youth Music grant request (at least 15% must be cash match funding).
- The project will run for 36 months.
- The programme will have a national impact, with plans to deliver the work across a minimum of two local authority areas at County or Unitary Authority level and to share practice at a significant scale.
- Programmes must work towards five outcomes, across all five outcome areas. The workforce outcome is set by Youth Music:
"To improve the ability of the workforce to deliver high-quality music-making activities for children and young people".

If you are considering submitting an application for a project with a request for funding in excess of £150,000, you must get prior approval from Youth Music's Grants and Learning Team **at least six weeks before the application deadline**. Please contact us on 0207 902 1060 or email grants@youthmusic.org.uk to discuss your proposal.

Calculating your project budget

Fund A

Fund A applicants can apply for a grant of between £2,000 and £30,000.

Fund B

Fund B applicants can apply for a total grant of between £30,001 and £150,000. In exceptional circumstances, we may award grants of £150,001 - £200,000 for cross-regional or national strategic programmes.

As a direct result of the continued high demand for our funding and our commitment to ensuring a diverse portfolio we anticipate that we will only be able to make a small number of Fund B grant awards over £100,000 each year. You should take this into account when considering how much funding to apply for, as there will be greater levels of competition for large grant requests over £100,000.

If you are considering submitting a grant request of £100,000 or more, you must first check whether your proposal meets the additional criteria detailed under the 'Large grant requests' section above.

All applicants

All applicants will be required to submit a full project budget (including breakdowns of all costs to demonstrate how you have reached the total amounts for each budget line). For more information, please see the [example budget form](#).

Direct costs

- Staff costs should be paid at or above the real [Living Wage](#).

Capital costs

- Total capital costs should not exceed 10% of your overall request for funding from Youth Music.
- Youth Music classes capital costs as physical items that have a use which extends beyond the project or that could be sold on once the project has been completed (e.g. instruments or computers).

Indirect costs

- Youth Music offers full cost recovery to ensure that grants awarded cover the true costs of running a project. This means that you can apply for a grant to cover the direct project costs plus a relevant share of your organisation's overheads (indirect costs).
- Indirect costs are the day-to-day overhead costs that help to support the proposed project, but also support other projects or activities that your organisation provides. These can include a proportion of the costs related to, for example: human resources, office rent and utilities, IT systems, governance, your organisation's insurance and audit fees.

- Total indirect costs should not exceed 20% of the overall request for funding from Youth Music.
- This toolkit from NPC is helpful for understanding the true costs of a project:
<https://www.thinknpc.org/publications/full-cost-recovery-2/>

We reserve the right to invite you to apply for an amount that is higher or lower than your original request.

Match funding

All Youth Music projects are expected to raise match funding. This will include both cash match funding and match funding in-kind (e.g. another organisation may provide you with a free venue for your music-making sessions).

The minimum thresholds for cash and in kind match funding vary depending on whether you are applying for a Fund A or Fund B grant and your total grant request amount. For information on minimum match funding thresholds, please see the **Which fund should I apply for?** table on page 8.

The following sources cannot be used towards the minimum Youth Music match funding requirement:

- Arts Council England funding (including Music Education Hub core funding).
- National Lottery funding (e.g. Awards for All, Big Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund)

Funds from the above sources can be included in your project, however they will not count towards the minimum match funding requirements.

Match funding guidance

There are two types of match funding which should be included in a Youth Music application:

- Cash match funding
- In kind match funding.

This guidance is designed to support you to calculate the amount of match funding your project is likely to bring in. It's important that you provide an accurate reflection of match funding when you make your application, in order to demonstrate the true cost of your project.

If you are successful in your grant application you need to provide evidence of cash match funding only. We don't usually ask for evidence of in kind match funding.

Types of match funding

Cash match funding is an amount of money given towards your project, typically a cash donation from an individual, grant-making organisation or corporate sponsor. Some organisations also use earned income (e.g. ticket sales) and their own reserves as cash match funding.

In kind match funding is a non-cash contribution to a project. Most in kind match funding can be categorised into three areas:

- Support associated with people and services
- Support associated with premises
- Support associated with goods.

In kind match funding

There is a wide variety of in kind match funding given to Youth Music projects. The most common types of contributions are described below, along with advice on how to calculate their value.

1. Support associated with people and services

Staff and volunteer time, waived/reduced fees and other specialist support.

- Applicant organisations often give in kind staff time for project support roles instead of listing them in indirect costs – for example communications, finance, HR, fundraising, or staff management.
- Remember to include your Board of Trustees when you consider how much in kind volunteer time is given to your project.
- Partner organisations may assign people to work on your project and cover the costs themselves. This may include pastoral support (e.g. youth worker attendance at sessions), mentoring, or even sitting on your project steering group.
- Specialist support is often given in the form of consultancy, evaluation advice, by external speakers presenting for free at conferences, or by visiting musicians delivering sessions.
- Sometimes other services – such as video recording, photography or transport – are provided by partner organisations.

How to calculate this support

We recommend you estimate the equivalent rate it would cost to pay someone to undertake the role or service they are providing. Overheads such as recruitment, training, insurance, National Insurance and expenses should also be included in the calculation where applicable.

2. Support associated with premises

Meeting space or venue hire in your own premises or at a partner's venue, if they are provided free or at a discounted rate.

- This includes meeting rooms, studios, rehearsal spaces, or other places where you deliver work and would usually have to pay for the space.
- Sometimes organisations receive free storage facilities for instruments and equipment.

How to calculate this support

If the space would normally be rented out, you can use standard hire rates. If you're getting a discount then list the in kind support amount as the total value of the discount.

3. Support associated with goods

Any goods, equipment or supplies that are gifted or loaned to you; or any of your own equipment that you use on the project but don't request funding for.

- Often partner organisations gift musical equipment or digital hardware or software to a project, or loan it at a reduced rate.
- Other in kind goods might include things like free tickets to performances or events, printing and merchandise, or food and refreshments.
- Applicant organisations often use their own instruments to deliver project work. Most musical instruments have a cost attached for repair and upkeep which can be thought of as an in kind contribution.

How to calculate this support

If you are getting the items for free, then use the market rate. If you are receiving a discount, work out how much your discount equates to and list this as the in kind value. If you are providing your own instruments then cost how much the standard annual maintenance and repair costs would be and then pro-rata this according to the length of your project.

Ready to apply?

Before applying, take a look at the practice application form for your chosen fund on the Youth Music Network. This will help you to plan your project and gather all the information you need.

Once you've planned your application, you can apply via Youth Music's online grants portal. (You will need to register on the grants portal - please note that this is a separate site from the Youth Music Network).

<https://grants.youthmusic.org.uk/Login.aspx>

What's required if I'm successful?

We ask applicants to select a project start date that is between 6 and 12 weeks after the funding decision because the following steps must be completed before we can process the first payment.

<p>1. Application form returned for changes</p>	<p>2. Grant Offer Acceptance form</p>	<p>3. Funding agreement issued</p>	<p>4. Initial Grant Requirements form</p>	<p>5. First payment</p>
<p>The assessment panel provides recommendations with all grant offers, and may require you to make some changes to your application form e.g. to your evaluation plan or budget lines.</p> <p><i>You will usually have 1-2 weeks to make these changes.</i></p>	<p>You will be asked to complete a "Grant Offer Acceptance Form" by a given deadline to confirm you wish to take up the funding.</p> <p><i>You will usually have 2 weeks to complete and submit the form.</i></p>	<p>Your assigned Grants & Learning Officer will issue your funding agreement and an "Initial Grant Requirements" form.</p> <p><i>It can take a few weeks for your Grants & Learning Officer to create your funding agreement.</i></p>	<p>To complete your Initial Grant Requirements form you must upload your signed funding agreement, evidence of bank details and match funding, and responses to any assessment panel recommendations.</p> <p><i>You will usually have around 4 weeks to complete the requirements and submit the form.</i></p>	<p>If your initial grant requirements are satisfactorily met your Grants & Learning Officer will process your first payment.</p> <p><i>We endeavour to make the first payment within 30 days of the submission of complete Initial Grant Requirements.</i></p>