

Youth Music Stakeholder Survey

2021 Summary

What is the stakeholder survey?

Every year, we send the stakeholder survey to all organisations that have applied for, or hold, a Youth Music grant.

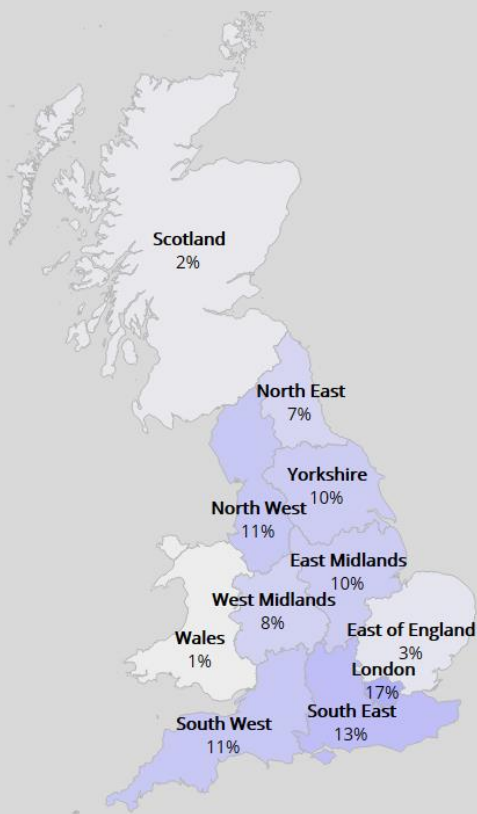
The survey is completed anonymously. It is an important way for us to check how we're doing as a funder, and how we can improve.

Respondent information

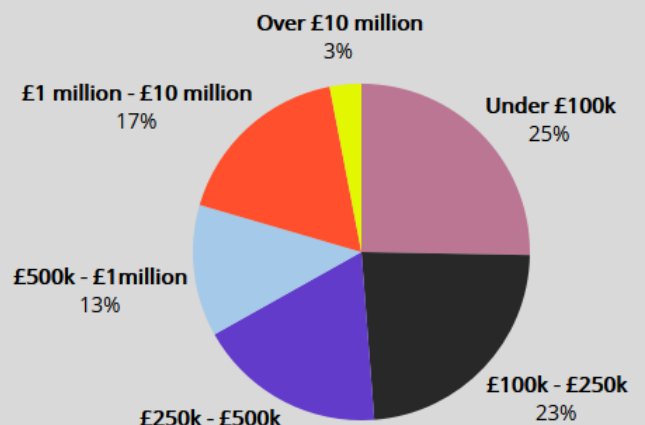
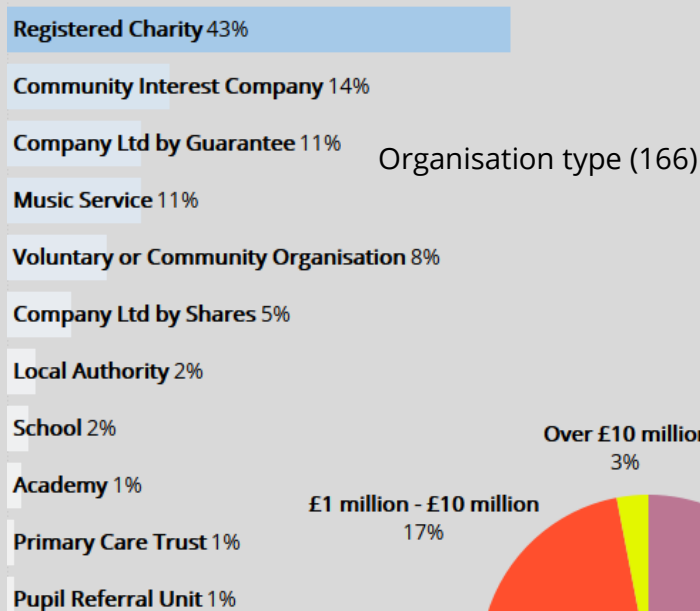
This year, the Stakeholder Survey had a response rate of **20%**.

Sixty-three percent of respondents indicated that they were a current grantholder. **Ten percent** were previous grantholders and **10%** were unsuccessful.

Forty-eight percent of grantholders held a Fund A, **39%** a Fund B, **10%** a Fund C and **16%** an Incubator Fund grant. **Thirteen percent** held two or more active grants.



Region of operation (166)
England/Multiple Regions 8%



Organisation turnover (166)

Applying for funding

Fifty-nine percent of respondents had applied for funding more than once. Thirty-seven percent had applied once and 4% had not applied for funding.

We asked respondents to rate the quality of the various aspects of the Youth Music application process:

	Very poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Excellent	Was aware of this, but did not use	Was not aware of this	#
Phone/email support from Youth Music staff	1%	1%	8%	15%	66%	6%	3%	157
Applicant guidance notes	1%		16%	36%	47%		1%	156
Information on Youth Music's current funding priorities and criteria	1%		10%	33%	54%	2%	1%	156
Information on Youth Music's currently funded projects	1%	1%	20%	32%	34%	10%	1%	157
Online grants portal (where you apply and manage grants)		1%	27%	43%	29%	1%		157
Application questions and language	1%	1%	18%	38%	40%	1%		155
Youth Music Network website	1%	1%	22%	38%	27%	6%	4%	156
Youth Music website	1%	1%	16%	45%	34%	4%		155

How would you rate the following aspects of the application process?

Many positive responses to qualitative questions throughout the survey related to aspects of the application process:

"Your application form is well laid out, with clear explanations of what you're looking for in responses to questions."

"Your pre-application guidance and resources are really clear and comprehensive. And any time I've called or emailed with questions your team have been really helpful."

When asked what they would **improve** about the process, one of the most common areas of focus was the **application portal** and the **Youth Music Network**:

"The online grants portal seems a bit outdated."

“The Network site often confuses with the Youth Music website itself. This can be made clearer.”

Others suggested changes to the **content** and **detail required** in the application:

“Less detail required in project proposal - we gave lots of detail and then it all changed! - so perhaps funding decisions might rest more on things like clarity of purpose, track record, partner involvement etc than on the fine detail of the proposed project.”

Relationships with Youth Music

We asked respondents to rate their level of agreement with the following statements about their relationship with Youth Music:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	#
Youth Music staff are often available to respond to my queries	2%		11%	33%	54%	148
Youth Music staff respond to my queries effectively	1%		10%	27%	62%	147
I feel comfortable approaching Youth Music staff with a problem	2%		8%	30%	60%	148
Youth Music staff are flexible with the requirements of my grant	1%	1%	18%	24%	55%	146
The requirements of my grant were made clear to me from the outset	1%	1%	8%	42%	47%	147

Notably, **90%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt comfortable approaching Youth Music staff with a problem.

“You excel at relationship management! Our Grant Officers have always been supportive and positive and we feel very comfortable coming to you with questions and/or requests to amend our delivery plan.”

“Every Youth Music staff member I have ever spoken to has been approachable, knowledgeable and helpful.”

Evaluation requirements and processes

Since the last Stakeholder Survey, Youth Music has refined some of the evaluation requirements we ask of grantholders, with the aim of being lighter touch and more flexible.

We asked funded organisations to rate their level of agreement with the following statements about their evaluation practice:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	#
My evaluation skills have improved as a result of reporting to Youth Music	1%	1%	39%	39%	20%	142
I use the evaluation data I collect for Youth Music reporting for other purposes (e.g. other funders, own organisational use)	1%	1%	21%	43%	34%	142
I have been well supported with the evaluation process by Youth Music staff and resources	1%	2%	28%	50%	20%	141
Reporting to Youth Music is accessible to me and my organisation	1%	1%	22%	53%	23%	142

Several qualitative responses discussed how the new way of reporting to Youth Music were more useful for their organisation:

“A good improvement, more flexible and like being able to design our own format of reporting on our outcomes. This has made the reporting much more meaningful and given it a new function in developing our relationship with our partners and how we develop our programmes with them.”

Since the last Stakeholder Survey, we have also refined the evaluation guidance offered to applicants and grantholders. It was published in April 2021 and we received emergent feedback about it from the survey.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	#
The guidance is accessible to my organisation			14%	59%	27%	92
The guidance covers everything I need to know to evaluate my Youth Music project		2%	17%	63%	17%	92
The guidance is clear and easy to understand			13%	60%	27%	92
The guidance can improve my skills in evaluation		1%	14%	64%	21%	92

Youth Music's impact

We asked respondents to rate their level of agreement with the following statements about Youth Music's impact on various aspects of their work:

	No impact	Below average impact	Average impact	Above average impact	Significant impact	#
Your organisation	7%	2%	8%	35%	48%	144
Your organisation's approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	11%	3%	36%	28%	22%	144
Your organisation's Safeguarding practices	18%	4%	47%	24%	6%	144
Your wider field of work	10%	1%	19%	45%	26%	144

Both grantholders and unsuccessful applicants spoke about the positive impact Youth Music had on their organisation:

"Youth Music was one of our first major funders and the process of receiving and delivering the grant gave us a really strong framework for all our projects."

"We have not received grant from Youth Music, but the act of applying has deepened our reflection and awareness about applying for funding in general and about how we thinking about and clarify our priorities and be clear about the need for our project work. YM has also raised our intention and practice in consulting young people in greater depth at all layers of the organisation."

When asked specifically about Youth Music's impact on organisations' Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and safeguarding practices, some felt that these practices were already embedded in their work separately from working with Youth Music, whereas others felt Youth Music had had an impact in these areas too:

"Not really sure how to answer for Youth Music's impact on our organisation's EDI approach or safeguarding. Safeguarding and EDI/equality are central to every strand of everything our org does, and therefore not specifically impacted by any one funder."

"Youth Music support has helped us develop the professionalism of key staff and turn young people into professionals. On Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Youth Music has helped us tighten our focus and attune to wider developments. On safeguarding, Youth Music has paid for additional training to raise staff awareness of specific issues pertaining to music delivery, e.g. counselling skills and CME. It has impacted our wider field of work by linking our music project in with community partners, bringing added value to other projects and improving the fabric of youth provision in our region."

Youth Music's grant-making principles

Youth Music is committed to being a [Flexible Funder](#) . We've signed up to eight principles to inform how we work, and added an extra two of our own. They are:

1. *We will not waste your time. We will explain our funding priorities clearly; we will be open and transparent about all our requirements and exclusions.*
2. *We will only ask relevant questions. We will only collect information that we must have to make funding decisions; we will test our application forms rigorously to make sure our questions are clear and do not overlap.*
3. *We will accept our share of risk. We will be realistic about how much assurance applicants can reasonably give us; we will clearly explain how we assess risk when we make our funding decisions.*
4. *We will act with urgency. We will seek to work at a pace that meets the needs of applicants; we will publish and stick to our timetables; we will make our decisions as quickly as possible.*
5. *We will be transparent about our decisions. We will give feedback; we will analyse and publish success rates and reasons for rejection; we will share our data.*
6. *We will enable you to respond flexibly to changing priorities and needs. We will make our funding as flexible as possible.*
7. *We will be clear about our relationship from the start. We will be realistic about time commitments; we will ensure that our contact is positive and purposeful.*
8. *We will commit to light touch reporting. We will ensure that our formal reporting requirements are well understood, proportionate and meaningful.*
9. *We will be accessible. We will ensure that our guidance and application form questions can be understood. Our website and grant management software should be easy to navigate and use.*
10. *We will involve people in our programme design and decision-making. We will consult with people to inform how we do things, and act upon their feedback. We will bring people with experience participating in and running Youth Music projects into our assessment and decision-making.*

We asked respondents to rate Youth Music's progress against these principles:

	Very poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Excellent	#
Not wasting time	1%	1%	7%	41%	49%	162
Relevant questioning	1%		17%	48%	35%	162
Accepting risk	1%	2%	16%	49%	33%	160
Acting with urgency	1%	1%	18%	35%	44%	159
Transparency	1%	1%	17%	41%	40%	160
Flexible funding	1%	1%	14%	27%	58%	160
Clear about our relationship	1%		9%	38%	53%	158
Light touch reporting	1%	3%	26%	36%	34%	157
Accessibility	1%	2%	17%	38%	43%	159
Participatory practice	1%	2%	18%	43%	36%	155