



**Frequently Asked Questions – Composer-Curator 2021**

To assist those interested in applying for the Composer-Curator 2021 programme, we have compiled this list of frequently asked questions (FAQs).

We will update these regularly in response to new questions, enquiries and comments. But, if you can’t find the answer to your question here, please email Heather Blair, Creative Project Leader for Composer-Curator – [heather.blair@soundandmusic.org](mailto:heather.blair@soundandmusic.org)

**Who runs Composer-Curator?**

The Composer-Curator programme is managed and delivered by the Sound and Music team as part of our Audience Egungagement and Artist Development work, with regional-specific support provided for the 2021 by our partners [Back to Ours](http://www.backtoours.co.uk/), Hull and [Sunderland Culture](https://sunderlandculture.org.uk/).

Lisa Meyer, Artistic Director at [Supersonic Festival](https://supersonicfestival.com/) will also provide mentoring support to those selected for the programme.

Composer-Curator is funded by Sound and Music, Arts Council England and PRS Foundation.

**What does the partnership with Back to Ours and Sunderland Culture mean for the Composer-Curator 2021 programme?**

In line with our commitment to ***bringing more new music to more people***, who may not normally have access to it we have developed this year’s Composer-Curator programme in partnership with Back to Ours and Sunderland Culture both areas which have been identified as having low provision.

Our aim is to support composers, music-creators and collectives who have a meaningful connection to Hull or Sunderland to develop their curatorial skills and artistic ambitions, and to build thriving, more sustainable and inclusive communities for new music in these cities.

A bespoke package of financial support along with practical guidance on areas such as fundraising, marketing, audience engagement and event production will be led by Sound and Music. Back to Ours and Sunderland Culture will provide more focussed support based around local knowledge, insight and networks, and will also be involved with the selection and interview process for their respective cities.

We believe it is essential that those applying have good knowledge of these areas in order for the programme and their events to be successful.

**Eligibility**

**Am I eligible to apply?**

To be eligible to apply for Composer-Curator 2021 you must be a composer, music-creator or part of collective aged **over 18 years old and based in the UK**.

You must also be able to demonstrate a clear and meaningful connection to either Hull or Sunderland and a commitment to building a thriving, inclusive and sustainable community for new music in one of these cities.

Unfortunately, we are not able to accept applications from those in full-time, undergraduate education and those who are currently participating in a Sound and Music programme.

**What do you mean by a ‘composer’?**

We use the word ‘composer’ to describe any individual who creates new work using sound or music, whether they perform it themselves or write for others – and whether they work with software, notes on paper, through improvisation, or in other ways.

We welcome applications from composers, music-creators and collectives working in many different musical styles or genres – from jazz to electronic, grime, folk, non-western music, contemporary classical - in fact those working in just about any form of experimental new sound and music are eligible to apply.

**What do you mean by ‘meaningful connection’?**

Firstly, we don’t mean that applicants need to live or currently be based in these cities.

Although that would be brilliant, we are looking to support people who have some connections to these places and surrounding regions – maybe through family, study, previous work or similar – who understand these cities, their current scenes and audiences.

**I’ve been part of a Sound and Music programme in the past, can I apply again?**

If you have been selected for Composer-Curator in previous years then unfortunately you are unable to apply again.

However, we are happy to receive applications from those who have previously been selected for our other programmes where they meet the criteria.

Note those who are currently participating in Sound and Music programme are not eligible.

**I am a composer/music-creator working in collaboration with an artist, curator or producer, can we apply together?**

Yes, you can. Composer-Curator welcomes applications by composers working with collaborators in different mediums and disciplines – both inside and outside of new music.

**I am part of a collective or organisation currently in receipt of funding, are we eligible?**

It depends. Unfortunately, we are not able to support projects that are produced by an organisation receiving core funding such as Arts Council England’s National Portfolio Scheme or equivalent, or funding received from local authorities or higher education institutions.

However, projects receiving funding from other sources such as Arts Council England’s Project Grants or the PRS Foundation are eligible.

**How much experience should I have of curating and producing events?**

Where possible, applicants should be able to demonstrate some experience or networks that will help you to deliver your project. The programme provides practical guidance on areas such as fundraising, marketing, audience engagement and event production, so you don’t need to be a professional curator, producer or promoter to apply - in fact we very much welcome composers and music-creators who are looking to grow and build their curatorial skills.

However, you should be aware that Sound and Music does not produce these projects on your behalf and therefore you must be confident in your ability to deliver your project offline/online or in a hybrid format.

**The Application Process**

**When is the deadline for applications?**

The deadline for applications is Sunday 4th April at 11:59pm, we cannot accept late applications.

**Do I need to have a specific project in mind before I apply?**

Yes, you should have an idea of the type of event(s) that you want to create, the artists you want to work with, the audiences you want to reach, the spaces you might present in and the impact you want your project to have.

We recognise that your ideas may develop and change over the course of the programme but your applications should be well thought out and as details possible, demonstrating both the ideas behind the project as well as the practicalities of how it might be realised.

We require a clear sense of the project in order to understand whether it is achievable within the budget provided.

Keep in mind that the programme takes place over a 10-month period and encompasses development and production phases, with completion of the programme expected by March 2022.

The more fully formed your ideas are, the easier it is for the us to visualise the type of project you might want to produce and to understand what support you might need from us

**Is there any access support available for making the application?**

Yes. We can offer alternative application methods, extensions for the application process, as well as financial support for anyone who needs to pay for additional access support, including at interview stage, please contact [alex.noble@soundandmusic.org](mailto:alex.noble@soundandmusic.org) to discuss how we can help.

**Can I make an audio/video application?**

Yes. If you would prefer to submit your application as an audio or video recording, the [online application portal](https://airtable.com/shrskYhpBglWf7CDT) enables you to submit a link to a site where we can view or listen.

This could be an unlisted video link to YouTube or Vimeo. Alternatively, you can provide a link from a file sharing service like Dropbox or Google Drive.

**Please include the password, if your video is password-protected**

Your audio or video file should be 8 minutes max and address all questions in the application form except for your proposed budget template which you should submit using the usual application form. If you require support with any of this please contact [alex.noble@soundandmusic.org](mailto:alex.noble@soundandmusic.org)

**What are the selection panel looking for and what makes a strong application?**

Please refer to the guidance notes for more information on the criteria that will be used by selection panel to review applications.

A strong application is:

* Clear (and easy to read)
* Authentic (to your voice and style)
* Compelling (we want to be excited by your vision)
* Realistic (we want you to be able to make this happen)

**If I reach the interview stage, what format will the interview take?**

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview over Zoom, with the names of the interviewers provided in advance.

You will be asked to answer some standardised questions that will be consistent with all applicants.

We will then ask a number of questions relating to your specific project, this is so we can gain a better understanding of your ideas and your understanding of the audiences you want to reach and the local context, as well as their feasibility within the timeframe and budget.

To help you prepare and feel comfortable during your interview, we will share these questions within you in advance.

You will also have the opportunity to ask the panel any questions you might have, in regards to this year's programme.

We will inform shortlisted applicants in writing within four weeks of the interview.

**Are you able to offer feedback on my application?**

We will be in touch by week commencing 17th May to update you on whether or not your application has been successful.

We are able to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants upon request.

**Budget**

**How much can I apply for?**

You can apply to Sound and Music for up to £4000 towards the cost of your project.

Please bear in mind that the amount offered may be lower and will be determined by the needs of the project.

**Note that the approximate amount awarded per project in 2020 was £3500.**

**Do I need to provide evidence of other income sources and in-kind contributions in my application?**

No, while you might have some other income and in-kind support confirmed for the project before applying, Sound and Music are able to commit funds to the project without having further funding sources such as grants, bursaries or ticket sales secured at the time of application.

**What do you mean by ‘in-kind’ support?**This refers to the donation of goods or services that you may receive towards the project. This is usually something that you receive free of charge or at a reduced rate, such as a venue or rehearsal space or equipment or materials. If you have been or expect to be given in-kind support, you should mention this on the application form.

**If you are successful**

**If I am successful, how many events will I need to produce and when will they take place?**

Composer-Curators should plan for **at least** two public-facing events to take place between May 2021 and March 2022.

Changing circumstances relating to Covid-19 will be reviewed regularly in discussion with your Creative Project Leader.

**What impact will Covid-19 have on Composer-Curator in 2021?**

We don’t know exactly. With the continuing situation surrounding Covid-19, we understand that Composer-Curator’s usual focus on live events may have to flex and shift.

Given this uncertainty, we want to know that any events taking place as part of the programme will be carried out in a way that is safe for both artists and audiences.

Applicants proposing live projects should give consideration to how their projects can be reframed using a hybrid live/digital approach, or exclusively digital delivery method should government guidelines remain in place.

We have learnt a lot with our 2020 cohort, all of who we have continued to support during this difficult time – you can read more about them here: https://soundandmusic.org/post/meet-our-2020-composer-curators/

**What is the Impact and Insight Toolkit and how will I be expected to use it?**

The Impact and Insight Toolkit is a new resource to help Arts Council England’s funded organisations to evaluate the impact of their work on the people who experience it.

The Toolkit uses sets of metrics to explore what audiences, participants and peers think about a performance, an event or a project. It allows organisations to understand people’s perceptions of their work and how this aligns with their creative intentions.

The resulting insights can be used to inform future practice, as well as enrich the conversation between organisations and funders about the impact of funded work.

All those selected for the Composer-Curator 2021 programme will be expected to use the Impact and Insight Toolkit to evaluate the impact that their projects have had on audiences, participants and peers.

But don’t worry! Training and support on how to use the Toolkit and incorporate it into your work will be provided by the Sound and Music team.

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**I’ve read the guidance notes and FAQ’s but still have a question. What should I do?**

If you can’t find the answer to your question, please contact Heather Blair, Creative Project Leader – [heather.blair@soundandmusic.org](mailto:heather.blair@soundandmusic.org)