

Guiding principles for Music Patron

Definition

These guiding principles for Music Patron encapsulate the higher level assumptions, values and intention behind Music Patron.

What are the guiding principles for?

These guiding principles are intended to be a useful framework for the future development of Music Patron, and to support everybody involved in navigating the path to success (including a clear understanding of what success is).

They aim to underpin effective and aligned activity on the work to come, consistent with the founding vision of Music Patron. As such they encourage trust in the executive team who will be empowered to work with agility and innovation on a day to day basis within this framework.

They will also serve as a helpful shared reference point for discussions and decisions that will shape Music Patron, supporting all involved to keep in mind the unique characteristics of this project.

What are they?

1. Music Patron aims to create something of lasting value that will shift the system of support for and public perception of composers over the long term. This means:
 - The grant funding for Music Patron is to build the “institution” that makes this happen: Assets, people, infrastructure, systems, processes, content, materials, relationships etc.
 - Longer term systemic change is the priority, although there will also be benefits to composers in the shorter term
2. Music Patron is not like anything that currently exists - it is a new model. While its development will be informed by active curiosity about similar models, it will have very clear differentiators that will be important to its success in this very specific domain.
3. As a completely new model, Music Patron has risks and achieving the greatest level of success will require taking many risks along the way. Having an appetite for this level of uncertainty is unusual in the arts, but essential to Music Patron’s success. Trying things when we can’t be sure of the outcome, learning from them and thus working through the risks is one of the key purposes of the development phase. Failure is a potential part of risk taking and we agree to respond to failures and setbacks with honesty and learning, not recrimination and blame. We also recognise that assumptions are bound to arise – at times we will want to state these explicitly and test them, at other times a more pragmatic approach may be required.
4. There are inherent tensions in Music Patron that may include (but not only):

- What is the balance between already-successful composers and those who need support the most?
 - What is the balance between digital-savvy composers (who will be quickest and most adept at drawing patrons to the platform) and those who will have more to overcome and learn to take best advantage of Music Patron?
 - How can we cater for patrons who are already passionate about new music as well as patrons who have not supported composers before?
 - To what extent is Music Patron shaped by user behaviour, or by longer term strategic intentions? What is the balance between what works, and what we perceive as being where the need is greatest?
5. Music Patron will be at its best when those tensions are openly acknowledged and embraced, and a balanced path negotiated between them. We will do that by a number of means including (but not only):
- Explicit and courageous acknowledgement of the tensions
 - A creative approach to opening up thinking e.g. multiple viewpoints, external input, exploring different options
 - Being comfortable with ambiguity - the 'right' answer in any given situation may change according to timing and context
 - Testing and trialling at a micro level to see how going one way or another affects things and learning from experience
 - We will focus on learning and prioritise outcomes over outputs
 - Periodic persevere or pivot discussions
6. The development of Music Patron will be undertaken with agility and innovation at its heart. This means:
- Because it is completely new (as per principle 2 above), we will aim to get a prototype (i.e. anything we put in front of users for testing) out there in front of real people sooner rather than later - this will be prioritised over more careful and lengthy development and project management. Further development will also be undertaken in shorter sprints
 - Each period of grant funding will be framed around an agreed set of milestones / intentions / direction, which can be executed with a high degree of autonomy and agility by Sound and Music
 - Unnecessarily formal or overly detailed project planning is not only not expected, it is agreed that it is not the right approach for Music Patron
7. Music Patron will be developed through an open and collaborative approach with composers, patrons and the wider music sector. We believe that this will mean that Music Patron has a greater chance of success.