Commissioning Policy

The appointment of Hub partners, individuals and organisations, is the responsibility of the Hub Lead Organisation, ratified by the Hub Board, who will also review and approve this Policy. Partnerships may be sought with organisations which will enhance the offer of the Hub, by offering skills knowledge and capacity that enhances and broadens the musical reach of the Hub. Many of these will be based on long association and collaboration. Others may be opportunistic, ad hoc, and/or short term for a specific project.

Where there is a need to recruit a partner to cover a new or specific area of work, the HLO will advertise the opportunity through an open tendering/competitive bidding application process.

All individuals and organisations invited to work in partnership within the Hub, are expected to agree and model the Core, Values and ethos of the HLO: Inspire, Nurture, Excel, enabling Child Centred Leaning.

Partnership Agreements will be drawn up and signed with any Partners where there is a formal agreement that the Partner will deliver an element of work directed by the HLO.

It is the responsibility of all Hub Partners to ensure that all children and young people participating in music education activities as part of the Hub are inspired, experience enjoyment and take meaningful value from the music education they participate in, so that they are motivated and supported to continue along their chosen progression pathway.

The quality of all Hub activity is the responsibility of all partners overseen by the Hub Lead Organisation, which has the responsibility to ensure quality of all delivery within the Hub. Representatives of the HLO have the right to attend and observe activity carried out for or on behalf of the Hub.

1.0 Purpose & Aim

1.1 This Policy exists to outline how partners and services will be appointed and secured by Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust, Hub Lead Organisation for the Northamptonshire and Rutland Music Hub, to deliver the promises of the National Plan for Music Education for the children, young people, and communities, of Northamptonshire and Rutland.

1.2 This Policy aims to:

- Clearly outline how partners and services will be appointed and secured by the Hub Lead Organisation (HLO), and/or overseen by the Hub board
- Outline how our partners are varied, diverse and representative
- Set out the Hub board's role in approving and reviewing this policy, at least annually
- Ensure an appropriate range of partners are commissioned/procured to support and deliver the Hub's programme of activity and strategic functions
- Set out how quality and performance will be monitored, and how funding will be distributed and monitored to support the delivery of the Music Hub's Local Plan for Music Education (LPME)
- Give information on how opportunities to join the partnership and/or deliver Hub activity will be promoted to ensure the Hub evolves in response to the developing needs and context of the Hub area

2.0 Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to all partners working with the Northamptonshire and Rutland Music Hub.

2.2 This Policy does not form part of a partner's Service Level Agreement or Partnership agreement and may be amended from time to time.

3.0 What is Commissioning?

3.1 The HLO accepts the definition of commissioning as 'the process of specifying, securing and monitoring partners to meet people's needs". Commissioning is more commonly used to describe the strategic, long-term process by which this takes place, as opposed to the short-term operational purchasing process.

3.2 The process of commissioning relates to ensuring the best use of resources (time, money, people and premises) to secure services of the appropriate quality to meet the identified needs.

4.0 Our Approach to Commissioning

4.1 The following commissioning principles have been identified to define our approach to commissioning:

1. **Quality and Excellence:** Commission partners that demonstrate a commitment to delivering high-quality music education that aligns with national standards.

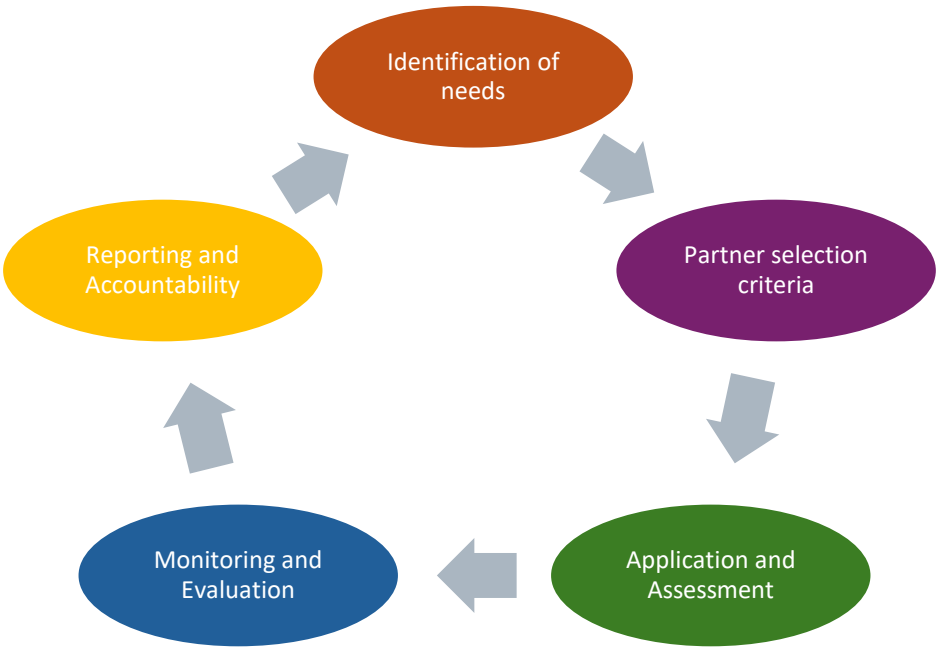
2. **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Prioritise partners who can engage diverse and underrepresented groups, ensuring equitable access to music education.

3. **Collaboration and Partnership:** Foster a collaborative approach where commissioned partners work together to enhance the overall impact of the Music Hub.

4. **Innovation and Creativity:** Encourage innovative approaches to music education that inspire creativity and engage students in new and exciting ways.

5. **Sustainability and Impact:** Ensure that commissioned activities are sustainable and have a measurable impact on the musical development of children and young people.

5.0 The Commissioning Cycle



5.1 Identification of Needs

- Conduct a needs analysis to identify gaps and priorities in music education provision.
- Engage with stakeholders, including schools, parents, and young people, to gather insights and feedback.

5.2 Partner Selection Criteria

Potential partners will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Experience and Track Record:** Demonstrated experience in delivering music education programs.

- **Quality of Provision:** Evidence of high-quality, impactful music education initiatives.
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** Commitment to proactively supporting and improving representation, equity, diversity, and inclusion across all protected characteristics within their work.
- **Innovation:** Ability to deliver innovative and creative music education projects.
- **Capacity and Sustainability:** Capacity to deliver sustainable and scalable programs.
- **Safeguarding:** Commitment to Child Protection/Safeguarding best-practice, with robust policies in place and regular training for all staff.

5.3 Application and Assessment

- Open call for proposals outlining specific priorities and objectives.
- Provide clear guidance on application requirements and evaluation criteria.
- Establish a transparent assessment process involving a panel of experts and stakeholders.

5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

- Develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the impact and effectiveness of commissioned activities.
- Set clear targets and outcomes for commissioned partners.
- Conduct regular reviews and feedback sessions with partners to ensure continuous improvement.

5.5 Reporting and Accountability

- Require commissioned partners to submit regular progress reports.
- Conduct observations of activity to ensure compliance and quality.
- Provide feedback and support to partners to enhance delivery and outcomes.

5.6 To ensure transparency in accountability, the HLO, as key delivery partner for West Northamptonshire, North Northamptonshire and Rutland, will be commissioned through this policy as per other partners.

6.0 Funding and Resource Allocation

6.1 Funding will be allocated based on the type of activity being delivered.

6.2 The HLO will ensure a fair and transparent distribution of resources to commissioned partners, and partnership agreements will include the relevant Additional Conditions and the standard Terms and Conditions.

6.3 The HLO will continue to explore additional funding opportunities to support and expand its programmes of activity.

6.4 Being a Partner of the Northamptonshire and Rutland Music Hub does not mean that there is automatic access to Hub Grant Funds.

6.5 Hub Grant Funds are primarily reserved for delivery of activities that meet the aims and objectives of the National Plan for Music Education as determined through the Needs Analysis. There are no guarantees that funds will be awarded to Hub Partners that are delivering activities that meet the aims of the NPME.

6.6 All Hub Partners must work to secure additional funding from a variety of sources to support their work, that is at least equal to the value of any grant. For example, fundraising, trading, applying for grants etc.

7.0 Governance and Oversight

7.1 All activity of the Hub is overseen, by the Hub Lead Organisation, NMPAT, and monitored by the Hub Board, an independent sub-committee of the main Trust Board. All Hub partners will be overseen by the Director of Ensembles and Projects in collaboration with other members of the NMPAT Senior Leadership Team.

7.2 Delivery and strategic partners may be invited to participate in the Northamptonshire and Rutland Music Hub Board.

7.3 Details of the governance of the Hub Board are captured in the Terms of Reference.

7.4 The HLO will ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

8.0 Monitoring and Review of the Policy

8.1 The Hub Board will monitor the outcomes and impact of this Policy on an annual basis, to assess its effectiveness throughout the Organisation and its continuing compliance with legislation.