

Youth Voice Network

Evaluation Report

South West Coastal Hub Alliance

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1. Introduction

1.1. The project

The South West Coastal Hub Alliance's (SWCHA) Youth Voice Network was established thanks to grant funding from Youth Music. The South West Coast Alliance of Music Education Hubs aimed to improve inclusion for children and young people from under-represented groups by ensuring they have action and agency in shaping the music-making opportunities available to them.

A Youth Voice Engagement Worker (YVEW) was commissioned by each hub and provided training and development to help them better engage with, and respond to, the voices of young people. Through action research projects they developed, reviewed, and improved upon approaches for bringing voices of under-represented young people into each hub's offer. Through a network of these workers and young people, and a regional Youth Voice conference, this progress towards greater inclusion was shared across the region.

Hubs participating:

- Southampton
- Isle of Wight (IOW)
- Portsmouth
- Dorset
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP)



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1.2. Evaluation Approach and Process

The workforce involved in the project have been encouraged and supported to keep reflective journals throughout the programme, to collect evidence of learning and progress towards the project outcomes. They have been supported to share their experiences with each other through facilitated one-to-one and group reflection sessions. YVEWs have used these journals and reflective practice sessions to document and share the experiences of the young people participating, shared with them through the many informal conversations which have been part of their sessions. We have also used surveys to collect feedback from young people participating in the programme, including asking them for their experience of the skills, knowledge and understanding of the YVEWs.

Qualitative data has also been collected via participation records across the activities. Hub leads have been given surveys to complete which collects the quantitative and qualitative data required to evidence the organisational outcomes, including providing evidence of hub policies and other documentation.



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2. Project Summary

Spring Term 2021

- Recruitment of Youth Voice Engagement Workers (YVEW) across each region (5 x 0.1FTE)¹

Summer Term 2021

- Youth Voice training – delivered by SoundConnections
- Action research project planning and consultation – each hub drawing on their own needs analysis, and building on the workforce skills developed through the training sessions, to design youth voice action research projects to:
 - Engage children and young people from under-represented groups
 - Build authentic relationships and contexts where young people feel their voices are listened to and their opinions valued
 - Allow young people have agency in shaping the music-making opportunities available to them
 - Ensure access is equitable, aiming to offer the greatest support to those facing the biggest barriers to engagement

Autumn Term 2021 and Spring Term 2022

- Action research project delivery
- YVEW join hub boards
- YVEW network meetings

Additionally, in Southampton and IOW, two Kickstart positions for young people (aged 18–25) currently on Universal Credit, were created and appointed: Youth Voice Lead and Music Studio Assistant.

The action research projects each addressed their own area of under-representation:

- **Southampton** – *Gurmaan Digwa* – rap and hip-hop focussed sessions, working with young people referred through youth offending teams and other referral agencies
- **Isle of Wight** – *Em Johnson* – songwriting and music mentoring focused sessions, working with older young people at alternative provision setting, Island Learning Centre
- **Dorset** – *Isaac Rogers* – online music community on Discord for children and young in care
- **Portsmouth** – *Ruth Morgan* – songwriting approach for children and young people with mental health and language barriers

¹ Example [Job Description is included in the references at the end](#)



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- **Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP)** – *Sandy Elkins* – developing an open-access music club with children and young people who identify as LGBTQ+

The Action Research projects led workshops and event directly commissioned by young people, including:

- Music clubs
- One-to-one mentoring and support
- Rap masterclasses
- Music lessons
- Instrument and equipment loans
- Performances

Summer Term 2022

- Action research projects close and evaluated
- Youth Voice Conference, co-designed with young people



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3. Evidence Relating to Outcomes

3.1. Outcome 1: to improve equality, diversity and inclusion practices in participating Music Education Hubs

Higher numbers and diversity of young people involved in youth voice and participation activities

All (5 hubs, 100%) hubs reported engaging and working with young people they had not previously worked with before, and who come from backgrounds or circumstances which are currently under-represented within their hub participation data. For each hub, this represented an increase and diversification of the young people involved in youth voice and participation activities. Whilst this was not always large numbers of young people, often small groups of 2-5, the vast majority of the young people participating engaged on a sustained basis.

As a result of participating in the youth voice activities, the hubs have seen young people progressing to further music-making opportunities in a way which aligns with their interests, ambition and needs. In Southampton, two young people have been awarded grants from Southampton Music Trust to continue their one-to-one rap and songwriting support, and the rap group established as part of the project will continue as part of the hub funded ensemble offer. On the IOW, one young person has since chosen to take part in a local music club as a result of their participation in the project, an opportunity they were made aware of whilst taking part. In Portsmouth three young people have been signposted to progression opportunities for instruments they expressed an interest in during sessions, and feedback from the participants' school has been that for all those who took part in the youth voice sessions, their engagement in curriculum music has significantly improved. In BCP, young people from the sessions are now part of a youth consultation group which meet regularly with the hub lead to suggest and give feedback on future hub activity. In Dorset the Discord platform set up to engage young people is continuing in use, with a small but growing community of young people actively using the platform to collaborate and share ideas.

The Hub lead organisation and key staff have an increased understanding of inclusion and are better able to support it

Hub leads have provided evidence of their increased understanding of inclusion.

Project Manager, Matt Brombley (Southampton and IOW), reflects on the impact of the programme on his practice:



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This project has completely transformed the way I develop, design, deliver, staff, manage, and evaluate projects going forward.

In terms of development, I would not begin a project that did not have, or was not working towards getting, a clear mandate from consultation with young people about its relevance to their interest, ambitions and needs.

In terms of design, I am now constantly looking for opportunities to design projects in a way which allows young people more of a voice. In a practical sense, this often means designing a journey, not a destination, building in capacity and resources for meaningful collaboration with young people, and getting comfortable with a little bit more uncertainty at the start.

In terms of delivery, this again is about looking for opportunities: opportunities to empower and enable young people to make choices and decisions which impact them. This often starts small, and requires the building of trust. This takes time. This takes commitment to follow through and follow up. This means getting comfortable with young people saying no. This means young people knowing that we will show up for them. This means patience. This means getting comfortable with sharing control and power.

In terms of staffing, adding young people to my team has only made me more passionate about adding more. I would now start with asking if a job can be done by a young person, and actively look for ways to bring them into our workforce.

In terms of management, I am having to learn to get comfortable with leading projects which might not always go the way we planned or expected. I am having to empower my team to in turn empower young people to share and make decisions. I am having to let go of some of my much neater, tidier expectations of what a project should be, and get comfortable with managing in a more responsive way.

In terms of evaluation, I am finding ways to let young people have more agency here too. This has started with finding ways for participants to tell me what progress they feel they have made to sit alongside the experience of music leaders and other adults in the room. This is now also starting to include young people in the outcomes setting process, so that they cannot just say what progress they have made but have agency in what type of progress they think is important.

Without a doubt, this project has fundamentally changed my whole approach to my work.

Nia Collins, IOW Hub Lead:

As IOW Hub lead, I now feel that we are embedding YV activities into everything we do particularly in terms of the Hub menu of activities and enrichment for schools. For example what previously would have been a songbook resource now will always include compositional input from CYP at the outset to involve



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them in the creative process (e.g. Biosphere Big Sing in 2021-22). I feel that this has given CYP (and also their schools and teachers) much more 'ownership' of those projects and the outcomes helping to drive up numbers of participation and enjoyment and engagement generally. This has meant a different approach for our workshop leaders and in how we support them to plan and deliver sessions and has also meant that we alter the CPD and training that we give to staff in schools to ensure they are including this in their planning for musical activities in school to be inclusive and include YV.

Em Johnson, IOW Team Member:

[This project] has really opened my eyes to how little say young people have in what they learn and how they learn it. Their opinions and voices are important, and this project has shown how important it is to centre future projects on young people having their voices.

Ruth Morgan, Inclusion Lead at Portsmouth Music Hub:

The project has involved frequent self-evaluation before, during and after each session. Being flexible to respond to the needs of the young people involved with youth voice as the priority for these sessions has given me lots of opportunity to develop my first-hand experience of inclusive working with young people with special needs.

Feedback from the teachers and support workers of young people involved in this initiative has been helpful and the benefits of music to support 'whole child' development have helped me understand further the effect of music and it's inclusive impact:

"Where one pupil barely smiled at all in class before the sessions, X is now smiling frequently in class"

"X was extremely tearful in class throughout last year and X's confidence and self-esteem appears to have improved significantly since beginning the sessions. X and X who attend the sessions work together to resolve problems as and when they arise in class which they didn't do before. They also now regard themselves as boomwhacker experts so when playing in whole class sessions their confidence has increased significantly." Quote from class teacher.

Clair McColl, Dorset Music Hub Lead:

Many lessons have been learned about the need to adapt our leadership and management practices in order to facilitate and develop new Youth Music Leaders. The ideas and fresh perspectives about how to effectively and authentically connect with young people, and 'on their turf' in platforms they already use, were fantastic and has informed our plans for future engagement and co-production of music-making projects with young people that better speak to their interests. The Youth Voice training from Sound Connections and discussion and feedback from the virtual conference has increased the confidence and



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understanding of how to embed young people's voices in our decision-making, planning and the delivery of provision.

Dan Somogyi, SoundStorm (BCP) Hub Lead:

The project has greatly enhanced our understanding both of the importance and some of the challenges of Youth Voice work. It has been our most sustained piece of work with youth voice as a key focus. What has emerged is that young people are keen to contribute, lead and shape activities; and that a creative focus is an excellent way to do this. We have developed a core group of young people willing to contribute; plus much greater knowledge of the process; and also the many nuances that exist in the overall term, 'youth voice'. The project has seen our staff knowledge of youth voice enhanced. We now feel, through the knowledge built up through an action learning capacity, the CPD and peer support as part of the project, and the contact with various groups of young people, including many previously under-represented, that we are in a much better place to incorporate youth voice in our strategies. That said, it is an ongoing learning process.

Our main partner in this project has been Sandie Campbell, our Youth Voice Engagement Worker. Her knowledge of youth voice process and range of contacts has been greatly enhanced by the project, including through interactions with young people, local authority inclusion contacts, musicians and others. Particular thanks should go to Matt Brombley at Southampton Music Service for mentoring Sandie throughout the project, and for organising some very useful CPD. Conversely, the knowledge we at SoundStorm have built up through this project, and that of Sandie, has also been fed back to our council contacts, musical partners and others; and has informed how we plan future projects together.

The Music Education Hub sees musical inclusion as a priority

In Southampton and IOW, we have seen the board increasingly understand and prioritise inclusion along with the broader EDI agenda. This is very tangible in a number of specific outcomes. Firstly, the board has invited the Youth Voice Engagement Workers to join as full members, giving Youth Voice higher priority in discussions and decision making. Secondly, the board has added inclusion as a standing item to the agenda for each meeting. Thirdly, the board has been working to develop alternative forms of progress reporting to sit alongside KPIs, recognising that whilst quantitative data is important, it can often miss important inclusion outcomes, and over emphasis on increasing numbers can deprioritize EDI outcomes. Finally, the board has also undertaken EDI audits, and are working towards agreed targets and timelines to address issues of underrepresentation, including the appointment of greater numbers of young people.

Evidence of the increased prioritisation of musical inclusion can be seen in Southampton and IOW's Youth Voice Action Plan, created the Youth Voice Lead (formerly Kickstarter, but now continuing their role in the hubs) and embedded within the hubs' business plans and funding applications. This action plan outlines



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the actions needed to take learning from the targeted work from this Youth Voice Network programme, and embed it, along with further Youth Voice and Participation best practices across the work of the lead hub partner and the wider hub partnership. This plan has seen other hub partners signposted to training and resources to support their own youth voice journeys. Southampton and IOW Music Hubs have also, for the first time, ring-fenced funding for inclusion work, with a priority on funding engagement and progression pathways for children and young people in challenging circumstances where the young people participating are empowered to shape the offer available to them.

In Portsmouth, there is evidence of increasing priority for inclusion also. In January 2022 Portsmouth Music Hub published its 5 year Inclusion Strategy (see website). In September 2022 a Music Inclusion and Fundraising Manager post was created (new part-time 2 year post) so that inclusion can be promoted and further developed across the Hub in key areas including work with young people. Since then, the Inclusion and Fundraising Manager role is now a position on the Hub board and is on the agenda for all Board/SLT meetings. Staff Training Days also now include Inclusion Training from both the Music Inclusion Manager and other experts in inclusion. Additionally, Youth Representative/s on the Hub board, as well as increased collaboration with young people, has led to opportunities for young people to lead hub-funded events, including a range of concerts which are now compared by young people and where young people are fully involved in the organisation of them.

In Dorset a new, four year inclusion strategy has been developed, building in learning from this project and other inclusion focussed work. This was approved by the board in 2021, and minutes from the hub board meetings show significant engagement from across stakeholders in the development and approval process of this strategy. The plan includes 13 overall strategic priorities, seven to be actioned in 2022/23, with clear KPIs assigned to evidence the impact of the work. These KPIs include targets for Youth Voice participation activities, and ensuring under-represented groups of young people are engaged in that consultation, as a key strand of ensuring the hub's work is relevant and representative of the young people in the region. The hub has also increased its ringfenced inclusion funding year on year (+30% since 2017/18), including additional grant income, to support an inclusion budget that in 2021/22 is up 680% since 2017/18. Across the broader hub work there continues to be high priority placed on musical inclusion in workforce development, partnership work, grant funded activity and beyond.

In BCP, the Board has approved SoundStorm's ambitious new 4 year Inclusion Strategy, in 2022, which includes a significant commitment to Youth Voice amongst other initiatives. It has also approved the Action Plan that embeds much of this work in 2022-23. The Board is diversifying its membership, including exploring the mechanism to incorporate youth voice representation, and developing representation from under-represented groups. SoundStorm's Action Plan for 2022-23 has significant sections devoted to Musical Inclusion, including 15 areas of development. Partnership agreements are also being amended to include a commitment to Musical Inclusion. We have engaged a freelance Project Manager to drive forward the initial stages of our Inclusion Strategy. Their Access Fund remissions



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scheme remains open to enable access to underrepresented groups, young people in challenging circumstances, and those in economic disadvantage. We successfully bid to become part of Award for Young Musicians' Furthering Talent project, with its own highly inclusive agenda, and that also has a Coordinator specific to that role. The proportion of the overall Hub budget devoted to musical inclusive initiatives has increased by around 10% this financial year, including new grants pulled in, a much more committed inclusion strand, plus an improved and enhanced SEND offer. They have committed by 2026 to have at least 25% of our overall budget committed to musically inclusive activities. This is a major ambition but is right at the centre of their priority group. The past 12 months have seen 8 BCP practitioners undertake a year long training programme in partnership with Live Music Now developing their inclusive practice. School music coordinators have been engaged on an extensive CPD programme, including Go Compose, a new pilot developed with Bath Philharmonia Creative Learning Team to specifically develop inclusive practice amongst specialists and non-specialists. They are also working with other Hubs in SW England developing a joint Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.

Other evidence

There is also evidence of impact of the project through the embedding of Youth Voice, Participation and Consultation with Children and Young people in wider hub projects. For example, in Southampton, Youth Voice has been embedded in the evaluation process of a Paul Hamlyn Foundation funded rap and literacy programme, with the design and delivery of that process being informed by the training undertaken in this programme. This has meant that over 250 children have had the opportunity to evaluate their own musical and literacy progress, their engagement with the school curriculum, and how the classroom has become more representative of their cultures and interests. In Southampton, co-construction with young people has become a core part of the design of many hub projects, including, for example, the African Choral exchange, which allowed young people to collaborate across international boundaries, both musically and socially. Also in Southampton, Hannah started her role with the hub as a Kickstarter as part of this project and has since had that role extended to lead on embedding Youth Voice across Southampton and IOW Music Hubs, Cultural Education Partnerships, wider regional support offers, and as a board member for Southampton Cultural Education Partnership. On the IOW, Arts Council England funded a consultation with young people to allow their voices to inform the future of ensemble provision post-pandemic. Additionally on the IOW, new hub partners have been recruited this year to expand the inclusion offer as outlined in the business plan. This included Aspire Music Trust who were not previously involved with the Hub offer or activities, but who offer fantastic musical inclusion activities which the hub now supports. In BCP, SoundStorm is widening the diversity of its Board to include youth voice representation moving forward. This process is being led by Dan Somogyi, Director, and the Chair of the Board. They are currently consulting with the young people in our 'The Music Club' group, the key initiative funded by this grant, to confirm an effective mechanism to do this effectively. Key recommendations have already been fed into the Board. In BCP, funding has been found to maintain the key projects started by this grant, which will continue to help develop our knowledge. It comes as part of a



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much wider new inclusion strategy which SoundStorm has developed over the past 18 months, which is having a major impact on SoundStorm practice moving forward.

The joint working and learning funded by this project has been at the heart of many of the discussions and future ambitions set out by the South West Music Mark Hubs EDI Working Group, of which all five hubs are a member, and which Matt Brombley from Southampton and IOW Music Hubs is currently chairing. Our membership and leadership of that group is helping to set an ambitious agenda for the whole South West region, with Youth Voice being one of four strategic inclusion areas identified for joint working.

3.2. Outcome 2: to improve the skills, knowledge and understanding of the workforce in engaging, and responding to, the voices of young people

Practitioners' self-assessment of their own skills, knowledge and understanding of engaging, and responding to, the voices of young people

Ongoing self-reflection by the project's Youth Voice Engagement Workers, demonstrates strong evidence of significant progress and development of their skills, knowledge and understanding of engaging with, and responding to, the voices of young people. Across the five projects in the five regions the learning was vast and unique to each practitioner and their circumstances. In shared reflection sessions, this learning was shared between the practitioners, and by sharing their experiences at the Youth Voice conference, music teachers across the region were able to benefit from their learning also.

There have been some themes in the learning, some of which have been shared in a [blog post on the Youth Music Network](#) and summarised below:

- **Relationship is key**, including taking time to build authentic relationships on an equal basis, meeting young people where they are at
- **Creating spaces for relationship to develop**, including working with setting staff and quieting our own "inner critic" to avoid rushing young people
- **Be flexible and have patience** as sometimes what young people need is to say no, or not yet, and if we allow them the opportunity to do that, we build important trust
- **Create and find reasons to say yes**, even if that means offering small choices at first, but ones you know you can say yes to, as again, this builds trust
- **You can still introduce new things, but in a different way**. A misconception of youth voice work is that we can only do things young people already know and are interested in. This is not true. We can still bring new ideas, concepts and activities to the sessions, but we can also do this in ways



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which allow young people to engage in their own way, express their opinions, and is responsive to their response.

- **Different types of participation are right for different young people and different settings.**

Some young people want to be actively involved in lots of decisions, and others might not. Some types of activities can offer lots of opportunity for choice, and some will not. Not every activity can, will, or should be the same, but we can be actively looking for ways to increase youth voice participation in ways which fit the young people and the context.

Other areas of development which YVEW's reported included:

- Better understanding of the levels of participation possible
- Skills for helping young people set their own boundaries
- Increased flexibility of approach to sessions
- Changes to planning sessions, including planning for variations and alternative learning activities to better respond to feedback from young people in sessions
- Developing communication skills with setting staff to help create more flexible spaces
- Learning musical skills from the practitioners young people had commissioned, including rap and hip-hop artists
- Being open to letting young people share other parts of their lives and interests
- The usefulness of the "ladder of participation" as a tool for understanding youth voice

In particular, it has been remarked by the YEWs how participation in this project has changed and developed their wider practice, taking the learning from their own Action Research, and learning from each other, and embedding this into other areas of music-leading and teaching.

From the Youth Voice Conference Poll, we have strong evidence of impact on the 40+ music leaders, hub leaders and other practitioners who attended on the day. Additionally, we know that the learning will reach other music teachers, leaders and others who were not able to attend, but who will be part of the sharing of the learning from the day, the ongoing performance management target setting which the conference started in Southampton and IOW, and the sharing of this report.

Of those attending, 97% said they felt they had made some progress towards better understanding youth voice and participation, and over 50% said they had made more, or a lot more progress. Comment feedback suggested that those who felt they had made less progress felt that was because they were already highly familiar with youth voice and participation. 100% of attendees said they would continue to embed youth voice and participation in their practice going forward, and 90% said they would like to continue receiving support to do this.



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Young people's assessment of practitioners skills, knowledge and understanding of engaging, and responding to, the voices of young people

Young people provided strong evidence that the practitioners they had worked with were well equipped to engage with them, and respond to their interests, ambitions and needs. These included the quotes from participants:

"I have enjoyed the whole entire thing but you [the YVEW] were my favourite part"

"I feel my ideas are always listened to and you [the YVEW] always try to help us do the music we want to do"

"You [YVEW] always make me feel my ideas are important and as a group we have learnt to respect each other's views and try to find a compromise if we disagree."

Hub manager's assessment of practitioners skills, knowledge and understanding of engaging, and responding to, the voices of young people

In Southampton and IOW, the hub leads have noticed significant progress among the workforce. In particular, Hannah (formerly a Kickstart Intern and now the hub's Youth Voice Lead) leading on the development and delivery of the conference was a significant moment of professional development for her, and evidenced increased skills, knowledge, understanding and, most importantly, confidence. In Portsmouth, the hub lead reported on the passionate way the YVEW has taken on and overcome the challenges within the project, and then shared this learning with colleagues (which has been very well received by the team), representing significant development of their role and influence within the hub programme. In BCP, the hub manager has identified Sandie's personal qualities as a real enabler of the authentic relationships which were built throughout the project and helped ensure its success. The hub leads remarked on the importance of the support from the project manager to help develop the YVEWs and enable their success.

Other

In Southampton, IOW and Portsmouth, the Youth Voice Conference has been the starting point for a full year of performance management target setting from the full music service teams, including all members of the teaching workforce working towards their own Youth Voice Action Research project as part of their performance management targets for the year.

In Dorset, the Hub Lead has used the lessons learnt from this work as a mandate to engage with the existing Youth Voice initiatives within their wider organisation, developing youth consultation and



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governance within both the LCEP and in recruitment and selection of key roles within DMH. There has also been strong cross-over with key Hub partners, with youth led consultations in partnership with the Dorset Youth Association and the wider Children's Services teams within Dorset Council. In BCP, there has also been good development of relationships with inclusion agencies and departments in the local council.



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4. Learning Points

The learning across this project has been vast, with much of it specifically focused on individual regions and circumstances, including the approach taken in the Action Research approach. However, the three main themes which have emerged are:

1. **Meaningful Youth Voice engagement requires authentic and trusting relationships to be made, and this takes time.** This is true for all people, but especially so when working with children and young people who face challenging circumstances or are currently underrepresented. It is easy to push for greater numbers taking part, or to want to get things done “quickly”, but in this environment, some children and young people will be left behind or miss out. The causes of the pressure to engage children and young people quickly can often be subconscious, and our team talked about needing to quieten their “inner critic” which can make us feel guilty for “wasting” time on these things. However, by keeping our eyes on the longer-term goal of building meaningful relationships, we can help to silence this inner critic and give ourselves permission to do what is needed. It can also be important to communicate this value with setting staff too, so they don’t interrupt that space, as it can be very different from the approach taken in more formal learning environments.

2. **Youth Voice and Participation can look very different depending on who is participating and the context they are in.** There is no one-size-fits-all approach to youth voice. Each young person comes with their own unique perspectives, interests, ambitions and needs. Each setting and context comes with its own unique set of circumstances, dynamics and constraints. Some young people want a big say, over big decisions. Some young people want smaller choices over the things affecting them right now. Some large groups or complex settings require a lot of collaboration, planning and compromise. Some small groups and one-to-one settings can enable more dynamic and responsive choices. They each have their place, and that diversity of opportunity is not just ok, it’s great. Our work as music leaders and hub leaders is to maximise the opportunities for young people to have their say in ways which match both the young people and the context.

3. **Diversifying and developing the workforce can help to break the cycle of underrepresentation.** As music hub leaders we have a responsibility to address issues of underrepresentation in the children and young people we reach, as well as the workforce which supports them. We don’t know what we don’t know, and we don’t reach who we don’t reach, and so we continue to reach



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who we have always reached. It can feel difficult to break that cycle. By creating new opportunities for employment in our workforce we can help to break that cycle. By creating the post of Youth Voice Engagement Worker, and support positions using the Kickstarter scheme, we were able to diversify our recruitment pool and bring into our workforce people, and particularly young people, who might otherwise be excluded from it. By developing their skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence, we were able to support them to remain in our workforce. And in turn, their unique lived experiences and perspectives helped us to reach, engage and support young people from backgrounds who were previously underrepresented themselves.



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5. Recommendations and Ways Forward

Based on the learning from this project, there are three main recommendations for moving forward:

1. **Continue to work collaboratively** across the five music hubs to continue and extend our shared work and learning around Youth Voice and its significant contribution to making music education more inclusive. This should include joint funding applications to allow for the continuation of an “Action Research” approach which supports innovative and diverse models of recruitment, delivery, and practice.
2. **Embed the learning and approaches** from Action Research projects more widely into hub practices through workforce development, performance management and reflective practice programmes.
3. **Share the learning** from this work across the wider South West region and nationally through our connections within Music Mark and other cultural education networks.



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6. References

6.1. Support Offer for Music Hubs

Based on shared learning and the models of practice developed through out this programme, the SWCHA can offer the following support to other music hubs:

Youth Voice – Staff Inset Training (Full Day Conference)

This conference will develop staff understanding of what youth voice is and its benefits within music education. Through practical activity and non-judgemental discussion they will have the opportunity to reflect and explore tools to enable them to better facilitate, listen and respond to the voices of young people.

This conference will help music teaching staff to understand what youth voice is, why it is important for inclusion, and how it can be nurtured within music education / music-making contexts.

Staff will be guided through exercises to reflect on the ways they currently engage with young people and honour their needs, wishes, and opinions. Together we will acknowledge the challenges in facilitating youth voice and decision making. We will explore tools which can guide you to better facilitate, listen and respond to the voices of young people, and approach your engagement through the lens of ‘value exchange’ and the importance of building trust. Staff will be encouraged to share thoughts, ideas and experiences within the conference as shared learning and discussion. We aim to build staff confidence in their ability to integrate authentic youth voice into their practice and support them with practical steps for achieving this.

This programme of staff development integrates with the new National Plan for Music, supporting staff to ensure their teaching is relevant and representative of the young people and communities they work with. Optionally, the conference can be used to initiate a year-long staff development programme, including the resources and templates needed to support staff in developing action plans which can be integrated into the performance management process.

[Contact Southampton Music Hub](#) for more information, including costings.



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Development Support

For music hubs, services and organisations at the early stages of their inclusion and youth voice journey, the SWCHA can support the development of inclusion and development strategies, priorities and plans. [Contact Southampton Music Hub](#) to begin a conversation about what a support package could look like.



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6.2. Example Job Description

Youth Voice Engagement Worker – Job Overview

Part of the Youth Voice Network for the South West Coast Music Hub Alliance

The music hubs that form the South West Coast Music Hub Alliance are looking to recruit Youth Voice Engagement Workers to help make our music hubs more inclusive, by engaging, listening to, and responding to the voices of under-represented young people: helping them shape, and lead, the music-making opportunities available to them.

We have roles available in:

- Locations...

Through developing and delivering Action Research projects, Youth Voice Engagement workers will recruit and work with young people who are excluded from music hub opportunities, supporting them to take part in, and lead, music-making opportunities which represent their individual and collective voices. The learning from this Action Research will help develop the wider hub offer, and be shared nationally.

You should be able to support young people on their musical, personal, and collective development. This will include your own experiences of learning and making music (either formally, or informally) but there are no restrictions on the styles, genres and approaches this may include. Training and support will be given to help build the skills needed to engage, listen to, and respond to the voices of young people from all backgrounds.

We welcome, and encourage, applications from individuals who have lived experience of being part of an under-represented group.

This role is a fixed term contract, running from..., for up to ... half days (3–4 hours), paid at £60 per half day.

The role will include a mixture of remote working – including virtual meetings and sessions – as well as face-to-face workshops, events and office-based working. As you will be working with children and young people, the role is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

This work is kindly supported by Youth Music, using public funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Please send a CV, covering letter and, if applicable, a link to examples of your music to:

-

Applications should be received no later than...

Interviews, via video conference, will take place during the week beginning...

To discuss the roles further, you can contact...



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Job Description and Person Specification

Post Title:

Youth Voice Engagement Worker

Working Hours and Salary:

- 16 month, fixed term contract
- 0.1FTE – up to 50 half days (3–4 hours)
- Working days and hours to be decided by agreement
- £60 per half day

Accountable to:

Project Manager (South West Coastal Music Hub Alliance)
Hub Management

Contents:

- Job Description:
 - Purpose of job
 - Key accountabilities
- Person specification:
 - Knowledge and experience
 - Key competencies, skills and personal qualities

Notes:

This post is:

- Subject to the terms and conditions of service as prescribed by the post contract
- To be undertaken in accordance with the employers key values, agreed performance standards and the need for political sensitivity and awareness

Scope of role:

The post of Youth Voice Engagement Worker is responsible for:

- Working individually, as well as alongside colleagues.
- Promoting youth led music provision in schools and other settings.
- Delivering youth led music provision in schools, other settings, and online.

Date of Document:

Thursday 21 January 2021



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Youth Voice Engagement Worker: Job Description

1. Purpose of job:
 - 1.1. To develop, deliver and evaluate youth-led music-making projects which engage, listen to, and respond to the voices of under-represented children and young people.
 - 1.2. To improve the engagement worker's youth voice engagement skills, knowledge and understanding, through the provided training, mentoring and support.
 - 1.3. To understand, and overcome, the barriers and challenges children and young people face in accessing music making, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds.
 - 1.4. To develop, plan for, and support delivery of inclusive approaches to making and learning music for all young people, particularly those underrepresented in existing music hub provision and to support all participants to improve their musical skills, develop new personal skills, and inspire them to continue making music in the future.
 - 1.5. Delivery
 - Work with children and young people in a variety of settings, ensuring sessions are of a high quality, enjoyable, and that participant progress is effective.
 - Assess participants' progress, giving individual feedback to participants and reporting to stakeholders in relation to musical, personal, and social progress.
 - Support and contribute to the wider work of the organisation.
 - Be an effective learner, participating in training, professional development, and sharing expertise with others.
 - Maintain accurate records and data as required
 - Discharge statutory functions of the organisation.
 - Conduct any other duties which reasonably fall within the purview of the post that may be allocated after consultation with the post-holder.
 - 1.6. Team Work
 - To take responsibility for sharing good practice with others
 - To actively contribute to the development of the organisation through a personal and professional commitment to teamwork.
 - To work collaboratively and effectively with all team members and stakeholders, ensuring effective communication
 - To discharge team responsibilities normally carried out by others if required.
 - 1.7. Hub Governance
 - To share youth voice led approaches with the hub board
 - To facilitate and support young people to share their views with the hub board
 - To assist hub management and the board in their development, interpretation, implementation, review and evaluation of hub policies.
 - 1.8. Personal and Professional Management
 - Take full responsibility for managing time and work whilst remaining up to date professionally and developing personally.
 - Develop effective personal time management skills, including managing stress.
 - Actively engage in personal and professional development within a framework of needs as agreed with managers.
 - Actively participate in appraisal and performance review.
 - Promote and ensure good behaviour among children and young people participating, safeguarding their health and safety, and ensuring their wellbeing



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- To attend meetings commensurate with the role.
- 1.9. Youth Voice Development
 - To develop, design and deliver youth voice led action research projects
 - To coordinate and manage the work of hub partners, other musicians, and other organisations, as appropriate to project delivery
- 1.10. Community Engagement
 - To engage with other local, regional, and national music makers and organisations to facilitate their contribution to the hubs' youth voice strategy
 - To engage with under-represented communities in the city to facilitate their participation in hub activities
- 1.11. Key Accountabilities:
 - To be responsible for delivering high quality, youth led music-making activities.
 - To be responsible for reporting on assessment of progress and achievement.
 - To work, and communicate, effectively with administration, management and other stakeholders.

Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience:

- Experience of project management
- Experience of learning and making music (either formally, or informally)
- A passion for helping others to develop, musically, personally, and socially.
- A passion for championing the voices of children and young people who are underrepresented, disadvantaged or facing challenging life circumstances.
- An ability to quickly learn new skills, develop new knowledge and understanding, and apply this to new tasks and experiences.
- A proven ability to manage and resolve difficult situations.
- Knowledge of online learning resources, and an ability to create high quality digital content, including video, audio and other multimedia sources

Key Competences, Skills and Personal Qualities:

- The capacity to deliver high quality projects, in a variety of settings, ensuring participants take part in music activities which are engaging, enjoyable and that progress is effective.
- The ability to value others for their unique perspectives, characteristics and identities.
- Excellent communication and networking skills.
- Evidence of good organisational and time management skills.
- Effective planning skills.
- The ability to engage in peer review to address own and others' professional development.
- Ability to keep data up to date.
- The ability to identify own professional development needs.
- Ability to work using Google Apps and other media content creation tools

This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties of the level of responsibility entailed.



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Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

Notes:

- The post holder is required to provide their own means of transport to visit settings within the region. Whilst living within the hub region is not essential, knowledge of the local area will be of benefit
- When remote working from home is arranged, the post holder may be required to provide their own equipment for doing so, including a good quality internet connection.



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