

MUSIC >> FUTURES

Entrepreneur Fund - Webinar



Introductions



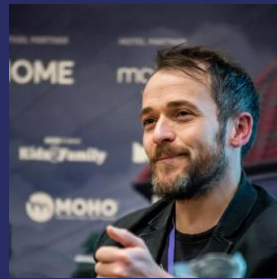
Yaw Owusu,
Enterprise Lead



Richard Koeck,
Director



Hatana El-Jarn,
Co-Lead LJMU



Pete Woodbridge,
R&D Innovation Lead

Agenda

- About MusicFutures
- Fund Criteria, Eligibility & Timeline
- What we are looking for
- Q&A- pop in your questions

Liverpool City Region

SHAPING THE FUTURE THROUGH MUSIC INNOVATION



MUSIC >>
FUTURES

What is MusicFutures?



£7m

Investment

5yr

Programme

27+

Industry Partners

1600+

Music Businesses
across LCR



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

MUSIC 
FUTURES

Mission

MusicFutures ... is driving the next generation of the music industry across the Liverpool City Region — supporting artists, entrepreneurs and creative businesses to grow, innovate and thrive.



MUSIC >>
FUTURES

Innovation & R+D

Powering music innovation by linking creative talent with advanced research and technology to develop future-ready products, services and experiences.

Skills & Talent

Developing the next generation of diverse music talent by providing high-quality training, professional development and access to research, technology and industry expertise.

Entrepreneurship

Driving entrepreneurship in the music sector by enabling SMEs, entrepreneurs and artists to innovate, grow, attract investment and create resilient, sustainability.

Policy & Research

Shaping the future of the music sector through research and policy development that supports a fair, inclusive and thriving ecosystem.

Music Entrepreneur Fund

MusicFutures is launching the Music Entrepreneur Fund to support and elevate bold, future-facing ideas for new products, services, processes and experiences in the music sector.

This fund is designed to help music innovators in the Liverpool City Region (LCR), especially those historically excluded on the grounds of gender, race and socio-economic status.

MUSIC 
FUTURES

What's on Offer?

Successful applicants will receive:

- Up to £5,000 in direct financial support
- Additional business support (Bootcamps/Mentoring)

The fund will help you develop, prototype, test, or launch an idea for scalable products, services, processes or experiences.

Eligibility

This fund is aimed at:

Sole traders, freelancers, and micro-businesses (fewer than 5 employees), including CICs, working on new products, services, processes and experiences for the music industry.

Applicants must:

- Be based in the Liverpool City Region.
- Be working in music, music technology, music culture or content/product/service innovation in music.
- Have a project that can be delivered by April 2027.

Not eligible:

- Public bodies, charities, universities, schools, or large companies (although they may collaborate with an eligible individual or business as partners).

What we can fund

We support entrepreneurial projects across the full spectrum of music from production to live, distribution to publishing....

Which also contribute to furthering the aim of a more innovative, inclusive and sustainable innovative music sector.

Creative & Artistic Innovation

- **Developing audio and/or audio-visual innovations.**
- **Experimenting with new ways of working:**
innovative production, composition and performance methods, new formats and approaches to production.
- **Creating prototypes or pilots for new music products, services and experiences.**

Entrepreneurial & Business Ideas

- Building or testing an early-stage concept for a music business.
- New approaches to audience-building, direct-to-fan or community engagement.
- Projects that support new revenue or business models for artists.
- Small-scale ventures that support the wider music ecosystem.

Technology Innovation

- Inclusive approaches to music / music technology.
- Early prototypes of tools, plugins, or interactive products or experiences.
- Development of technology-assisted creative tools, workflows and approaches.
- Apps, creative tech concepts, or digital artist services.
- Convergent opportunities across gaming, film, TV and immersive experiences.

Live, Studio & Experience Innovation

- New performance & live formats, interactive shows, or hybrid experiences.
- Small-scale immersive or experiential pilots.
- Accessibility-focused innovation for audiences or creators.

Wellbeing, Environmental & Social Impact

- Innovative approaches for improving access, inclusion, or participation in music.
- Innovation projects supporting and benefitting under-represented groups.
- Innovation in environmental sustainability for the music sector.
- Innovations that improve health and wellbeing with music.

What we cannot fund

- **Standard music activities** with no R&D element
(recording, rehearsals, gigs, touring, live production)
- **Marketing** as the main activity (PR, ads, social media, playlist/radio promotion)
- **Travel costs**, unless travel is part of demonstrating your R&D activity
- **Equipment purchases** as the primary spend —
kit can be included but is capped at 20% of total costs
- **General overheads** not tied to R&D (rent, utilities, admin, unrelated staff costs)
- **Work already completed** before the project start date
- **Standalone music education or community programmes**
- unless they lead to new products or services/or have a clear innovation angle

Selection & Assessment Criteria

Projects will be assessed in relation to the following criteria:

1. Strategic Alignment

- Does the opportunity align with MusicFutures' mission and long-term goals?
- Does it support innovation, diversity, and sustainability in the music industry?
- Is it consistent with current priority areas (e.g., emerging talent, technology, audience development, inclusivity)?

2. Market Potential and Audience Reach

- Is there a clear target audience and demand for the proposed work?
- Does the opportunity demonstrate potential for growth or scalability?
- Are there plans for marketing, distribution, or audience engagement?

3. Financial Viability

- Is the budget realistic and well-structured?
- Are there other sources of funding or revenue streams?
- Does the project demonstrate value for money and sustainability beyond initial funding?
- Does the project allow for return on investment if profit making? If yes, how?

Selection & Assessment Criteria

4. Innovation and Future Readiness

- Does the opportunity leverage new technologies or innovative practices?
- Will it prepare the music sector for future trends (e.g., digital platforms, immersive experiences)?
- Does it encourage experimentation and risk-taking in a managed and responsible way?

5. EDI and Environmental Responsibility

- Does the project promote and address inclusivity and equity?
- Are there measures to minimise environmental impact?
- Does it contribute positively to community development?
- If the project involves a team, is the project team diverse?

6. Track Record and Capability

- Does the applicant have the skills, experience, and resources to deliver the project successfully?
- Are partnerships or collaborations in place to strengthen delivery and route to market?
- Is there evidence of past success or learning from previous projects?

Further Details

Project funding will be administered by University of Liverpool

Through subgrant agreement (standard terms on website).

- **Projects are funded at 100% of project costs**, inclusive of VAT, including labour (staff), materials, subcontractors, equipment and other costs
- **It will be paid in instalments- check the schedule**
- **Equipment costs** — maximum of 20% of project grant for equipment and capital purchase costs.
- **Subcontracting**— up to 70% maximum subcontracting costs, with a maximum 30% outside of Liverpool City Region
- **Projects must comply with Minimal Financial Assistance subsidy controls.**
- **We want to see diverse and inclusive teams.**

Expected Outputs

- Development, testing and demonstration of a music innovation prototype.
- Project documentation and visual assets about the project
- Internal mid-project and end-of-project reports, and attendance at regular progress meetings.
- Contribution to future MusicFutures events and showcasing opportunities.

Timeline

- 20th April 2026 – Call Opens
- 7th May 2026, 1pm – Funding Call Q&A Webinar
- 1st June 2026 - 1PM – Deadline
- June/July 2026 – Assessment Period
- September 2026 – Decisions announced
- October 1st – 31st March 2027 – Project delivery window

How to Apply

<https://musicfutures.co.uk/opportunities/music-entrepreneur-fund/>

Please read through all the supporting information:

- Applicant Eligibility and Guidance
- Subgrant Terms and Conditions

Required submission documents include:

- Application form.
- Additional supporting information (visual decks etc).
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion form.

Support for Applicants

If you require any adjustments to complete your application, or if you feel you would be disadvantaged by a written application (e.g., preference for a video/audio submission)....

Then please contact the MusicFutures team
amusicfutures@liverpool.ac.uk

MUSIC >> FUTURES

>> Questions & Answers



Current Opportunities

- W W IP Clinic
- W W PRSF Accelerator
- W W Future Live Fan Experiences Fund
- W W MF Music Innovation Fund (12/5)

<https://musicfutures.co.uk/contact/>



MUSIC >> FUTURES

Thanks for joining

