



BLMK Music Hub - Commissioning Policy

To be reviewed September 2025

This policy outlines the principles and procedures by which the BLMK Music Hub Executive Group guides the Hub Lead Organisation (HLO) in commissioning and appointing partners and services, in coordination with the Oversight Committee. The policy ensures transparency, accountability, and value for money, fostering a responsive partnership environment aligned with the Hub's mission and strategic goals. It establishes a commitment to effective resource use and to meeting local needs through ethical and efficient commissioning practices.

Strategic Overview and Mission

The BLMK Hub's overarching mission statement and action plan will be based on a comprehensive needs analysis, ensuring that commissioning activities address the Hub's vision, goals, and community impact. Each of the four music services will select partners to meet the unique needs of their respective areas, respecting and upholding existing partnerships. No single partner will be required to operate across all four areas or specialise in a particular genre. This structure allows each area to collaborate with local partners, preserving community trust and fostering local development through community-rooted partnerships.

Purpose and Accountability

The commissioning policy explicitly outlines the purpose of the BLMK Music Hub's commissioning activities, detailing its goals, intended beneficiaries, and its importance to the region. Accountability is embedded, reinforcing the Hub's commitment to ethical, fair, and transparent commissioning processes.

Value for Money Assessment

The policy defines Value for Money as a central criterion, focusing on maximising benefits per unit of cost rather than simply choosing the lowest-cost options. Value for Money assessments will be conducted at key stages to ensure commissioning decisions support sustainable, high-quality outcomes. Regular reviews of Value for Money will be part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation to maintain alignment with the Hub's objectives and ensure efficient resource allocation.



Good Principles of Commissioning

The Hub's commissioning approach is grounded in good principles such as transparency, inclusiveness, and strategic partnership-building. To support this, the Hub will conduct needs assessments to inform commissioning activities, identifying service gaps and prioritising resources. The policy emphasises diverse engagement with different types of organisations, from small community groups to larger institutions, to meet the varied needs of the community.

Service Shaping and Outcome-Based Approaches

Commissioning activities will align with the Hub's mission by establishing SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-efficient) outcomes in collaboration with partners. A needs analysis will guide a clear mission and action statement, shaping services to meet agreed objectives and enhancing relevance for the community. This outcome-based approach ensures commissioned services are targeted, impactful, and measurable.

Identifying Partners

Promoting Partnership Opportunities

The BLMK Music Hub promotes partnership and delivery opportunities by:

- Continuing with successful, effective partnerships.
- Public announcements on consortium partner websites and social media.
- Direct outreach to schools, community groups, and music education providers.
- Hosting networking events and information sessions for prospective partners.

A diverse range of partners will be selected to deliver the Hub's program, reflecting the varied skills and contexts across the region.

Reviewing and Renewing Partnerships

Partnerships will be periodically reviewed to remain relevant and responsive to the region's changing needs. The HLO, in agreement with the Executive Group, may commission partners on a responsive, ad hoc basis as necessary to address emerging priorities.



Commissioning Process

Compliance with Organisational Procurement Policies

The HLO and music services will adhere to their respective Local Authority procurement policies, ensuring that all commissioning activities are fair, transparent, and compliant with public sector guidelines.

Activities and Budget Proposals

The HLO and consortium partners will appoint services through a transparent, competitive process, in liaison with the Executive Group and reporting to the Oversight Committee. This process includes:

- **Open tendering and competitive bidding** to ensure fair selection.
- **Evaluation of proposals** based on criteria such as expertise, value for money, alignment with Arts Council England standards, and the Hub's objectives.

Budget and activity proposals will be reviewed to ensure they demonstrate value for money and comply with relevant contractual standards. Partner services may be contracted or sub-granted through formal agreements that outline deliverables, timelines, and performance metrics.

Self-Commissioning by Consortium Members

Consortium members intending to deliver program activities within the Hub area will follow the Local Authority commissioning policy to ensure fairness and transparency, preventing conflicts of interest between strategic responsibilities and delivery roles.

Risk Management and Payment Models

The policy includes a risk management framework that identifies, assesses, and mitigates risks associated with partnerships, financial stability, and service quality. A suitable payment model will be selected to ensure fair and equitable remuneration while balancing risk appropriately. Financial transactions will adhere to Local Authority procurement policies, safeguarding public funds and enhancing accountability.



Sustainability and Environmental Considerations

The commissioning policy includes commitments to environmental and organisational sustainability. This means prioritising local partnerships, minimising environmental impact, and supporting programs that encourage self-sufficiency and long-term growth for partners.

Quality and Performance Monitoring

Monitoring and Reporting

Quality and performance will be closely monitored to ensure effective delivery of the Hub's Local Plan for Music Education (LPME). Until the 2024/25 impact framework is finalised, quality and performance will be measured through:

- **Regular progress reports** from partners, detailing activities conducted, outcomes achieved, and any challenges encountered.
- **Data collection and analysis** on participant engagement, satisfaction, and learning outcomes.

Funds will be systematically distributed and monitored to ensure they are effectively used and in alignment with Hub objectives.

Decommissioning Partners

Decommissioning a partner may be necessary for both positive and negative reasons, reflecting the evolving needs and objectives of the Hub. Positive reasons for decommissioning may include achieving all objectives, meeting targets, or creating a sustainable model that allows the program to continue independently. Decommissioning in such cases acknowledges the partner's success and allows resources to be reallocated to other priority areas. Conversely, negative reasons may include failure to meet quality standards, unmet objectives, or a lack of alignment with the Hub's strategic vision.

Decommissioning in these cases ensures resources are directed toward partnerships that maintain the high standards required by the Hub.



Executive Group's Oversight

Approval of Commissioning Decisions

Each Music Service will commission their own partners in liaison with the Executive Group who will oversee the appointment of partners, ensuring that decisions align with the Hub's values and objectives. The group will report these decisions and review processes to the Oversight Committee to maintain accountability and transparency.

Annual Policy Review

The Executive Group will review this commissioning policy annually, typically before the main commissioning cycle, to ensure that it remains current, effective, and aligned with the Hub's strategic goals.