

Budgeting Principles

These principles provide an approach to budgeting that is fair and sustainable. If you're applying for Youth Music funding, you should use these to inform your costings.



Budgeting principles explained

1. Embed equity and promote wellbeing

Paying people fairly should be a priority. As a minimum, you should pay the [real living wage](#). But freelancers should expect more than this. If you're contracting music leaders, remember to build in time for planning and reflection too. A real living wage is not a real living wage if you're only working 2 hours per week. If you engage part time workers or freelancers, try and meet the terms of the

[Living Hours](#) scheme. If that's not possible, speak to your freelance workforce about how to make it easier for them to engage in multiple contracts.

Include budget to remove barriers to access. These might cover things like travel, food, or equipment. If you charge young people to attend sessions, ensure this is not a barrier. A flexible and easy-access fee remission policy is a must. Access costs might also be relevant for the workforce, particularly if you're partnering with disabled people or people on low incomes.

2. Think beyond delivery costs

The delivery of music activity for children and young people is likely to form a large part of your overall budget. Venue hire, music leader fees, equipment and evaluation are all essential elements of a Youth Music project. This will ensure that you execute well and adapt to what you're learning.

Many not-for-profits don't have the luxury of regular core funding. Ensure you recoup the real value of core costs from your project funding. This is essential if you want to be a sustainable organisation.

Youth Music funding proposals must contain a mix of delivery costs and core costs, but you can set the ratios for each. Think about project-based core costs as well as ongoing costs, for example updating your safeguarding or equality, diversity and inclusion policies.

3. Leave room to adapt

Build flexibility into your budget by including some contingency costs. This gives you room to adapt in response to learning. It gives you more space to innovate, respond to young people or take up new opportunities.

If you're running a programme across multiple years, consider budgeting for inflation beyond year one.

We rarely increase overall grant amounts but have a flexible approach to budget changes, so long as our grants criteria are still met.