

## Writing for Music Education *ABRSM composer mentoring programme 2024/25*

### Terms of reference

#### Introduction

ABRSM's composer mentoring programme, [Writing for Music Education](#), is a six-month programme for emerging composers based in the UK looking to explore the world of composing for music education. The programme includes opportunities to join ABRSM behind the scenes, to develop skills in writing to a brief and to work alongside some of our partner organisations. Recruitment for the programme is supported through our partnerships with Black Lives in Music and the Ivors Academy.

#### When is the programme?

The six-month programme will run from September 2024 to February 2025.

#### Who's the programme for?

While not prescriptive, we're looking for composers who:

- are interested in writing music for education settings
- are in the early stages of their careers as composers
- are not tied into an exclusive publishing contract
- have a working knowledge of traditional notation and western classical music
- are based in the UK and can attend the programme's various in-person activities
- have a good understanding of English
- are happy to take part in ABRSM's comms campaigns relating to the programme and other activities as relevant

Writing for Music Education aims to identify composers, arrangers and works that are new to ABRSM, our audiences and the world of music education. A key part of our Diversity and Inclusion Plan, the programme aims to increase the diversity and breadth of our syllabus and publications by drawing on new sources of quality music from contemporary classical and jazz composers and a wider range of styles and influences.

We are really keen to receive applications from composers who are underrepresented in the music education sector, including composers from the global majority, Disabled and/or neurodiverse composers, and trans and/or non-binary composers. For the 2024/25 programme, we will be looking to allocate six places, including at least three places to composers from underrepresented backgrounds.

## What are the commitments?

We have confirmed dates and times for a number of the sessions already and would ask that prospective composers complete their expression of interest on the basis that they can attend these sessions. Other dates will be firmed up in due course, while the 1:1 mentoring sessions will be arranged directly between composer and mentor.

The programme requires approximately 2 – 3 hours per week, in the form of workshops, mentoring sessions, preparation, composing or feedback and review. A number of opportunities to engage with our partner organisations will be available and composers can choose as many or as few of these as they like.

## What are the benefits of the programme?

There are a range of benefits for emerging composers looking to explore the world of writing for the many and varied music education contexts out there. The music education sector needs more composers who write well for beginners in particular and ABRSM is keen to open up our offer to give more opportunities to more people, to work with us as composers and arrangers. Specific benefits include:

- opportunities to explore the world of writing for music education, including ABRSM's commissioning, editing and publishing processes
- bespoke mentoring from leading educational composers
- a deep-dive into ABRSM's exam marking criteria and how knowledge of assessment can support effective educational composition
- networking opportunities for composers through our wide range of partners, including Open Up Music, the National Youth Jazz Orchestra, National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain and more
- opportunities to write to a brief, including for ABRSM exam syllabuses, with the possibility of inclusion in future syllabuses and publications
- opportunities to engage with our partner organisations in writing to briefs in other education settings
- becoming part of a community of emerging composers who can share their musical ideas and experiences together in an inclusive and creative environment

The activities will be spread throughout the six month programme so composers should be able to engage alongside other commitments and work opportunities.

## Are there costs involved?

There is no cost to take part in the programme, and each composer will receive a bursary of £750 to support their engagement with the programme activities over the six-month period. ABRSM will also reimburse reasonable travel expenses for face-to-face activities.

## How do I apply?

To apply, please ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria and that you can commit to the programme during its full duration (September 2024 – February 2025). Please take any other commitments you may have into consideration when applying.

The timeline for applications is as follows:

Tue 7 May: applications open

Mon 24 June: applications close at 9am

Tue 25 June – Fri 5 July: applications reviewed by Selection Panel

July 2024: applicants notified of outcome

It is anticipated that successful applicants will be invited to an informal interview via Zoom/Teams the week beginning 8 July prior to formal offers being made.

Applications should be made via The Ivors Academy (via [this application form](#)) no later than **9am on Monday 24 June 2024**. Please note that we will not be able to accommodate applications after this.

In the application you will be asked to provide details:

- About your application and why you should be considered for this opportunity
- About yourself so that we can get in contact to confirm the outcome of your application
- Declarations that you agree with the privacy policy and code of conduct

Once submitted applications will be anonymised and reviewed by a Selection Panel with representation from ABRSM, The Ivors Academy (current composer members) and a composer from a previous cohort. We aim to notify applicants of the outcome of applications by Monday 15 July 2024.

## About ABRSM and its partners

Inspired by the joy of music, **ABRSM** provides pathways, assessments and resources for music learners and teachers, in partnership with the Royal Academy of Music, Royal College of Music, Royal Northern College of Music and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. As a music charity, ABRSM makes significant investments into music education around the world through a programme of scholarships, sponsorship, research and advocacy, and supports the next generation of musicians through an evolving suite of development programmes, including its flagship mentoring programme for composers, *Writing for Music Education*.

**Black Lives in Music** addresses the current inequality of opportunity for Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse people aspiring to be artists or professionals in the Jazz and Classical music industry.

The **Ivors Academy** is a passionate community of songwriters and composers committed to campaigning for positive change, celebrating the highest achievements and providing music creators with practical support to develop their careers and craft while successfully navigating the industry.