

CENTRE FOR MUSIC EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE AHRC HUB FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH MUSIC RESEARCH

SPOKE PROJECT UPDATES - SPRING 2026

MUSICAL CONNECTIONS (LIVE MUSIC NOW & THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES)



'We are now midway through Phase 3 of the project, which centres around two 10-week Musician in Residence projects at an Autism Resource Base in South Wales and a Specialist Provision in Mainstream School in Northern Ireland.'

The residencies, delivered by Live Music Now, follow the values-based approach to practice developed through pilot work and refined through Phases 1 and 2, with two classes accessing the project at each site, accompanied by their teachers and support staff. The team are pursuing a Mosaic Approach to gathering data around the project, capturing a wide range of qualitative data from children, parents/guardians, musicians, teachers, school staff and researchers, which is then analysed collaboratively with the steering group of autistic musicians to ensure the autistic experience is the dominant position in the analysis and shapes how they move forward. The team's adventures as they make progress on the project are being shared via their 'Shared Notes' podcast, and an open access resource and film are currently in development.

QUEER MUSICAL STORYTELLING (SAYIT & THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD)

'The last few months have been an exciting time for the Queer Musical Storytelling Project!'

The team held a workshop with the brilliant musicians and poets on the project. Together, they forged an innovative approach to facilitation, which allowed them to take a trauma-informed, participant-centred approach to queer musical storytelling. This enabled them to create spaces of care for their participants and facilitators. They also held two weekend-long workshops in Bradford and Sheffield. These workshops enabled their participants to write musical storytelling pieces to share their experiences of queer love, life, and the law. They are currently recording seven of these musical storytelling pieces, which will be used in public engagements over the next three months to build dialogue, understanding, and solidarity.



EQUALIZE (YOUNG SOUNDS UK & THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER)

'Equalize is generating exactly the kind of evidence we need. We are now in a place where we can say: the system is broken, here's the evidence, here's where the breaks are, and here's what the opportunities look like.'



The EQUALIZE team have just completed visits to two schools in Bradford, with sharply contrasting experiences. At one site, a lack of support from staff combined with a deprioritization of development in this area of music created challenges which exemplified the problematic state of the system at present. At the second site, interactive sessions were delivered in full, and systems were updated accordingly, leading to tangible positive outcomes and brilliant feedback from both the staff and students involved. Having explored the gap in delivery of the curriculum, the team can now move forward with articulating the broken ecosystem and focus on addressing the obstacles created by deficits in staff capacity, knowledge, time and funding. The team are also exploring ways in which their work connects with the recent UK Music Black Music Report, and what their policy outcomes might look like, alongside developing an interactive genre map for teachers which will provide regional mapping of specific genres along with information relating to the origins and DNA of the music to address a disconnect in the knowledge base of teaching staff and create an exciting legacy for the project.

SAVE THE DATE!



CENTRE FOR MUSIC EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

AHRC HUB FOR
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
WITH
MUSIC RESEARCH

Final Showcase

TUESDAY 7TH JULY 2026

Join us at **BBC Hoddinott Hall**, Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff from **2pm** for a celebration of best practice public engagement with music research. The Spoke projects from the AHRC Hub will share project outcomes.

This event is open to all, with especial relevance for academics, musicians, arts sector professionals, arts funders, social justice activists, policymakers and music educators.



RESERVE YOUR TICKETS HERE!