



PRESS RELEASE

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📷 Images: BPH-ACE Grassroots Music Funding Announcement

Bradford Producing Hub Secures Major Arts Council England Funding to Create District's First Music Strategy

An ambitious grassroots music development project will bring the Bradford music community together to co-create a shared roadmap for sector growth.

Arts development charity Bradford Producing Hub has been awarded funding by Arts Council England to lead a major new initiative that will put Bradford's grassroots music scene front and centre throughout 2026.

Following Bradford 2025's transformative year for the district, this investment marks a significant step forward for grassroots music, building on growing recognition of Bradford's diverse musical talent and creating the foundations for long-term growth and sustainability.

This new investment builds on over five years of Bradford Producing Hub's work to support and strengthen Bradford's grassroots music ecosystem. Recent activity has focused on long-term legacy building, including sector research, artist development, policy engagement and regional partnership working, all of which have helped lay the foundations for a district-wide music strategy.

Bradford Producing Hub

Running from January to September 2026, the project will bring together the district's diverse music community to co-create Bradford's very first music strategy – a shared roadmap designed by and for local artists, venues, promoters, educators and music lovers. The strategy will help shape future funding priorities, improve support for grassroots venues, and strengthen routes for local musicians and industry professionals to build sustainable careers in Bradford.

A strategy built by Bradford, for Bradford

Through district-wide workshops, online surveys and a dedicated steering group, this strategy will build on existing sector conversations and partnerships developed over the past five years. The strategy will reflect the real voices, experiences and ambitions of Bradford's grassroots music community. The process will explore what makes Bradford's music landscape special, identify shared challenges, and set out clear priorities and practical actions to support talent development, venue sustainability and sector growth.

The project will culminate in September 2026 with a series of live performances across grassroots venues, alongside a central launch event showcasing the breadth of musical talent Bradford has to offer. Young people aged 18 to 25 will have the opportunity to gain hands-on industry experience through paid professional placements, supported by experienced mentors.

Lisa Mallaghan, Executive Director of Bradford Producing Hub, said:

“This is such an exciting moment for Bradford’s music community. After our incredible City of Culture year, we now have a real opportunity to build something lasting and meaningful for our grassroots music scene.

What makes this project special is that it’s genuinely community-led. We’re not imposing a strategy from above; we’re creating the space for musicians, young people, venues, promoters and music lovers across the district to come together, share their experiences, and shape the future they want to see.

This funding recognises the work the sector has already done together and allows us to turn that shared momentum into a clear, long-term plan. Bradford has always had an extraordinary depth of musical talent across every genre and community, and this strategy will help ensure that talent - and the grassroots infrastructure that supports it - can thrive for years to come.”

Claire Mera-Nelson, Director of Music at Arts Council England, said:

“I’m delighted that we’ve been able to support Bradford Producing Hub to create Bradford district’s first music strategy. Throughout 2025, Bradford showcased its incredible cultural offer as UK City of Culture, including its amazing grassroots music community. It’s fantastic to see that this music strategy will help to build on Bradford’s

Bradford Producing Hub

year of culture, creating opportunities for new and existing musicians throughout the district. I'm excited to see what the next nine months have in store for the district as the music strategy progresses."

Key Project Aims:

- Strengthen pathways for emerging musicians and industry professionals
- Increase collaboration and resilience across the music sector
- Grow and diversify audiences for live music
- Build on the momentum of Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture

The strategy will be endorsed by Bradford Council and supported by Bradford Music Scene, West Yorkshire Music Network, and other regional partners, ensuring it becomes a working document that supports real change. Partnerships with regional bodies, including WYCA, UK Music, and Great North Creative, will also be nurtured throughout the project.

Get involved

Bradford Producing Hub invites musicians, venue owners, promoters, educators and anyone who loves live music to help shape Bradford's musical future.

Anyone interested in staying up to date with the project's progress and hearing about opportunities to get involved can complete a short Expression of Interest form. This does not commit people to taking part but ensures they receive updates as the strategy develops.

<https://forms.gle/tUSwDV9bVMBSjQ178>

Bradford Producing Hub is committed to making this project accessible and inclusive, and will work with participants to support access needs throughout the programme. Participation bursaries and access support will be available to ensure those who want to be involved are supported to participate.

This project is funded by Arts Council England's Supporting Grassroots Music fund.

****ENDS****

Notes to Editors:

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Images can be found here:

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Bradford Producing Hub

About Bradford Producing Hub

Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) is a charity and arts development organisation based in Bradford, West Yorkshire. Established in 2019, in response to inequality in the arts, BPH supports artists through funding, mentoring, training, commissions, and tailored programmes, with care, inclusion and equity at its core.

In its first four years, BPH worked with over 5,700 artists, distributed nearly £500,000 in grants, and enabled more than 50,000 hours of creative work. Now an independent charity, it serves as the Cultural Capacity Partner for Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture, helping to prepare and strengthen the city's creative workforce.

BPH's approach is rooted in Bradford's bold, community-led creative identity. It collaborates with artists to co-design development and responds to emerging needs. Beyond 2025, BPH is focused on embedding sustainable systems, championing diverse voices, and growing an inclusive, thriving arts ecology in Bradford.

<https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/>

About the Arts Council England Supporting Grassroots Music Programme

Jointly funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England, Supporting Grassroots Music (SGM) is designed to help secure the sustainability of the grassroots music sector.

This investment programme currently supports venues, festivals and promoters, recording studios and rehearsal spaces, as well as sector bodies operating in grassroots music. It also supports grassroots music sector bodies in their work to develop and support the sector.

Eligible projects support the transition of artists, bands and industry professionals to sustainable careers in music, as well as the development of new audiences and the grassroots music sector as a whole.

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/supporting-grassroots-music>