



## MFY MUSIC MENTOR

### Background Information

MFY exists to encourage, support and raise standards of music performance by giving performance opportunities in high profile venues across the UK, coupled with appropriate and constructive feedback from professional musicians acting as Music Mentors.

Through a Festival Series that is artistically engaging we aim to inspire more young people from all backgrounds to engage in music-making, opening the door to new musical possibilities. The MFY Festival Series seeks to inspire, challenge, excite and educate, commissioning artistically adventurous work and shining a light on the high quality and eclectic music being created across the UK.

MFY's annual programme consists of the following:

#### REGIONAL FESTIVALS

The Regional Festivals are the gateway to the MFY Season and are the foundation of our work. Each Festival provides a unique opportunity for musicians aged 21 or under to perform to new audiences, listen to other groups from their area and get valuable feedback from music professionals. Taking place throughout February, March and April, around 40,000 young musicians take part in 50 festivals held in many different venues throughout the UK.

#### NATIONAL FESTIVAL

The National Festival is the national showcase for the UK's creative young musicians. Held in July each year, MFY takes over the city of Birmingham for a five day Festival, celebrating the enormous diversity and enthusiasm of youth music-making across the UK. At the heart of the Festival, over 10,000 young musicians perform in some of the country's premier concert halls, in various outside spaces and everywhere in between. Performers descend on Birmingham city centre from as far afield as Scotland and Cornwall and vary in age from 4 to 21.

#### EXCHANGE

MFY deliver a range of activities in Scotland, including Exchange - a new two day event in Glasgow for over 500 young musicians. Exchange will provide opportunities for young people to perform, and take part in workshops and collaborations with other young people from across Scotland, as well as finding out about pathways into the music industry.

#### FREQUENCIES

Targeting young musicians who perform rock, pop and urban music, and who predominantly do their music making outside of school, this series of events widens access to our national programme and increases opportunities for young musicians to progress their musical development in areas which are less well provided for in the formal education system i.e. non-classical. Events are scheduled in a number of major UK cities and include performance platforms, vocal clinics, Q&A sessions with artists and industry experts, performances by artist role models and coaching.

#### MFY PROMS

Held over three nights at the Royal Albert Hall in November, 3,000 young musicians from across the UK perform an eclectic mix of music to a public audience of friends, families, supporters, music education professionals and government ministers. The concerts are the finale of the MFY season and feature high quality, musically diverse performances that highlight the excellent music education work taking place across the country. High production values, including expert sound, lighting and stage crew and professional presentation offer those taking part a truly unforgettable experience.

## **Role Description**

MFY is the only organisation to offer a national programme which connects regionally produced music education work, and allows organisations and young musicians to have a sense of being part of a bigger national scene.

MFY engages a pool of experienced musicians and performers, reflecting varied musical disciplines, to give feedback on live performances by participating music groups, based on their own extensive experience of performance work at all levels and across all age groups.

Increasingly, MFY is appealing to young musicians who do not learn music through the traditional educational channels, but who also need opportunities to perform and benefit from professional feedback. As trends for learning music evolve, and more young people learn informally, we anticipate working with more young musicians who reflect a wider range of learning styles. Music Mentors working for MFY need to be aware of, and adapt to this trend, mindful of the resulting imperative to provide feedback which is appropriate and relevant to the young people concerned.

## **ETHOS**

Throughout its annual season, MFY showcases the range of youth music-making in the UK, aiming to present quality music-making of a high technical standard, as well as innovative performances and approaches which include unique collaborations and new music.

The Music Mentor plays a crucial part in enabling the events to feel supportive for all participants, and to celebrate achievement. Music Mentors should see themselves as guides who can boost the confidence of both young people and music leaders through providing constructive and considered commentary.

The Music Mentor is frequently the public voice and face of MFY, with the additional job of facilitating a selection process which supports progression, avoiding any negativity which can sometimes accompany an overly competitive environment. Every performance group should be encouraged whatever the degree of their success, giving respect and taking care not to come across as patronising.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Music Mentors have two main roles.

1. To give credible, relevant, meaningful and encouraging feedback after a performance, both written and verbal, with conviction and effective communication. Music Mentors should consider the following:
  - how to adapt their feedback to the audience, responding to a range of different musical styles and ways of learning;
  - the importance of encouraging good practice at all levels of music making – from wider opportunities classroom projects to the choice of repertoire for a county symphony orchestra.
2. To provide MFY with recommendations, along with a rationale, on which groups should progress through the MFY season, keeping in mind MFY's key aims and objectives. Mentors are also required to recommend groups for identified awards.

## **THE MUSIC MENTOR POOL – WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR**

MFY needs to have access to a pool of professional musicians who reflect the diversity of the UK's music scene and have experience of working with young people in an educational context. In particular, we are looking for musicians with the following skills, experience and qualities:

- wide experience of performing, teaching and rehearsing musicians of all ages, preferably across a broad range of genres, but with your own specialisms;
- an understanding of the music education sector, with an awareness of current issues and trends, and direct experience of working with young people;
- an ability to respond to, and represent, the ethos and aspirations of Music for Youth.

Music Mentors should be articulate and confident at speaking in public as well as comfortable about writing feedback that will be seen and used by teachers.

Music Mentors should be able to identify talent and potential in a group, individual or performance. Positive comments from the Mentor can transform and motivate a group and individuals, as well as the music director/leader. Similarly, negative comments can have a profound effect and care should be taken regarding the manner of delivering constructive criticism as it can easily be misconstrued.

MFY aims to recruit musicians into our pool of Music Mentors who are:

- professional at all times with the ability to be a team player;
- motivational and encouraging but lucid;
- accessible and supportive as well as relevant and credible;
- diplomatic and flexible.

### **Safeguarding**

MFY has a responsibility for the safeguarding of young people involved in all of its activity. As a key figure at MFY events, the role will require a current DBS check and you will be expected to help implement MFY's safeguarding and child protection policy, adhering to its code of safe conduct.

### **Equality of Opportunity**

Through personal example and clear action, MFY seeks to ensure a positive approach to equality of opportunity for staff, teachers, Local Organisers, musicians and volunteers involved in the implementation of the Music for Youth Festival Series.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

MFY will review our pool of Music Mentors on an annual basis. Whilst we are happy to receive applications or expressions of interest from potential mentors at any time, we will review our list and recruit new mentors in September each year.

We cannot guarantee that applications received after that date will be considered for the forthcoming season, but will keep the application on file for future consideration. Musicians putting themselves forward for a Music Mentor role will be invited for a meeting with MFY. MFY also reserves the right to solicit applications from musicians to cover specific skills/specialism gaps as required.

MFY is currently working on its new Music Mentor Development Programme, and will publish further guidance in due course. This will include the maximum number of Music Mentors in our pool, frequency of future Mentor reviews, and information regarding the current pool and their specialisms.

**Deadline for Music Mentor applications for the 2016 season is: Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015**