

## M4C DTP Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) Marketing Template

<b>Project Title</b>				
Music Education, Cultural Value and Social Change: A Case Study of the Nottingham Music Service				
<b>LEAD INSTITUTION</b>				
Name of HEI institution	University of Nottingham			
Lead regional city	Birmingham <input type="checkbox"/>	Coventry <input type="checkbox"/>	Leicester <input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>PARTNER ORGANISATION</b>				
Name of organisation	Nottingham Music Service			
Website URL	<a href="http://www.nottinghammusicclub.org.uk/">http://www.nottinghammusicclub.org.uk/</a>			
<b>THE RESEARCH PROJECT</b>				
<b>Research Context</b>				
<p>The evidence that music education benefits children’s cognitive function, social skills, motor skills and confidence (Hallam 2010; Royal Conservatory of Music 2014) is anecdotal in its reference to inner city children. These populations tend to be culturally diverse and include areas of high deprivation that encounter barriers to cultural engagement, educational achievement and social mobility. Using a qualitative case study of the Nottingham Music Service (NMS) provisions, this project will assess the cultural value of one initiative, which might help children to succeed despite those barriers. The research aims to understand the value of engagement with the arts to inner city children through interviews and focus groups. The student will seek to identify the most effective strategies, structures and methodologies towards enhancing cultural value in the lives of these children. First-hand knowledge of the NMS will be gained through weekly observation of their musical activities, and the investigation will be informed by critical research on other Music Services, In Harmony and El Sistema. The final thesis and supplementary policy paper will include a set of recommendations for providing appropriate, accessible and sustained progression routes for inner city children.</p> <p>Nottingham has a very tightly drawn boundary that includes an unusually high proportion of areas of deprivation. 35% of the population are from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups (Census 2011), who have been traditionally under represented in music education. The city also has the lowest disposable income (Office for National Statistics 2015) and is the eighth most deprived area in the country (Indices of Deprivation 2015). These high levels of diversity and deprivation render Nottingham an ideal location to investigate this topic. Since its establishment, the NMS has made significant progress in developing a system that overcomes many barriers to participation in music making for young people. However, its employees are not always clear why particular strategies have succeeded or failed in certain environments. This project will inform best practice at the NMS and help to achieve its ambition for a fully inclusive music education provision, thereby promoting cultural value and the cultural industries in the East Midlands.</p>				
<b>Research Questions</b>				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The NMS’s mission is ‘making music make a difference’. What positive social changes have been activated by NMS in the lives of inner city children?</li> <li>2. Which strategies, structures and methodologies currently adopted by the NMS are having the greatest impact on sustained musical engagement and educational progression for young people from diverse backgrounds, and how might these be improved?</li> <li>3. Beyond the localised case study, how might best practice across the cultural industries be identified and shared in a more constructive manner among music services, educators and scholars?</li> </ol>				

4. How can this study inform government policy and investment in children's education and the arts?

## Methodology

This investigation demands a focus on three distinct sectors: recipients of NMS provision (RQ1), NMS as an institution (RQ2), and local, national and international educational strategies for musical engagement (RQ3 and RQ4). The first year of study will focus on the final group with literature and document review; data analysis from the Department of Education; interviews with state representatives; initial visits to schools and regular engagements at the NMS. Training in preparation for fieldwork, including for the safeguarding of young people, will also be completed.

The second year of study will focus on recipients of NMS provision through ethnographic, qualitative research (especially RQ1 and RQ2). The researcher will examine aspects including social skills, well-being, engagement and cultural enrichment, academic performance, and the impact on families and the wider community. A sample of four primary schools (c. 50 students) will be used for as focused case studies. Informal interviews with children and observations of classroom teaching practices will provide an understanding of their experience of music education. Interviews and focus groups with parents, teachers, mentors and other influential figures in the children's lives will inform the research. To help investigate engagement and cultural enrichment, the researcher will analyse records from NMS, and examine participation data from NMS concerts and events, and school events. The above activities will be carried out over the period of a school year.

Year three will be largely devoted to analysing the interview data and writing up the research findings. Periodic visits to schools and the NMS will buttress the writing. After completion of the main research project, the student will visit other music services to develop a broader understanding of the government's music education provisions in preparation for the authorship of a policy paper (see below; RQ3 and RQ4).

## HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

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