Application: M4C2022

Midlands4Cities Doctoral Training Partnership

Application Form

Your Proposed Project

For applicants to the Open Doctoral Competition: Please provide details of your proposed project. Read the Guidance Notes to help you. For applicants to the Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) competition: Please provide details of the purpose and reasons for undertaking research on the collaborative project. Read the Guidance Notes to help you.

Please provide a project title for your proposed programme of research

'x For y Hours' – Music's Ontological Status After the Internet

Project Proposal (max.500 words)

Please outline as relevant to the stage of your research at the time of applying, and with reference (e.g., Jones, 2017) to existing literature in the field:

The **context** of your project (i.e., the research or practice background to the problem/challenge/research gap you will investigate).

The **research question(s)** it will answer.

The **method(s)** you will use to investigate your research question(s).

The **impact(s)** your project could make in terms of an original contribution to knowledge in the field(s), and beyond academia (e.g., in professional and creative practice, industry, etc).

An **indicative structure/timeline** for your project across the duration of the award you are applying for.

CDA applicants will want to consider the **context** and **research questions** slightly differently, please see the guidance notes for details.

Music is bound by time, but how has the internet and new technology transformed duration and listening experience? My project will explore 'open duration' to formulate new ideas about musical time that internet-mediation and current economic and technological conditions allow. I will investigate how cloud-based storage has removed the material carrier of music (e.g. CDs), meaning duration (linked to material) becomes indeterminate. The importance of 'completeness' in the listening experience of music has shifted due to the emergence of streaming services and advancement of audio automation. Consequently, digital technologies have enabled a new conceptualisation of duration that deconstructs existing linear structure and teleology in music. To reimagine duration as a non-linear and undefined musical component, I will create a body of work where parameter x (static, ambient musical material) exists to mediate y (indeterminate time) through web-based pieces, site specific performance- and concert-installations and notated electronic and instrumental compositions. This builds upon experience combining scored and undefined musical elements.

Over the past 25 years, the environment for creating and consuming music has been radically transformed by internet technologies (Born, Haworth 2017). The 'democratisation' of musical production online, a result of the ethic of DIY and popularity of Bandcamp and SoundCloud, coincides with the growth of degrees in music technology and sound art. Expanding the practices developed as a result of these changes will form

compositional methods that deconstruct musical time and structure in contemporary music, critically engaging with conventional concert duration, effects of streaming and web-based music (such as ambient generative music), and thus challenge further on definitions of 'academic' and 'non-academic' composition.

By deconstructing ritualised linear listening experiences embedded in the concert-hall, I will establish a body of work solidifying grounds for a musical practice based on open duration. My research will contribute to active discourses on non-linearity, non-teleological form, and fields of sound art, experimental electronic and computer music. Recognising current research on time-perception, this project contends that these perceptions have become increasingly indistinct in the context of live and online listening experiences. A preliminary literature review considering how electronic music "is changing the way we listen not only to music, but to sound itself" (Demers 2010), will inform theoretical frameworks surrounding open duration. Concurrently, I will contextualise existing notions of 'open form' (Earle Brown) and 'moment form' (Karlheinz Stockhausen) "post-digital aesthetics" in computer music and sound art (Cascone 2000, Andrews 2000, Cramer 2014), and "internet-mediated musics" (Haworth, Born 2017), such as vaporwave and microsound, in relation to my compositional output. Adopting a reflexive approach to practice-based research will generate a feedback loop of assessing compositional ideas, concepts, and decisions against theoretical frameworks and relevant literature.

The outcomes of my research will facilitate a new understanding of duration for an emerging community of composers to question traditional forms and structures. I am cultivating such a community through Vivid Projects' artist development programme Black Hole Club. Collaborating with Vivid Projects enables further dissemination of my project, through live platforms, to a wider public. Producing work alongside BHC's cohort of interdisciplinary practitioners will test reflexive methodological approaches used to assess outcomes.

AHRC Subject Remit

Please review the AHRC subject remit guidelines and indicate as far as you can a primary research area and, if applicable, a secondary research area; these should both be from Level 2 categories.

https://ahrc.ukri.org/funding/research/subjectcoverage/ahrc-disciplines/

Primary (Level 1):   Music

Secondary (Level 2): Music Composition

Ethics (max.200 words)

All research projects **must** comply with relevant research ethics and integrity guidelines. Please review your proposed home institution's guidelines and outline:

Any **Ethical considerations** in the context of your project (e.g. in relation to research

participants/stakeholders, data collection and storage, archive use, copyright, intellectual property etc.); and

How you will **address potential ethical concerns** (e.g., informed consent, anonymisation, ethics training needs for yourself and/or participants, identification of support services etc.)

In carrying out my project I will closely follow and apply both University of Birmingham and De Montfort University's code of practice for research. The health and safety practices of concert halls, performance spaces, and studios within both institutions will be adhered to. Risk assessments will be completed and health and safety procedures followed during live performances at external venues, including Vivid Projects. All quoted literature used to contextualise my research and practice will be referenced in accordance with the house style guidelines of my home university. Any quoted musical material and any contributions to compositions from collaborators (composers, performers, other creative practitioners) will be credited and clearly acknowledged. I will adhere to copyright law regarding any sampling of musical material used in my work. Where relevant, anyone who took part or contributed to the research will be required to give their consent. Visual documentation is intrinsic to the aesthetic representation of my practice. Where there is video documentation of my work, I will ensure that all participants are acknowledged and credited appropriately. In the case of a live performance audiences members will forewarned and required to sign a consent form.

Research Activities (max. 200 words)

Complete this section if your proposed project will require you to undertake fieldwork, study visits or practice (beyond routine dissemination and engagement events). For each activity, please provide indicative details about:

Where the activity will take place (i.e., country, institute, archive, centre etc)

How long the activity will taker (i.e., days, weeks)

Why the activity is required (i.e., how will the activity support you to complete your research? e.g., enable data collection, stakeholder engagement, language practice, test theoretical argument etc).

What costs are likely to be incurred (travel, accommodation, room hire, training costs) **Contingency plans** in the event that activity cannot go ahead due to risk assessment outcomes (e.g., restrictions due to COVID-19).

Not applicable

Extended Funding (max. 200 words)

A standard award is for 3.5 years full-time. An award can be extended up to a maximum of 6 months full-time or 12 months part-time.

Requests for extended funding can be made where there is a rationale for complex or extended training, skills acquisition (e.g., research cannot be completed without acquisition of new, high-level skills), extended research/fieldwork/extended practice activities, visits, or extended practice or placement needs (e.g., due to significant challenges with collaboration, access and/or logistics).

Please see application guidelines for further details. All such requests must make a case for the need and explain how it is integral to your research.

Complete this section if you anticipate that you will require extended funding. Please provide details of the:

Training/skills development, operational challenges or extended practice activities you anticipate.

Planned **destinations and purpose** of visits for fieldwork or placements.

and **indicative length** of additional time you will require. The allocation of extended funding will be confirmed after the first mid-year review.

Not applicable

Person and Preparedness

If applicable, please provide details about your qualifications.

<u>Undergraduate Degree</u>

Subject   Classical Musical Performance

Degree   BA (Hons)

Classification 2:1

Completion Date xxxx

<u>Postgraduate Degree (Master's or equivalent international qualification)</u>

If you are not studying for/do not hold a Master's but have equivalent professional experience, please proceed to the next questions and provide details there.

Subject: Music Composition

Qualification   Master of Music

Classification distinction

Completion Date xxxx

<u>Previous study and Experience (max.500 words)</u>

Describe how you are ready to undertake your proposed doctoral research project based on your previous study and experience. You might comment on: [max. 500 words].

Knowledge and skills developed through previous study (e.g., undergraduate/postgraduate studies (including specific modules), certifications, training etc) and/**or professional and creative practice** (e.g., employment, research assistantships, consultancy, residencies, performances, curations, internships etc).

Specialised training (e.g., languages, ICT, methods, EDI etc).

Academic and professional achievements (e.g., awards, scholarships, publications etc).

If appropriate, you should also identify any training you might need to undertake or skills you might need to gain in order to complete your project. These may include:

Language proficiency

Research methods in data collection, such as interviewing, archive use, and associated ethical practice.

Data management and processing, particularly where specific software is required

Project management, including in practice and curation.

I bring to this project a broad portfolio of professional and academic experience. My academic training began in classical performance, and I have extensive experience as a performer in a number of duos and ensembles. For my Masters study, however, I chose to develop my skills in composition, completing both a significant portfolio of work and a module on critical analysis for composers. During this degree, I developed and refined my research-informed composition strategies, thinking through theoretical understandings for my work, and revising them accordingly. My doctoral research will use the same methodology, now tried and tested in the academic context of my Masters, for which I gained a distinction.

As a composer I have had work performed at a variety of festivals, including Gaudeamus Muziekweek (Netherlands) and received commissions from well-known ensembles such as Ensemble Klang. I have extensive experience as a composer-performer: with 7balcony (an experimental electronic music duo), both in live performance in Birmingham and also in recorded performance (https://nmc-recordings.myshopify.com/collections/new-releases-2021/products/7balcony-7balcony); as a solo artist and composer with a range of commissions including from Theatre Orpheus Apeldoorn, Netherlands (see here: http://zachdawson.life/). Most significantly, for five years, I have been a co-founder, curator and project manager of the Post-Paradise series. Post-Paradise Series is an experimental concert series dedicated to providing support and unique opportunities for underrepresented composers and artists through curated live events, residencies, and commissioning opportunities. Building infrastructure for cutting edge new and experimental music, the organisation is quickly emerging as a leading figure and making a significant contribution to Birmingham's music scene. As Co-founder and Curator, I have produced over 20 live events of experimental music, worked with and supported 70 emerging and professional composers, artists, and performers, gained a proven track record in securing substantial project funding from such bodies as Arts Council England, RVW Trust and the Hinrichsen Foundation, developed a large, international network of composers and musicians, and continue to build an expanding audience base (some of whom are new to experimental and interdisciplinary practices). Since initiating the series in 2016, I have gained many professional performance and composition opportunities at galleries, festivals, and universities throughout the UK and abroad, and developed strong collaborations with professional composers. Ahead of my PhD I remain Curator and Project Manager and hold responsibility for developing and managing projects and fundraising, producing concerts, and developing partnerships and audiences on a freelance basis. LINKS:http://www.postparadise.ricercata.org/Archive.html /https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpieSCPE3IIwuCh7ndKdP1A/videos

While I am already proficient in the production of electronic music, I would welcome the opportunity to receive further exposure to and training in the use of BEAST, a world-

recognised presentation system for electronic music based at the University of Birmingham, and to develop my work within the research group around it.

Any other information (max.150 words)

Is there any other information you would like to bring to the panel's attention? For instance, you might wish to note extenuating circumstances, such as illness, which have affected your previous performance.

N/A