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Planning

National Centre for Arts and Music Education

Department for Education

UK3: Planned procurement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-011236

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-052863

Published 9 February 2026, 9:42am

Changes to notice

This notice has been edited. The [previous version](#) is still available.

Scope

Reference

itt_3879 - National Centre for Arts and Music Education

Description

The Department for Education intends to procure a delivery partner to establish and operate a National Centre for Arts and Music Education. The intention is to establish the Centre by September 2026.

The independent Curriculum and Assessment Review published its final report on 5 November 2025. The government also issued a response to the report on the same day, setting out the changes that will be made to the National Curriculum, qualifications, accountability and enrichment. The first teaching of the new curriculum will be September 2028 and new GCSEs from September 2029, following consultation. The intention is to publish the new national curriculum in Spring 2027, following consultation on the draft later this year.

In light of these reforms, the Centre will aim to ensure every child in England has more equitable access to high-quality arts education by supporting excellent teaching, developing sustainable partnerships between schools and cultural organisations, and promoting arts education opportunities.

It will focus on supporting more equitable arts education for children and young people aged 5-16 in England, ensuring disadvantaged pupils have access. This should ensure effective delivery of the new national curriculum and relevant qualifications across art and design, dance, drama, and music in state-funded schools, including working with local and regional partners, and their communities.

The scope of services includes establishing and operating the National Centre to design, deliver and oversee programmes of work that:

- Support excellent teaching through a new online CPD offer for primary and secondary school teachers and support to access existing high-quality teacher development provision available from others.
- Develop sustainable partnerships, strengthening collaboration between schools and cultural organisations, to provide high-quality opportunities for children and young people.
- Promote arts education to school leaders, teachers, parents and young people, including promoting opportunities for children and young people to progress in the arts and pursue their interests and career aspirations.

In addition, the provider will be responsible for:

- Oversight of the Music Hubs network, assuming responsibility as fundholder from September 2027, monitoring hubs' performance and delivery, and working with hubs to achieve the Centre's three priorities.

- Delivering an ethical, transparent and sustainable social impact programme that builds partnerships with philanthropy and strengthens long-term financial resilience to support the delivery of the Centre's three priorities; as well as supporting the Music Hubs network in fundraising.

The Centre will be established with a phased implementation plan for its programme of work from September 2026. This includes the Centre assuming responsibility for the Music Hubs network from 1 September 2027. This gives the Centre a year to plan the transition from existing oversight arrangements with Arts Council England, during which the Centre can undertake preliminary engagement with Music Hub partnerships before September 2027. The existing Music Hubs capital grant overseen by Arts Council England will also be extended to the end of April 2027. The Centre will not therefore need to assume responsibility for this grant. Future funding for the Music Hubs revenue grant will be confirmed in due course and is separate to this contract value.

Once the tender notice has been issued, potential bidders should log in or register on our e-tendering portal, Jaggaer. They should also seek to attend the forthcoming information sessions which will follow publication of the tender notice. These will cover in more detail all aspects of the tender requirements. This includes details of the new fundraising element, which was not presented in the 2025 information sessions.

The DfE is keen to maximise opportunities to participate in procurement across a wide range of organisations from the public, community and private sectors, including small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs). Consideration will also be given to consortia and collaborative bids from all forms of organisations.

Total value (estimated)

- £13,000,000 excluding VAT
- £15,600,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2029

- Possible extension to 31 August 2032
- 6 years

Description of possible extension:

Extension option periods 1+1+1

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 80000000 - Education and training services

Contract locations

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKD - North West (England)
- UKF - East Midlands (England)
- UKG - West Midlands (England)
- UKH - East of England
- UKJ - South East (England)
- UKK - South West (England)

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
-

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

16 February 2026

Enquiry deadline

10 April 2026, 12:00pm

Tender submission deadline

27 April 2026, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

<https://education.app.jaggaer.com>

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

19 June 2026

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Contracting authority

Department for Education

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDZG-3487-DPVD

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Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government