

NORTHERN MUSIC EXPORT OFFICE

FAQs

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Proudly based in the North of England

International Professional Programme 2026

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE GONE THROUGH THE 'PRE-APPLICATION GENERAL FAQs' ON THE HOMEPAGE INFORMATION FIRST, AS THIS COVERS GUIDANCE AND ELIGIBILITY RELEVANT TO ALL PROGRAMMES.

What is the International Professional Programme?

The International Professional Programme provides targeted investment of up to £5,000 for music businesses and independent professionals based across the North of England.

As well as financial support, NMEO acts as a strategic development partner by:

1. Integrating recipients into official NMEO trade delegations and global B2B networking sessions.
2. Championing Northern-owned music businesses globally to ensure long-term commercial returns, publishing rights, and master revenues remain rooted in the North.

Who Is the International Professional Programme for?

This programme is exclusively for commercial music businesses and behind-the-scenes professionals (rather than performing artists). Eligible applicants include but are not limited to:

- Artist Managers and Management Companies
- Independent Record Labels
- Music Publishers
- Booking Agents
- Live Promoters
- Tour Managers
- Music PR/Marketing Agencies

What Sort of Events and Activities are Eligible?

Support covers attendance, trade delegations, and business development missions to significant international industry conferences and market events, including:

Global Conferences such as SXSW, Folk Alliance International and Canadian Music Week.

European Showcases & Conventions: Eurosonic Noorderslag, Reeperbahn Festival, ADE, WOMEX and jazzahead!

Targeted Trade Missions: Structured trade trips, international songwriting camps, and verified overseas territory development campaigns.

What are the Business Case Requirements?

Because this programme supports commercial business development, assessors score applications on commercial viability and clear ROI. In addition to standard criteria, you must provide:

Confirmed or Targeted Meeting Itinerary: A clear list of international executives, buyers, or partners you plan to meet.

Target Territory Rationale: Why this specific conference or territory aligns with your business development or artist roster release cycle right now.

Commercial Objectives & Metrics: Expected outcomes (e.g., territory licensing deals, signing international roster talent, securing overseas sub-publishing or sync representation).

Evidence of UK Traction: Proven domestic trading history, active artist roster momentum, or established industry track record.

How Much Can Be Applied For?

You can apply for up to £5,000. See the '**Read This Before Applying**' information on match funding.

Are Businesses and Professionals from Liverpool City Region Currently Eligible?

At this time, these programmes are exclusively available to artists from the Tees Valley, West Yorkshire and North East Mayoral Strategic and Combined Authority areas.

What Can the International Professional Programme Support?

- Official delegate passes/registration fees.
- International/domestic travel, such as flights and trains.
- Accommodation.
- Business visas/ESTAs as well as legal fees relating to visas, **please see the 'Read This Before Applying' information on visas.**
- Reasonable per diems (£25 per day).
- Business travel insurance.

What Can the International Professional Programme Not Support?

- Retrospective expenses.
- Ongoing staff salaries/general company overheads.
- Permanent studio/office hardware, software/plugins.
- Client entertainment budgets.

What is the Assessment Process?

As investments in this strand are capped at £5,000, applications are assessed internally by the NMEO with consultation with relevant event staff and/or regional industry experts where appropriate.

Applications must be submitted a minimum of 8 weeks before the start of the proposed activity. We recommend allowing 10–12 weeks for international activity to support effective planning and scheduling.

Funding decisions are typically communicated within 6–8 weeks of submission.

Please see the 'Read This Before Applying' for more information on assessment timeframes.

Assessors will consider:

- Your readiness for the proposed activity.
- The strength of your business case and planning.
- The opportunity being pursued and why it is appropriate at this stage.
- Evidence of preparation and industry engagement.
- The outcomes you expect to achieve.
- Whether the proposed costs represent good public value and are proportionate to the activity.