

Angela Jaap was delighted to secure funding from ESCalate for research into the influences that shape musical development in children. Here she recounts her experiences... ▶



# Pitching it right



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I am nearing the end of my PhD studies at the University of Glasgow, researching how musical gift and talent is recognised and accommodated within school. The project looks at the influences which impact on the musical development of children and how these experiences shape the young person's approach to music-making. The study involved a large group of successful and critically acclaimed international musicians, in addition to teachers and pupils from universities, conservatoires and schools across the UK.

At the end of my first year of study (2006-07) I successfully applied for a student grant from ESCalate. The grant was to help me collect data for my research from across the UK. As a beginning researcher, the process of looking for funding opportunities can (sometimes) feel a bit intimidating, from trying to find the funding

(which can be difficult in arts-based research) to the process of writing the application itself. ESCalate was different and offered support and advice from the first note of interest to raising the invoices for the grant. One aspect which I found particularly useful was the feedback on the original concept note. Applying to ESCalate was my first attempt at 'bidding' for external funding and I wasn't sure about what to do. The ESCalate team helped me, by letting me know what an expression of interest (and later a full proposal) should include, how best to estimate costings and many other aspects of the grant.

While I was still undergoing my research, in the spring of 2009, I was invited to speak about my experiences of being a new student researcher at the First Annual ESCalate conference in Birmingham. This was a great opportunity, not only for myself in presenting at the conference, but also in that a number of students and representatives from the Faculty of Education made the trip from Glasgow to Birmingham. The conference allowed us to network with other academics and researchers and to share our experiences to date. I would say that this has been a worthwhile addition to being involved with ESCalate – getting to know other people and their work. After completing my grant-funded project a few people (parents and



academics) contacted me about my work and told me why they found it interesting. From a personal perspective I feel that the whole process and ideology behind ESCalate is significant. I think that it's encouraging to know that there is a team dedicated to supporting new researchers (as well as more experienced) by encouraging people to share their ideas with a wider audience.

Although my postgraduate studies are nearing completion and the final project report completed, I hope to remain involved with ESCalate. The support and encouragement first shown to me by the team almost four years ago has acted as a good introduction to my work in academia.



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Angela graduated as a music teacher in 2005 and since then she has worked in Secondary Schools throughout Glasgow. At present she is a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Faculty of Education at the University of Glasgow and is in the process of completing her PhD which looks at identifying and accommodating gift and talent in the music classroom.