

## Mez Sanders-Green (LIFE)

Mez Sanders-Green is the front-man of Hull punk band LIFE. He and his brother, LIFE's guitarist Mick Sanders, were raised on 70s punk and a spirit of independence as integral to the identity of Hull – as a city on the edge and a long way from the music and cultural infrastructure enjoyed in London and other larger cities.

Mez talks proudly of his DIY approach to music and commitment to being an independent and radical voice. He still works as a youth worker at The Warren in Hull and he writes and performs from this perspective:

*The young people that we talk with and engage with on a daily basis are truly suffering with austerity. We actually see it – we don't just pretend. We live and breathe it. It's influenced our sound, and we're here to try and give hope to the community of young people in Hull*

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Momentum funding enabled LIFE to record their debut LP *Popular Music*. This included the opportunity to access 2 weeks of studio time in London. Previously, LIFE had released two singles, both of which were play-listed on BBC 6 Music. The investment is viewed as absolutely game-changing and the timing as perfect:

*The studio time allowed us to open-up to develop a full body of work...without funding, we wouldn't have been able to do it. It was a natural progression and it fell just before our biggest tour. If the funding had come earlier, it would have been less impactful.*

The LP was released in May 2017 and by the end of the year it was one of Radio 1's albums of the year alongside Stormzy, The XX and Jay Z. In the last 12 months the band have appeared at numerous festivals across the UK and Europe, headlined for the BBC at SXSW, toured with Slaves, Idles and Nadine Shah, gained playlist adds on BBC 6 Music and had real backing from Radio 1, including a live session at Maida Vale, and billing at Radio 1's Big Weekend.

PRS Foundation is credited with making a huge difference to the profile and trajectory of the band.

*We were a self-managed and DIY band...but a band is not just 4 people. We are still not signed and the PRS Foundation recognise our hard work and what we are about. The PRS Foundation are part of the band now!*

The band view independent funding as a vital part of the mix – especially as an independent and 'DIY' act. They are exploring other funding streams – including the International Showcase Fund. Mez sees funding as an important validation of their music and with Momentum it added to his sense of responsibility to work hard and get it right:

*It's a two-way process We're representing them – as a Momentum artist. We are thankful for the funding and proud of the logo. It is part of our journey.*