*August 2015 – for immediate release Further information: Chris Pockett, +44 1453 524133*

**Colston Hall and Renishaw join forces to launch Music Tech Lab**

Bristol schoolchildren will be given the chance to design and build their own digital music instruments, thanks to a new three year partnership between Bristol Music Trust and global engineering company Renishaw.

The two organisations have come together with hi-tech educators Conductive Music to create an inspiring education programme that combines engineering, maths, and music – giving 7-11 year olds the opportunity to learn about music technology in a fun and creative way.

Children from 12 schools initially will join Bristol Plays Music – the city’s music education hub based at Colston Hall – in a Beat Lab as part of their music curriculum from September 2015. Workshops will focus on the scientific concepts of engineering and acoustics, key elements of Key Stage 2:

* Conductive Music –in order to build their own digital musical instruments, pupils will be introduced to simple explanations of electrical circuits, building musical instruments with the Arduino-based Makey Makey boards and fruit and vegetables, and performing music in groups;
* Drawing Music Science – batteries, switches, LEDS, LDRs, diodes, transistors, buttons and potentiometers will combine to form linear circuits drawn entirely on paper. Pupils will then create circuits with their own design using conductive ink. Flows of electricity trigger music making devices, for example a Raspberry Pi, to trigger notes. Hand-drawn electronic synthesisers will play songs.

Louise Mitchell, Chief Executive of Bristol Music Trust, said, “We are always looking for new ways to deliver our music education programmes that will inspire and encourage young people. Bristol Plays Music’s Technology Lab will bring together computer programming, electronic engineering, and design to support the music curriculum, offering children huge variety in their learning.

“Developing music participation in creative ways is part of our wider ambition to help make Bristol the UK Capital of Young People’s Music. Once we’ve carried out this trial project in local schools, we will consider how the programme could be extended to benefit children across the wider region.

“We are delighted to be continuing to develop our excellent relationship with Renishaw, one of the region’s major employers; it is a creative organisation which understands the importance of encouraging young peoples’ creativity for their future lives in the arts, science and engineering spheres.”

Sir David McMurtry, Chairman and Chief Executive of global engineering company Renishaw plc, which is sponsoring the Lab, said, “This programme is an opportunity for young children to gain a crucial understanding about different engineering skills and how they can combine in a creative way.

“Delivering scientific innovation is one of Renishaw’s core values and sponsoring this programme contains elements of both. We understand the value of supporting young people as they take their next steps towards a rounded education, where science and the arts play active roles in their early development.”

Colston Hall’s £45 million transformation plans will enable Bristol Plays Music to expand its current music education offering in the future, reaching more young people and introducing further programmes. The Hall’s redevelopment includes a new world-class learning centre that will engage school children and adults from all backgrounds and all levels of ability.

**-ENDS-**

**Notes to Editors**

* Bristol Plays Music (BPM) is Bristol’s hub for music education, based at Colston Hall. It is the only music education hub based in a professional performance venue.
* Bristol Plays Music is run by Bristol Music Trust who also manages Colston Hall.
* Colston Hall is run by Bristol Music Trust, an independent organisation created in 2011 to develop the Hall’s artistic programme , promote music and music making in Bristol and help secure a sustainable future for Colston Hall
* In September 2014, Colston Hall launched a national campaign for a multi-million pound transformation to create an international standard concert hall. The ‘Thank You for the Music’ campaign is one of the largest projects of its kind in the UK. The £45 million transformation plans for the iconic building include remodelling the main auditorium, redeveloping the second hall into a versatile venue, opening up the cellars for the first time in 100 years for educational and workshop space and restoring the frontage to its Victorian magnificence.
* Colston Hall will be the last of the main concert halls in the country to have undergone a major redevelopment since the 1980s and works are due to start in the Hall’s 150th year in 2017, ready for opening in 2019. Find out more at [www.colstonhall.org](http://www.colstonhall.org).
* For more information on the transformation campaign visit: <http://www.colstonhall.org/transformation/>

**About Renishaw**

Renishaw is one of the world's leading engineering and scientific technology companies, with expertise in precision measurement and healthcare. The company supplies products and services used in applications as diverse as jet engine and wind turbine manufacture, through to dentistry and brain surgery. It is also a world leader in the field of additive manufacturing (also referred to as 3D printing), where it is the only UK business that designs and makes industrial machines which ‘print' parts from metal powder.

The Renishaw Group currently has more than 70 offices in 33 countries**,** with over 4,000 employees, of which 2,700 people are employed within the UK. The majority of the company's R&D and manufacturing is carried out in the UK and for the year ended June 2015 Renishaw achieved sales of £494.7 million of which 95% was due to exports. The company's largest markets are China, USA, South Korea, Germany and Japan.