



STUDY

BE THE CHANGE: Gender Equality in the Music Industry

Key Findings & Calls to Action

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Key Findings

THE PERCEPTION GAP

The music industry has a clear disconnect in how we assume industry professionals and artists experience the industry and the reality. **Just under 60%** of artists and industry professionals believe gender discrimination is a major issue in the industry. Women and nonbinary¹ individuals are more likely to see gender discrimination as a problem **(+28% and +46%, respectively)** compared to Men **(-32% less likely)**.

IDENTITIES & INTERSECTIONALITY

Gender discrimination in the music industry is compounded by discrimination based on other marginalized groups. Poor representation and tokenism complicate women and gender expansive² individuals' experience in the industry. Minority women, for example, are **+114%** more likely than average to feel that their hiring decision was, in part, based on their racial, ethnic, tribal background, or country of origin.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT & ABUSE

Alarming rates of sexual harassment and abuse occur in the music industry, often against women and gender expansive individuals, without proper resources for survivors or consequences for offenders. Women **(34%)**, transgender individuals **(42%)**, and nonbinary individuals **(43%)** in the industry report being sexually harassed or abused at work in the music industry.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Mental health is a prevailing issue in the music industry for women, nonbinary, and transgender individuals. Women **(76%)**, transgender individuals **(82%)**, and nonbinary individuals **(89%)** are all more likely than average to report struggling with their mental health since joining the music industry. Individuals with disabilities also face poor accommodations and resourcing in the industry.

RECOGNITION & COMPENSATION

The wage gap still impacts women and gender expansive professionals and creators in the music industry and is a barrier to a flourishing career. Roughly half **(53%)** of those working in the industry agree that cisgender³ men are paid more than others in the music industry. Half of women report having their or another's professional or career experience discredited which impacts earning potential in the industry.

LEADERSHIP

Fewer women and gender expansive professionals are in positions of power in the music industry and barriers exist to leadership positions. **58%** of people we spoke to disagree with the notion that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed in the music industry. Women **(+30%)**, underrepresented ethnic groups **(+30%)**, and transgender individuals **(+74%)** are all more likely to report being passed up for a promotion.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT

Women **(+42%)** and transgender individuals **(+98%)** in the industry are more likely to say that they don't have access to professional training/development opportunities. There are also barriers to entry into the industry as just **41%** of industry professionals and creators recommend a career in the music industry today (an additional **22%** would recommend a career in the industry if it advanced gender equality).



Please note: References to the industry average should consider only the individuals represented in this research.

Calls to Action

FOR THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Evaluate the current state of the industry by conducting and consuming research on gender equality in this environment. Read the full **BE THE CHANGE: Gender Equality in the Music Industry** study [here](#).

Assess the gender composition of executive teams, boards, and leadership and **ensure diverse representation** on such teams, reflective of the music industry as a whole.

Encourage dialogue about gender equality in the industry by creating spaces for discussion (e.g., workshops, open hours with an external expert, etc.), and allowing the learning process to occur without fear of retaliation or consequences of “saying the wrong thing.”

Pledge to create a more inclusive industry by committing to increase gender representation across all levels and sectors of the music industry.

Book more women and gender expansive creators and producers for live music performances and **employ more diverse creators behind the scenes** as producers, songwriters, engineers, and more, aiming for equal gender representation.

Increase availability of safe spaces for creators to record, promote, and perform their work (e.g., expand daytime availability in recording studios, designate substance-free zones at live venues, open women and gender expansive only studios, etc.).

Take Action Now! SIGN the global Keychange Pledge to craft personalized steps in your journey towards equal representation in the music industry.

FOR HR/LEADERSHIP

Commit to providing pay transparency in job descriptions, equal pay for equal work, regardless of gender, and **diversify hiring committees** so they reflect the entire music industry.

Provide clear paths to advancement, and invest in training and career development opportunities for women and gender expansive industry professionals and creators.

Require mandatory anti-sexual harassment and gender sensitivity trainings for all industry employees.

Ensure non-retaliatory and anonymous spaces both online and in-person to safely report cases of discrimination in the music industry.

Provide mental health resources and accommodations for those with disabilities in all music industry environments (e.g., in-studio, on tour, etc.) and make use of external resources, (e.g., [Safe Tour](#)). If you are in need of immediate assistance, please visit the [International Association for Suicide Prevention](#), [Helpline Direct-Link](#), and [Trans Lifeline](#) (U.S and Canada Only).

Take Action Now! Check out these professional marketplaces and profiles that showcase women and gender expansive creators and industry professionals: Gritty in Pink's [INPINK Marketplace](#), [Sound Girls](#), [She is the Music](#), [Amplify Her Voice](#), and more.



Calls to Action



FOR MEN

If you don't know where to start, **ask women and gender expansive individuals** in your organization how you can best support them.

Speak up and take concrete action to support, advocate, and fight for your fellow industry professionals and creators.

Recruit and hire women and gender expansive creators and industry professionals to develop diverse teams and perspectives.

Educate yourself on the realities that women and gender expansive individuals face in the music industry that stem from historically discriminatory practices in the industry.

Use your position of privilege to support the careers of women and gender expansive individuals, redistributing power among all genders in your industry.

Take Action Now! Speak out against gender discrimination, in-person and online, perpetrated against women and gender expansive individuals in the music industry.

FOR WOMEN & GENDER-EXPANSIVE INDIVIDUALS

Speak up about safety concerns and inequality in the music industry by reporting personal or witnessed instances of gender discrimination.

For leaders, provide mentorship to women and gender expansive individuals to help nurture the next generation of leaders in the music industry.

Take Action Now! Build or join music industry networks ([Women in Music](#), [SheSaidSo](#), [Color of Music Collective](#), [Queer Capita](#), etc.) and make use of their professional development resources and networking opportunities.

FOR CREATORS

Choose your team carefully and work with organizations, agents, and management that have pledged a commitment to gender equality (e.g., the [Reeperbahn Festival](#) which has taken the [Keychange Pledge](#) for gender equality).

Hire women and gender expansive individuals for traditionally male-dominated roles (e.g., producers, sound engineers, road crew, etc.). Organizations such as [#BookMoreWomen](#) and [Diversify The Stage](#) are great examples of inclusive booking practices.

Use your voice in the live music space to 'share the stage' with women and gender expansive individuals, providing opportunities and advocating for creators of all genders.

Designate spaces for women and gender expansive fans to safely enjoy live music (e.g., "Girls to the Front" championed by Punk Rock singer Kathleen Hanna).

Partner with organizations at live music events that work to create safe environments for women and gender expansive individuals at live shows (e.g., [Calling All Crows](#) ([#HereForTheMusic](#)), UN Women UK's [Safe Spaces Now](#)).

Invest in your own health and wellbeing by accessing services available to creators in the music industry (e.g., [Music Minds Matter](#), [Backline](#), and more)

Take Action Now! Consider adopting an **inclusion rider** that requires diverse representation among performing line-ups and crews.