

BE THE CHANGE

Gender equity in music

Our report reflects some positive change for women and gender expansive¹ individuals in music, particularly in the areas of harassment, mental health, and career opportunities. However, huge gaps remain in reporting for harassment and assault, with lack of enforcement and fear of retaliation major prohibitive factors:

MEASURING CHANGE:

(Since 2021)

- 60% of women in music say they have experienced sexual harassment.² However, this figure is down from 82% in our 2021 report – indicating that progress is being made
- Nearly half of women and gender expansive individuals say their confidence and self-motivation have improved
- Around one-third of women and gender expansive individuals say that opportunities for career progression and promotion have improved
- 28% of women and gender expansive individuals say diversity of staff has increased, and 31% say recognition has increased
- Only around one-fifth of men and women say their income or pay has improved
- The majority (60%) of women and gender expansive individuals saw no change in “negative, aggressive, or inappropriate audience behavior online,” with gender expansive individuals more likely to say this behavior has increased (27%) than women (18%)

¹ Gender expansive: Refers, in this report, to the segment of survey respondents who indicated that they identify as nonbinary, agender / neutrois, transgender, or “other.”

² Sexual harassment: Inappropriate, unwelcome remarks, or physical advances of a sexual nature.

Executive summary

KEY FINDINGS

The perception gap

- 49% of women, and 41% of gender expansive individuals, say the music industry is “generally discriminative” based on gender
- This is compared to just 16% of men, exposing the “perception gap”³

Harassment and assault

- Three in five women in music have experienced sexual harassment, and one in five have experienced sexual assault⁴
- More than 70% of women who had these experiences did not report them
- Fear of retaliation and not believing anything would change are the most common reasons women do not report
- More than half (56%) of women who reported sexual assault said their claims were ignored or dismissed, nearly one-third were told to keep quiet about it, and 12% even saw their employment terminated afterwards

The pay gap

- Women and gender expansive individuals are twice as likely as men to discover that they are paid less than colleagues in the same or similar roles (34%, compared to men at 17%)
- **Identity compounds:** 49% of women of a marginalized race or ethnicity have discovered they are paid less than colleagues

³ Perception gap: The trend whereby those not adversely affected by discrimination are less likely to be aware that inequities exist.

⁴ Sexual assault: Intentional sexual contact without the other person’s consent, or coercing or physically forcing a person to engage in a sexual act against their will.

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Being the change

- Women and gender expansive individuals believe more diversity in positions of power, pay transparency, and stronger enforcement of penalties of harassment and assault are most important in driving positive change
- Less than 15% of women and gender expansive individuals trust industry executives to implement change — instead, they are being the change themselves

CALLS TO ACTION:

Above all, we urge the music industry to focus on reducing the perception gap, committing to pay transparency, and combatting sexual harassment and assault. The following calls to action specifically target these initiatives:

Everyone

- Reflect on the insights in this report, share them widely, and discuss them with others
- Speak up when witnessing or experiencing misconduct
- Sign the [BE THE CHANGE in Music](#) pledge and encourage others to do the same

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Leadership and human resources

- Include salary ranges in all job descriptions
- Diversify hiring committees and institute blind hiring where possible
- Diversify job candidate pools using databases like [INPINK](#) and [Women Who Create](#)
- Support new hires through mentorship and training, and regularly monitor satisfaction through anonymous feedback
- Regularly publish statistics on the diversity of staff and / or creative roster, referencing official guidance like the [Gender Equality Index](#)
- Host mandatory diversity, equity, and inclusion training for employees
- Create confidential, anonymous hotlines for reporting sexual harassment and assault, and enforce penalties for misbehavior
- Sign the [Keychange](#) pledge for music industry organizations (including festivals) to achieve gender equity and diversity by committing to self-determined goals within their scope of work

Creators

- Commit to working only with partners that are diversely staffed and / or have pledged commitments to gender equality
- Join and support trade associations, like the UK's [Musicians Union](#) and the [American Federation of Musicians](#)
- Use hotlines to report misconduct (e.g., New York's [Local 802](#))
- Recognize the power imbalances that can dissuade women from speaking up for themselves and keep all sexual contact, verbal and physical, out of work settings

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Venues (e.g., recording studios, live performance venues, conference venues)

- Develop, signpost, and enforce rules prohibiting misconduct, and include them in contractual agreements
- Commit to ensuring a diversity of acts, lineups, and curation
- Offer confidential support for anyone who experiences misconduct (e.g., the [Ask For Angela](#) campaign in the UK)

Non-profit organizations

- Spearhead the development of accessible, crowd-sourced online guides for the range of pay that creators should expect for certain gigs
- Organize grants for young women and gender expansive creators (e.g., PRS Foundation's [Women Make Music](#))
- Provide music business education resources and support to young women and gender expansive individuals (e.g., [Gen Admission](#)), and educate all young people on the gender gap and value of diversity
- Organize safelisting systems recognizing businesses that uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g., France's [ACT RIGHT Quality Label](#))

Governments, regulators, and trade bodies

- Develop and pass legislation prohibiting the use of non-disclosure agreements in sexual harassment and assault cases
- Develop and pass legislation requiring employers to publish salary ranges and equity practices / statistics

