

The Code of Conduct for Equal Access in Music

Background

The Code of Conduct for Equal Access in Music was developed in 2022 at the initiative of the Partnership for Sustainable Development in Music, which comprises a broad group of music stakeholders working together for the socially, environmentally and economically sustainable development of the music scene. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide the overall framework for this work.

The partnership's mission statement is:

*"Music is a societal matter; hence music industry stakeholders must play a clear part in driving efforts to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. With this partnership, we wish to **identify and launch initiatives** addressing relevant **cross-sector challenges** and contribute to the sustainable development of the music scene."*

Two central themes have initially been selected for the partnership's work:

1) equal access in music and 2) mental health and well-being in music. These two themes are considered key to bringing about change towards a more sustainable music scene and particularly to achieving SDGs 3: good health and well-being, 5: gender equality and 10: reduced inequalities.

The partnership holds an annual conference where industry stakeholders highlight and discuss these themes and related initiatives.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct for Equal Access in Music

The Code focuses on the theme of 'Equal access in music' and is intended to help provide a fair and even playing field where everyone can realise their full professional, artistic and intellectual potential on the music scene.

The Code's understanding of 'equal access' builds on the UN human rights, including the right to freedom from discrimination and the right to equal opportunities.

At a later stage, the Code may be expanded to include other relevant themes related to working with social, economic or environmental sustainability.

Signing up to the Code

The aim is to establish broad support for the Code from music enterprises and organisations. When an enterprise or organisation signs up to the Code, it commits to working for genuine change internally and externally, basing its activities on the six principles described below.

A special obligation concerns working for measurability and transparency. By signing up to the Code, organisations and enterprises commit to reporting annually on a number of measuring points (see principle 6) that indicate their efforts and progress. Reporting will be made to an independent body appointed by the partnership's steering committee, which is responsible for collecting all reports and verifying progress.

Revision of the Code

This, the first version of the Code of Conduct for Equal Access in Music, was adopted in December 2022. The next adjustment will take place at end-2023.

The partnership's steering committee will reassess the Code once a year, at which time it will also decide whether a basis exists for adjusting and/or expanding its content.

Principles

Change requires action. Music organisations and enterprises can create better, more equal access in practice by following the Code's six principles below.

01

Bias-conscious managers and staff

To be able to make swift decisions, the brain uses automatic processes that can result in prejudices and stereotypes about others. Greater awareness of our own unconscious preferences (biases) can provide insight into how our actions and words can – often unintentionally – seem to exclude others. When addressing our own biases, we automatically become more open to other people, their backgrounds and views. But addressing bias is not enough – we should also address the culture and decision-making processes that can arise from our unconscious biases. Accordingly, the process of creating change requires both that we as individuals become more conscious of our own prejudices and stereotypes and also that this knowledge is reflected in the organisation's or enterprise's processes and formal structures (principle 5). Only by involving both levels can we challenge the unconscious biases that affect our decision-making processes.

The organisation or enterprise commits to training managers and staff to work with and challenge their own stereotypes and prejudices to counteract ingrained preconceptions and discriminatory biases within its own entity. It also introduces specific measures to eliminate patronising language internally and in relation to cooperation partners.

02

Broad representation in gatekeeper roles

Some roles can be defined as gatekeepers – people whose position gives them special power and authority to decide whom or what to select in a given context. To ensure equal access for everyone in the industry, the organisation or enterprise should identify its various gatekeeper roles and examine the role they play for the areas they represent.

The organisation or enterprise strives to achieve as broad a representation as possible in the positions and at the decision-making levels that function as gatekeepers and thus exercise special power in relation to assessments, support distributions and prize awards, bookings and job appointments. Existing gatekeepers should also be trained to become aware of and challenge their own biases in the selection processes for which they are responsible – for example, by developing a questionnaire or checklist, or by ensuring representative pre-selection groups before making their selection.

03

Role models and idols

Role models and idols can be vital for inspiring and attracting candidates and target groups that are outnumbered and under-represented on the stage, in the workplace, in the industry and in positions of power.

The organisation or enterprise commits to working with more diverse role models and idols in its internal and external activities.

04

A safe, inclusive culture

Creating an inclusive workplace starts with creating a culture and a working environment where everyone feels that they are valued, experience a sense of belonging and have opportunities for development. In such cultures, everyone feels equally heard and acknowledged and can freely express their opinions. The work of nurturing a safe, inclusive culture depends on where an organisation or enterprise stands regarding the culture it wants and the issues for which it has zero tolerance. This position is then communicated continuously, clearly and unambiguously within the organisation or enterprise.

The organisation or enterprise commits to defining and promoting a culture and a working environment where no one, whatever their role – manager, employee, freelancer, member, musician, artist, songwriter, composer, student, trainee, volunteer or other – is treated with discrimination based on their age, gender, religious belief, skin colour, sexual orientation, national, ethnic or social background, political opinion, visible and invisible disabilities, appearance or other characteristics.

05

Professionalisation of the organisation or enterprise

The increasing demands and expectations from the outside world and stakeholders today – including expectations for efforts to support diversity, equality, inclusion and well-being – require a stronger focus on knowledge, more strongly professionalised structures and processes as well as strategic management development for all stakeholders. This applies to all enterprises and organisations from the music scene, whatever their size.

The organisation or enterprise commits to continuously establishing, implementing and maintaining the processes and guidelines required to make its management levels, processes, structures and operations more professional. By its very nature, this work will challenge the status quo and provide better opportunities for innovative thinking.

In particular, the organisation or enterprise commits to addressing and eliminating everyday sexism and other forms of discrimination and sexism by defining and communicating policies and support options as well as by launching processes to prevent and deal with offensive acts and sexual harassment.

06

Data and transparency

As with any other strategic focus area, it is important to know the basis for measuring progress and identifying activities that will bring about the desired changes.

To ensure progress, the organisation or enterprise commits to making its efforts measurable and transparent and to following up on its activities. Specifically, the organisation or enterprise commits to describing and reporting data on the below measuring points to an independent body appointed by the partnership's steering committee, which will annually collect and verify the reports received.

Reporting

Danish legislation affords limited opportunities for statistically measuring all the diversity markers that enterprises or organisations might wish to quantify. For instance, it is illegal to register a person's ethnic background, sexual orientation or disability. When an enterprise or organisation handles data registration itself, it may only lawfully record biological gender (male/female), age or seniority. It is therefore recommended that reporting also includes a description of efforts and a status of initiatives that aim to strengthen broader diversity and inclusion – even though progress in this respect cannot be quantitatively measured.

The following section depicts the description and the data-based measurements that the organization or company commits to when joining the Code. All organisations or enterprises report in the 'All stakeholders' category as well as the stakeholder category they belong to. For example, Koda reports in the categories 'All stakeholders', 'Member organisation' and 'Support-distributing organisation', as Koda belongs to all three categories. Data-based measuring points are calculated annually as sum totals and as percentage breakdowns, while other measuring points are written descriptions of efforts and examples.

DESCRIPTION OF EFFORTS	
All stakeholders must describe:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your specific long-term goals (for example, 3–5-year goals) for each action area and short-term goals for the coming 12 months in relation to promoting gender balance and other under-represented groups (see which areas apply to the individual stakeholder below). Describe the initiatives and activities to increase equal access you have implemented in the past 12 months and the effect they have had. Describe the initiatives and activities you plan to implement in the next 12 months and the effect you expect them to achieve. Specify the gender balance at all management levels (board of directors/executive board/team management/secretariat).
MEASURING PROGRESS	
All stakeholders must describe:	<p>As a minimum, stakeholders must report on the specific legal measuring points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the gender balance in positions with special responsibility (for example, budget, strategy, booking/A&R/scouting, management consultancy services, job appointments, application processing). Specify the gender balance for all employees: full-time, part-time and temporary employees, including students and trainees. Specify the gender balance of other affiliated persons. Specify the gender balance of applicants for positions at all levels. Describe how the organisation/enterprise annually ensures relevant competency development and insight into the work of increasing equal access.
Concert organiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the gender balance in booked artists/musicians, line-ups, employees, including specifically for bookers and/or associated bookers (eg, volunteers and freelancers).
Member organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the gender balance of the membership group (individual members). Specify the gender balance of the various membership categories (individual members).
Grant-distributing organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the gender balance of the candidate list, grant recipients and evaluation committee.
Educational institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the gender balance of the candidate list, trainees/students admitted, instrument or genre breakdown, assessment committee/experts, external examiners, teachers, researchers.
Music company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the gender balance for artists collaborating with the company, in publications (women, men, men and women combined).