

# Towards a more inclusive music sector ahead

Action plan for Musiksverige and member organisations

And our demands towards the politicians

2023-2025

## Background

Musiksverige is an association tasked with communicating and highlighting the industry's key topics for discussion. Our primary aim is to provide Swedish music with the best possible foundation and environment needed to create, develop and thrive internationally through collaboration with other creative industries, government agencies and departments.

As of November 2017, and due to the #metoo campaign and the over 2000 women in the Swedish music industry that signed an open letter against sexual harassment in the music industry, Musiksverige set a course for a new direction, where the association focused to work for a more inclusive industry free from antagonistic behaviour, harassment and discrimination.

In 2022, the board began a development project to increase its own competence and contribute to inclusion and representation in the music industry.

## Our process

### A working group formed the basic plan

A working group, led by **Camilla Wagner** from Klara K, was appointed to outline what such a change in work could look like, to map existing priority areas and to propose activities to support the change.

The group included **Ayesha Quraishi**, artist, **Aurelia Dey**, artist, **Anton Waltari**, STIM, **Fredrik Gustafsson**, Ledarna (a Swedish organisation for managers of all sectors), **Rebecka Sjöström**, Playground (also board member), **Eva Karman**, SOM, (board member) and **Camilla Wagner**, Klara K (process manager). The group had five meetings between 18 January and 17 March 2022.

This action plan is very much based on the work and insights of this group and a general conclusion of this work was that regardless of where or how we start, this is a process and a matter of maturity. It requires commitment and constant presence, but is also rewarding as each conversation, meeting or activity brings us a little closer to an inclusive community. The watchwords for the work now and forward should be *compassion* and *security*. Only then is curiosity and willingness to change encouraged to come forward.

### A first perspectives survey

As a first step, at the beginning of 2023, a broad survey was carried out to find out about how the inclusion in practice works in the music sector. The aim was to make visible which perspectives are included, which are possibly excluded and whether it differs depending on where in the music world one works. The perspectives survey was made by **Suzan Hourieh Lindberg** and **Olivia Hansson** at Perspetivo. Insights and recommendations from the survey have been weighed into this action plan.

## **One Voice for European Music**

Within the framework of the European collaborative project One Voice For European Music (OVFEM), we have been able to take our work further in the spring of 2023. A focus group within OVFEM was created with national and international knowledge bearer in the music industry: **Ceylan Holago**, Musiksupporten, **Mia Ternström**, Musikcentrum Öst/Key Change, **Daniel Boyacioglu**, artist, **Johan Oljequist**, Fryshuset, **Aurelia Dey**, artist, **Roger Wilson**, Black Lives in Music (UK) and **Corinne Sadki**, Centre National de la Musique (FR). The group was led by **Karin Inde**, this year's president of Musiksverige.

## **Starting points in our work**

UNDERSTANDING IS NEEDED FROM BOTH SIDES - minority vs position of power.

Everyone enters this conversation with insecurity. Everyone needs to feel dressed up, but often we only take into account the white fragility of those in power. It is equally uncomfortable for minority people to discuss thresholds.

We need to find a common vocabulary and create a reflexive approach to understand phenomena such as micro aggressions, micro validations, white washing, tokenism, invisibility, diminishing and objectification – finding facts that contribute to a common understanding.

We know that the knowledge threshold can feel high, and the fear of missteps can be paralyzing. Therefore, "compassion" is the key in working forward. For example, we can use the history of racism to understand and counteract racist thoughts. So it is crucial that privileged people use their position of power to push for change.

Exclusion is sometimes disguised as ignorance. That is important to keep an eye on. Increased knowledge is central but will not automatically lead to an end to exclusion. For that, strategies and changed behaviors are required.

## **POSITIONS OF POWER**

We need to concretize the arguments for change. Otherwise, we risk that the education is forced to take place from below, that is, the person in a dependent position needs to educate the one with power.

We need to achieve the same level of knowledge among all power holders. The key lies in understanding how privilege and survival strategies meet in these spaces and how structural discrimination affects the dynamics. Furthermore, other power structures also matter here - class, education, gender, socioeconomics, etc.

## **Our long-term tasks**

- a) Mapping – mapping power structures and mapping experiences
- b) Quota - every working group, panel, board needs to be characterized by the diversity we say we want.
- c) Review - we need to set demands on each other and review processes. Not only look at who was elected but also who was not.
- d) Manage – every progress also needs to be managed so that it is not lost. No victories are eternal.

## Activities

### 1. MEASUREMENT

a) Set up standardised metrics that are followed up on an annual basis.

Require member organisations to gather and share their data. Supplemented with other focus groups to get a representation that matches the organisations. A key task here is to build trust in the industry. Only then we will be able to collect the relevant data to detect and measure discrimination.

b) Investigate what statistics are already available and see if they can be used.

c) Demonstrate change/improvement and needs to the politicians concerned.

### 2. COMMUNICATION PLAN

a) Create a digital landing page

- Provide information about practical inclusion work: Tools for recruitment, supporting activities and info of statutory policies etc.
- Highlight already existing initiatives and platforms for inclusion and representation and also show everything music can mean in socioeconomically vulnerable areas: Security, building networks, possibilities of expression – use success stories! And point to the necessary chain - from supported kids to export successes.
- Present the basics of the music industry together with existing supporting organisations and networks to lower the thresholds for those who want to enter.

b) Develop a strategy for internal communication, social media, etc. that supports the work in reaching the goals and target groups and keeps the issue/work alive.

c) Identify and collaborate/co-create with local music organisations and initiatives in the areas the sector are not currently reaching out to.

### 3. EDUCATION - TO RAISE THE WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE

a) An annual external workshop to target power holders in the sector (including organisations, companies and authorities and politicians concerned) to raise the common level of knowledge and understanding. Always together with experts and with good representation. We sweep the stairs from the top.

b) An annual internal round-table discussion in Musiksverige with invited experts to evaluate the plan and share experiences, concerns and best practice and develop the common language.

c) Examine the need for targeted supporting activities – such as specific career programmes with intersectional perspectives to gain real equality and diversity in the music business.

## Findings – what the politics can do

1. It is clear our sector fails to attract and include people living in both socioeconomically vulnerable areas and sparsely populated areas in this country. This is not only a failure of the sector itself – it is a major problem for our whole society.

As an industry we must do our part, but we also expect the politicians to work much harder to reduce both the income gap and the service gap (healthcare, bank offices, recreational activities) between, on the one side, people living in the cities and, on the other side, people living in both suburban areas and in the countryside.

2. In France, there is a condition on the national public support from Centre de la Musique National: To apply for fundings you must attend a training day on how to work anti-discriminatory and prevent violence. That could be something for Sweden and the rest of Europe to adopt.
3. Local initiatives in those areas, should be able to apply for special fundings. We want to see established public fundings (cultural or/and business) to support inclusion projects, such as targeted career programs for underrepresented groups.
4. The sector itself needs to raise the knowledge and understanding. As a fourth priority we want to see established public fundings to support and encourage inclusion training within the sector. A requirement for granted funds should be a self-finance up to at least 50%.