

UNION OF MUSICIANS AND ALLIED WORKERS

February 14, 2022

Dear UK Competition and Markets Authority,

Thank you for taking the time to perform a study on the music market. Based in the United States, the Union of Musicians and Allied Workers (UMAW) organizes music workers around the world to fight for a more just music industry. Our work centers on issues such as demanding fairer deals from streaming services, ensuring musicians receive the royalties they are owed, establishing more just relationships with labels, and creating safer guidelines for venues. UMAW's first actions took place around the start of the COVID-19 pandemic when musicians suddenly lost all income from live performances, for most of us our primary way of earning a living. Musicians have long complained of the inequities of the digital music economy, but the pandemic forced us to take a much closer look. We saw that while streaming now dominates music industry revenues— amounting to [84% of all recorded music revenue in the United States](#) and [83% in the UK](#)—the streaming payment model is profoundly broken.

[Spotify dominates](#) the streaming market. During the pandemic, Spotify's valuation tripled to over \$60 billion, while their per-stream payout to artists actually decreased. UMAW launched our largest campaign—Justice at Spotify—in 2020 as an international effort demanding [a list of changes](#) for Spotify to make to address the multitude of ways artists are exploited on its platform. Our key demands include an increase in royalty payments, an increase in transparency around the company's algorithms and payment structures, and an end to Spotify's legal campaigns to lower artist royalties. Tens of thousands of artists have participated in the effort, making it the largest ever collective action against a streaming company. Since we launched Justice at Spotify in late 2020:

- More than 30,000 musicians and allied workers from all over the world have signed on to our demands.
- We delivered our demands in-person to Spotify Headquarters in 15 different cities across 4 continents on an international day of action. It was the largest ever coordinated in person protests against a streaming company.
- Through our organizing efforts pushing members of the U.S. Congress on this issue, Spotify was sent [an oversight letter](#) from the US House Judiciary Committee.
- We were invited to participate in a [round table with US Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib](#) and have engaged her office to continue supporting us and our Spotify demands.
- We continue to meet with US lawmakers and regulatory agencies to work toward a fairer streaming economy.
- We've assembled a [summary of the 2021 WIPO report](#) on the streaming economy to call attention to this document that calls for a new streaming royalty that would be paid directly to musicians.

As you can see, the brokenness of the streaming economy has angered and mobilized musicians to take action on an unprecedented level. We encourage you to take all possible steps to repair this system. Please let us know if we can provide any further information on our efforts or our findings.

Thank you again for your time,

[Union of Musicians and Allied Workers](#)

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