

ONLINE MUSIC BUSINESS RESOURCE

# Guide To Industry Organisations

Including copyright, royalties and IRSCs

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2017

# Guide to Music Organisations

Set out below is a quick guide to the music organisations that can help you as a musician including information on copyright, royalties and IRSC codes

1. The Musicians' Union
2. Copyright, types of royalties and income streams
3. International Standard Recording Codes (ISRCs)
4. Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL)
5. PRS for Music and MCPS
6. The British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA)
7. jazzconnects.com

## 1 The Musicians' Unions

The Musicians' Union represents over 30,000 musicians. They work for you by offering services, benefits and advice tailored to your needs at every stage of your career as well as negotiating with all the major employers in the industry. Please see: [Musicians' Union](#)

The services and benefits they offer are:

### 1.1 Insurance benefits

- £2,000 of instrument insurance cover and personal accident cover
- £10 million public liability insurance cover
- Professional expenses cover – help when dealing with tax authorities
- Discounted professional indemnity insurance for those working in education

### 1.2 Helping with legal advice and contracts

- Free legal advice and representation
- The MU offers members a Contract Advisory Service, which, in the vast majority of cases, is available at no cost. Please see: [Musicians' Union Standard Live Engagement Contract](#) for a sample contract
- Contract Advice and Negotiation Service
- Unpaid fee recovery
- Trade union representation for problems at work
- Partnership Advisory Service - advice on working with other musicians

### 1.3 Helping you get noticed and taking care of you

- Career development advice
- The MU publishes a members magazine The Musician which contains news and helpful, up-to-date, informative articles on the music business. Please see: [The Musician Summer 2017](#)
- Free training, workshops and networking events
- Regional officials offering a face to face service on your day to day problems
- Specialist officials to give advice on specific areas of your work
- Help with issues such as hearing and health and safety

### 1.4 Ensuring your voice as a musician is heard loud and clear

- The MU is the largest organisation representing musicians in the UK
- The MU influences the music industry through their membership of organisations such as UK Music, PPL and the British Copyright Council
- They work with other unions through the TUC and the Federation of Entertainment Unions to improve your rights
- The MU has strong links with international governments and musicians' organisations in order to secure improvements for musicians both here and abroad.
- Keep Music Live campaign to maintain live performance in theatres and beyond

- Work not Play - <http://www.worknotplay.co.uk/> – The Musicians' Union stand against musicians being asked to work for free
- Influence over policy in all Parliaments and Assemblies, for example through their parliamentary group
- Lobbying successes such as the Live Music Act 2012, which has made it easier to put on gigs at grassroots level

### 1.5 The Musicians' Union represents you and looks after your interests

- The MU only represents musicians. They are your union.
- The MU does not have corporate members, which avoids potential conflicts of interest.
- In everything they do, from legal cases to lobbying and from campaigns to negotiations, you can be confident that the MU is only ever acting in the interests of you – the musician.
- The MU is part of the International Federation of Musicians (FIM), which represents musicians worldwide on issues such as intellectual property and travelling with your instrument.

Fees are £213 annually (full payment or by direct debit). If you are a student you can join for just £20 per year

### 1.6 Contact

Musicians' Union  
60-62 Clapham Road  
London  
SW9 0JJ

Tel: 020 7582 5566  
<mailto:info@theMU.org>

## 2 Copyright, types of royalties and income streams

A musician earning their living from music it is vitally important that you have a grasp of copyright and the different types of royalties and their potential income streams.

Copyright is your "intellectual property" and there are two types of copyright. The first is composition; it might be a tune you have written, a song with lyrics, a suite of tunes for an album. By writing or recording the music on tape, disc or on your computer on music you have created a copyright, it is your intellectual property that you can exploit to earn money. You will need to register the copyright so you own it. Remember there is no copyright on ideas only when it is recorded on paper or registered with the PRS, a music publisher or send a copy (never send the original!) of your demo and/or lyric to yourself by registered post. Keep it in a safe place unopened.

The second type of copyright for you as a musician is the artist or performer's copyright. You record the music and your performance is your property for which you get a royalty. The record label will also receive a royalty.

The length of copyright for the composer of the music and the writer of the lyrics is the life of the author plus 70 years and for performers it is 70 years from the end of the first year of release of the recording

Artist or performers royalties are completely separate from royalties due for songwriters or composers although also collected and distributed by [MCPS - PRS Alliance](#) in the UK. If the composer is also the performer of the tracks then they will receive performance royalties as well as writing royalties.

The [Phonographic Performance Limited](#) (PPL) is a UK collection and distribution organisation for performers. They collect and pay out royalties to performers for the broadcast of their recorded performances. If you are an artist who has made a commercial recording which has been broadcast or played in public then you may be due royalty fees.

There are types of royalties that you can exploit:

- For the composer there are royalties from where the music has been publicly performed such as gigs, radio, clubs, and online shops

- Also for the composer there are mechanical rights where your music is copied such as CDs, vinyl, downloads. . Streamed through interactive streaming services such as Spotify for example. Or sold in digital retailers for digital downloads (iTunes, Amazon, etc.)
- For the artiste and performer there are the royalties collected by PPL
- Print royalties are earned when a composition is transcribed onto sheet paper, printed in songbooks, and published for the general population to purchase and play your music.

### 3 International Standard Recording Codes (ISRCs)

Making sure your music is copyrighted but how do you know it is being played? The International standard Recording Codes is an internationally recognized system that allows you to make sure your music and videos are identified.

When you become a Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL) recording right hold member you need to request an ISRC number. This code is unique to you and helps identify your tracks easily By adding an ISRC to each recorded music track or music video you register in the PPL Repertoire Database, you are helping PPL make sure that you will receive more accurate payments.

### 4 Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL)

The PPL was established in 1934, The PPL exists to ensure that those who invest their time, talent and money to make recorded music are fairly paid for their work. PPL does not retain a profit for itself - after running costs, all revenue is distributed to its record company and performer members.

Please see: [Why Should I Become A Member](#)

PPL currently has no fee. PRS pays royalties annually and international payments are more frequent.

If you release your own recordings you need to register both as a performer and as a “rights holder”, that is, you own the rights to recorded music.

#### Contact

PPL  
1 Upper James Street, London, W1F 9DE  
Tel: 020 7534 1000  
<mailto:info@ppluk.com>

### 5 PRS for Music

The **PRS for Music** brings together two collection societies, **the Mechanical-Copyright Protection Society (MCPS)** and **the Performing Right Society (PRS)**. The PRS for Music undertakes collective rights management, which is the licensing of copyright and related rights acting on behalf of rights owners of musical works, The PRS for Music was formed in 1997 following the MCPS-PRS Alliance. In 2013, PRS and MCPS-PRS Alliance merged and became PRS for Music.

The PRS collects and distributes royalties for musical works that have been performed or played, while MCPS collects and distributes royalties for musical works that have been reproduced or copied. Please see: [PRS for Music](#)

There are two classes of membership writers and publishers Joining PRS for Music as a songwriter or composer means you can earn money when your music is used. You don't need to be signed to a record label or a publisher, but you do need to be identified as the copyright owner of a musical work. PRS for Music charge a £50 joining fee. The MCPS writer joining fee is £100 inclusive of VAT.

To join PRS for Music as a writer please go to: [Join PRS as a writer](#)

To join MCPS as a writer please go to: [Join MCPS as a writer](#)

#### Contact

[Contact PRS for Music](#)

## 6 The British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA)

The British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA) is the voice for music writers and BASCA campaigns in the UK, Europe and throughout the world on behalf of its members. Please see: [The British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors](#)

BASCA are the independent professional association representing music writers in all genres, from songwriting to media and contemporary classical to jazz. BASCA are entirely self-funding and rely on the continuing support of their members to carry on our work.

What does BASCA do?

- Campaigns as a leading force in the domestic, European and international political arenas.
- Celebrates excellence through world-class awards ceremonies – The Ivor Novello Awards, the British Composer Awards and the Gold Badge Awards.
- Inform their members in a constantly changing environment through our publications, websites and seminars.
- Fosters a sense of community amongst British songwriters, lyricists and composers.
- Encourages the next generation of professional music writers.

BASCA has an active Executive Jazz Committee that consists of 9 working jazz composers representing your interests. The committee, voted for by BASCA members, acts as a point of contact for jazz composers and a place to share concerns and feel part of a community. Please see: [Jazz Committee](#)

### Contact

2 Pancras Square  
King's Cross  
London  
N1C 4AG

Tel: 020 7636 2929

## 7 jazzconnects.com

Jazz Connects is a place to connect for jazz businesses, organisations and musicians. Please see: [jazzconnects.com](#)

Simply enter your page for inclusion and you'll be automatically registered. Let Jazz Connects know by email at <mailto:admin@jazzconnects.com> of venues & festivals, musicians or businesses to be included and spread the word to join up.

More features are planned for the site at moment – this site aims to be the go-to resource for making contact with jazz professionals and enthusiasts alike.

**JazzConnects** was created by UK artist Emily Saunders for the direct benefit of the jazz community. The site is growing to cover every aspect of jazz, its functionality is designed to enable country-wide and region specific searching (eg: tour planning), connection and collaboration. Join now to be part of it.

### Contact

[Website: jazzconnects.com](#)

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10<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
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