

# FOSTERING GENDER EQUALITY AMONG MUSIC CREATORS

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Report by ECSCA's Working Group  
on Diversity & Inclusion

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# Introduction

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ECSA's Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Working Group was launched in 2022 with the aim of enhancing gender equality and diversity throughout our Alliance and its Members. The Working Group holds discussions to raise awareness about several D&I topics, including gender stereotypes, the gender pay gap, sexual harassment, power relationships, and the lack of women in influential and decision-making positions.

Supported by ECSA's 2022-2024 Creative Europe agreement, over the course of the last three years, the Working Group has continued and strengthened its work, holding a total of eleven meetings and organising various initiatives. In 2022, the Working Group launched its flagship activity, a [mentorship programme for female and non-binary composers](#), in collaboration with the [European Association of Conservatoires](#) (AEC) and the [Europe Jazz Network](#) (EJN). In November of the same year, the Working Group hosted an **online lounge with experts from the music sector** to discuss, raise awareness, and exchange best practices on D&I<sup>1</sup>, and in 2023 it organised a [panel discussion at the Eurosonic Noorderslag Festival](#) in Groningen (the Netherlands) focussed on creating a safer work environment devoid of sexism, racism, and toxic power dynamics.

This report, marking the end of ECSA's 2022-2024 Creative Europe programme, aims to **collect, consolidate, and present the insights and lessons learned** over this period. Drawing on initiatives and best practices from both within and beyond ECSA's membership, the report provides **seven recommendations for enhancing gender equality**. These recommendations aim to serve as **guidelines** that can be tailored and implemented across our network, and to stimulate a discussion around Diversity and Inclusion within our Alliance.

<sup>1</sup> A recording of the event is available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZ1\\_itcszil](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZ1_itcszil)

# Diversity & Gender Equality

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In March 2024, the Working Group adopted the following definition of **Diversity and Inclusion**:

“A summary of visible and invisible experiences, cultures, languages, perspectives, abilities and talents. These can consist of musical genres, their subcultures, geographical belonging, social background, philosophy of life (religion), education, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and different health conditions or impairments.”

The Working Group is committed to this definition, which highlights how different characteristics can lead to **diverse experiences, navigation patterns, and life skills that are invaluable for music creators**. Furthermore, the diversity of perspectives and voices is essential not only to maintain relevance, but to keep growing and developing in a holistic way. Due to the broad spectrum of this definition, and while recognising the importance of integrating a great variety of perspectives and parameters into our efforts, this report will focus specifically on the gender dimension, reflecting the centrality of **gender equality** as both a human right and a precondition for cultural diversity.<sup>2</sup> In accordance with the Working Group’s definition of Diversity and Inclusion, ECSA recognises that gender equality should consider different parameters, experiences, and cultures, and that **gender is a spectrum that goes beyond the binary**.

Gender equality refers to the concept that **individuals have the same rights, responsibilities, and opportunities irrespective of their gender**.<sup>3</sup> It is one of the founding principles of the European Union and is enshrined in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. As such, it was identified as one of the priorities of the EU Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022, and it was incorporated again in the Work Plan for 2023-2026.<sup>4</sup> Equality between men and women is also part of the [cross-cutting priorities](#) of the Creative Europe programme, of which ECSA is a beneficiary. In particular, the funding call of the Culture strand of Creative Europe for the period 2023-2027 required organisations to “incorporate a gender equality perspective and contribute to the equal empowerment of women and men, ensuring that they achieve their full potential and benefit from the same rights.”<sup>5</sup> Gender equality has been a growing concern for ECSA, and in 2019 our Alliance published the [ECSA Gender Equality Charter](#), which has been translated in five European languages.

<sup>2</sup> Menzel, A. (2021), *Towards gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors: Report of the OMC (open method of coordination) working group of Member States’ experts*, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/36e9028b-c73b-11eb-a925-01aa75ed71a1>

<sup>3</sup> [https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1059?language\\_content\\_entity=en](https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1059?language_content_entity=en)

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022G1207%2801%29&qid=1671635488811>

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/crea/wp-call/2024/call-fiche\\_crea-cult-2024-net\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/crea/wp-call/2024/call-fiche_crea-cult-2024-net_en.pdf)

# Gender Equality in the European Music Sector

Recent studies and reports on gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors (CCS) indicate that there is still a lot of work to be done in this area.

In a March 2024 report on gender equality in the music industry, **60% of women respondents in Europe found that the music industry is “generally discriminative”**, compared to only 16% of men.<sup>6</sup> Women are also twice as likely as men to discover they are paid less than colleagues in the same or similar roles (34% compared to men at 17%).<sup>7</sup> The same report also highlighted how **3 in 5 women in music experienced sexual harassment**, with 1 in 5 having experienced sexual assault, and that 70% of them did not report these experiences due to fear of retaliation or the belief that nothing would change.<sup>8</sup> A recent Danish documentary has reignited this debate, unveiling the experiences of 13 female musicians with **sexual harassment and everyday sexism** and sending shockwaves throughout the entire Danish music industry.<sup>9</sup> An important worsening factor to such scenarios is that composers and songwriters do not enjoy the same level of protection as other workers, making it harder for them to report instances of harassment and discrimination.<sup>10</sup>

Among frequent discrimination, harassment, and lower pay, women are also **largely underrepresented in the music industry**. In Europe, **women represent less than 20% of registered composers and songwriters**,<sup>11</sup> with Dutch collecting society Buma/Stemra recently reporting that only 13% of their members are women.<sup>12</sup> The under-representation is visible across all genres and sectors of the music industry. For instance, within **popular and commercial music**, despite female superstars outnumbering their male counterparts, in 2022 women represented only 30% of artists in the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 chart and, even worse, only 14% of songwriters.<sup>13</sup> Globally, as of December 2023, female and mixed-gender artists account for only 23% of all streams on Spotify,<sup>14</sup> with numbers for European countries ranging from 26% in Germany to a mere 18% in Italy.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Kahlert, H., Cirisano, T. & Oleksiyenko, S. (2024), *BE THE CHANGE. Gender equity in music*, p. 53, <https://www.midiaresearch.com/reports/be-the-change-gender-equity-in-music>

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>9</sup> Ayishah, D. (2024), *Danish Documentary ‘Sexism In the Music Industry’ Sparks Debate*, en.365Nyt, 10 June 2024, available at <https://en.365nyt.dk/2024/06/10/danish-documentary-sexism-in-the-music-industry-sparks-debate/>

<sup>10</sup> See the ECSA Report on Fair Practice (2023), <https://composeralliance.org/media/1465-ecsa-report-on-fair-practice.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual (2022), *Gender gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors*, p. 36, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/92d621d1-bb99-11ec-b6f4-01aa75ed71a1>

<sup>12</sup> Buma/Stemra, *Gendergelijkheid onder muzikmakers in Nederland*, 2023, [https://bumastemra.nl/app/uploads/2023/03/Rise-Up\\_Onderzoeks-rapport.pdf](https://bumastemra.nl/app/uploads/2023/03/Rise-Up_Onderzoeks-rapport.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Smith, S. L., Pieper, K., Hernandez, K. & Wheeler, S. (2023), *Inclusion in the Recording Studio?*, <https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-recording-studio-jan2023.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Every Noise (2023), [https://everynoise.com/gender\\_tldr.html](https://everynoise.com/gender_tldr.html)

<sup>15</sup> Every Noise (2023), [https://everynoise.com/tview.cgi?source=female\\_artist\\_streamshare\\_by\\_region&colorthis=true&sort=rank](https://everynoise.com/tview.cgi?source=female_artist_streamshare_by_region&colorthis=true&sort=rank)

In the **audiovisual sector**, a recent report by the European Audiovisual Observatory indicated that in 2022, **only 11% of all composers of European TV films and series were women** (a modest increase from 5% in 2015).<sup>16</sup> This number varied a lot across Europe, with the share of assignments of female composers being 13% in the UK and 0% in Italy and Hungary. Similarly, the number of audiovisual titles with female-driven composer teams (defined as titles where at least 60% of producers were women) also accounted for a mere 9%. In addition, between 2015 and 2022, on average female composers composed fewer episodes than their male counterparts. Data at the national level also confirms the under-representation: in France, female composers account for only 17% of Sacem members in 2024, a percentage which has stayed flat since at least 2018 (meanwhile, on average, only 20% of new Sacem members every year are women).<sup>17</sup>

In the **classical and contemporary music sector**, women are still **highly under-represented** among conductors and composers. Despite accounting for 7 out of the top 20 most-performed living composers in 2023, women represented **only 36 of the top 100 most-performed living composers**.<sup>18</sup> In addition, pieces by women composers are performed less frequently than those by their male counterparts. During the 2018-2019 orchestral season, only 76 of over 1,400 concerts performed by the 15 major orchestras worldwide included at least one piece by a woman composer, representing **just 2.3% of the over 3,500 classical works performed**.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestra reported that in 2023, despite accounting for over 60% of the administrative staff, women represented only 8% of composers and 19% of conductors. Furthermore, works composed by women accounted for only 25% of the Finnish contemporary music repertoire.<sup>20</sup> While the numbers for both composers and conductors have slightly increased over the last decade, women are still far from being equally represented.<sup>21</sup> This imbalance is also confirmed by ECSA data: an internal report found that only 26% of the pieces submitted for the ECCO concerts between 2015 and 2020 were composed by women.<sup>22</sup>

**Overall, these numbers paint a bleak picture and highlight the urgent need to take resolute action for gender equality.**

<sup>16</sup> Fontaine, G. (2024). *Female professionals in European TV/SVOD fiction production: 2015-2022 figures*, European Audiovisual Observatory, <https://rm.coe.int/female-professionals-in-european-tv-and-svod-fiction-production-2022-f/1680ae4a68>

<sup>17</sup> From Le Lab Femmes de Cinéma, *Female Film Composer Revelation Award*, <https://femmesdecinema.org/en/revelation-award-for-female-film-composer/>, complemented with information shared in the Working Group

<sup>18</sup> Bachtrack (2024), *A steady transformation: Bachtrack's 2023 Classical Music Statistics*, <https://bachtrack.com/classical-music-statistics-2023>

<sup>19</sup> Donne, Women In Music (2019), *Inequality In Music: Women Composers by Numbers 2018-2019*, [http://www.drama-musica.com/stories/2018\\_2019\\_orchestra\\_seasons.html](http://www.drama-musica.com/stories/2018_2019_orchestra_seasons.html)

<sup>20</sup> Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestra (2023), p. 7, [https://www.sinfoniaorkesterit.fi/assets/statistics/Suosio\\_Vuosikertomus\\_2023\\_RGB\\_sivuttain\\_pienikokoinen.pdf](https://www.sinfoniaorkesterit.fi/assets/statistics/Suosio_Vuosikertomus_2023_RGB_sivuttain_pienikokoinen.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> See footnote 18.

<sup>22</sup> ECSA (2020), *Gender balance in the ECCO concert submissions and selections: A preliminary report*, available upon request.

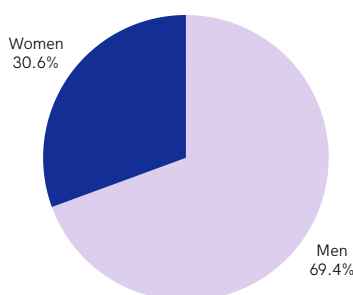
# Gender equality in ECSA

To complement this data and provide **an overview of gender balance within our own network**, ECSA has collected data on the composition of the executive boards of its members,<sup>23</sup> its Committees, the delegates at the ECSA Sessions, and the presence of women in high-level positions within its member organisations. This overview provides an **indicative snapshot** of the current state of our network and serves as a starting point for tracking gender balance within ECSA over time. Board composition data for 42 ECSA Members was collected in May 2024 from publicly available sources, while the data on delegate and committee composition refers the March 2024 ECSA Session in Brussels.

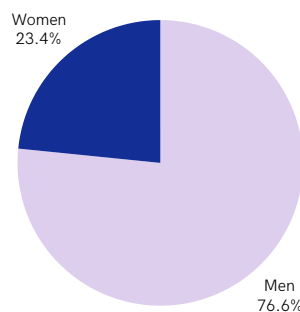
As of May 2024, **only 31% of the people serving on executive boards within the ECSA network were women**. Out of the 42 full members of ECSA, only 6 (14%) of them had a woman in the role of President or Board Chair. On ECSA's current Board, 3 out of 9 members (33%) are women, with one being our President. Among ECSA's three Committees, the percentage of women is the following: 33% (4 out of 12) in APCOE, 33% in ECF (6 out of 18), and 5.9% (1 out of 17) in FFACE. The number for FFACE is particularly low, but also in line with data by the European Audiovisual Observatory on the percentage of women composers in TV and fiction (11%), confirming the importance of working on gender equality in this area in particular. Lastly, at the ECSA Session in Brussels, only 11 out of the 47 delegates sent by ECSA's member organisations were women (23.4%).<sup>24</sup>

**These numbers indicate that a lot of work must still be done to ensure gender equality within our network.**

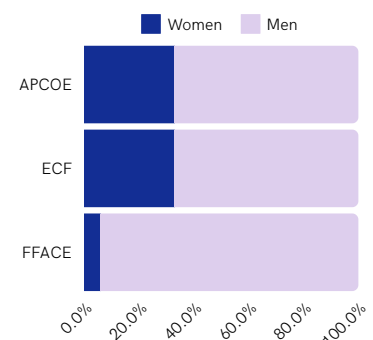
Women on ECSA Members' boards (average)



Delegates at 2024 Winter ECSA Session (Brussels)



ECSA Committees



<sup>23</sup> The numbers refer only to Full Members of ECSA.

<sup>24</sup> The percentage remains the same even when observers are counted (16 out of 68, 23.5%).

# Recommendations and Best Practices

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The following list of recommendations is based on the input from our Working Group members and draws inspiration from the recommendations of a 2021 report on gender equality by the EU's Open Method of Coordination (OMC) Working Group of Member States experts on gender equality.<sup>24</sup> Each recommendation is accompanied by examples of practices implemented by our member organisations or external initiatives that were highlighted by the Working Group. While the following recommendations should not undermine artistic or creative freedom, achieving gender equality is crucial for fostering a vibrant environment for artistic expression and providing equal opportunities for all.

## 1. Setting goals, guidelines or commitments for gender equality

Putting in place targets, guidelines for gender equality or making commitments to improve it are useful first steps to initiate a discussion around the topic within an organisation. This can be done in different ways, such as by drawing up a list of pledges for gender equality, adhering to an existing initiative or adopting guidelines. These initiatives allow each organisation to adopt realistic goals or commitments that fit their specific circumstances and capabilities, and can be complemented with concrete targets to facilitate tracking progress over time. The following are examples of such practices:

- **Music Finland's theses for "An equal music industry"**<sup>25</sup> consists of six pledges to promote equality, non-discrimination, and diversity in the music sector. Written in 2017 by a group of music industry professionals, they have been signed by over 100 organisations. The pledges include: creating and applying an equality and non-discrimination plan; promoting equality and non-discrimination in their communications, in the hiring and recruitment process, and in their administration and management; embracing diversity in artistic decision-making; and encouraging young people to choose their musical path irrespective of their gender. ECSA's two Finnish Members, the Society of Finnish Composers (Suomen Säveltäjät ry) and the Finnish Music Creators' Association (Suomen Musiikintekijät ry), are both signatories of the initiative.

<sup>24</sup> Menzel, A. (2021), *Towards gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors*

<sup>25</sup> Music Finland, *An equal music industry*, <https://musiikkiala.fi/yhdenvertainenmusiikkiala-in-english/>

- **The Keychange Pledge**, an initiative promoted by Keychange,<sup>26</sup> provides a list of pledges that organisations in the music sector can commit to by becoming signatories. Each signatory organisation is encouraged to outline their own goals and commitments in their own way. Examples include a target of 50% of women and gender-expansive members in orchestras, gender-balanced line ups in festivals, etc. ECSA signed the Pledge in March 2021, committing to strive for a 50-50 gender balance between men and women and under-represented genders in conferences and panels by 2022, as well as actively encouraging our Members to sign up to Keychange.<sup>27</sup>
- **The [ECSA Gender Equality Charter](#)** provides an example of a series of pledges that can be implemented by organisations in the music sector and in the CCS. Published in March 2019, it consists of eight pledges to improve gender equality and diversity throughout our network, as well as within the music industry. In 2020, the Charter was translated into French, German, Italian, and Spanish.

## 2. Adopting gender-inclusive language across all communications

As language has a strong influence on our perceptions and attitudes, using gender-inclusive language is a relatively easy step to take, but one that can have important positive effects. The use of gender-inclusive language in any type of communication avoids discrimination against a particular sex, social gender, or gender identity, and the reproduction of harmful stereotypes and biases.<sup>28</sup> An example from outside of the CCS are the **United Nations' Guidelines for gender-inclusive language in English**.<sup>29</sup> The guidelines provide three best practices to follow, which can easily be applied to other languages:

- **Making gender visible when it is relevant for communication.** One strategy consists in using both masculine and feminine forms ("he or she", "her or his"), and making gender explicit only in situations where one group is often disregarded or overlooked. However, in English this option is not very inclusive, as it reflects a binary concept of gender that excludes gender-diverse people.<sup>30</sup> ECSA Member **FACIR (Federation of Authors, Composers and Interpreters)** provides an example of gender-inclusive language from francophone Belgium. In their communications, the organisation utilises inclusive plural forms such as "musicien·nes", "auteur·rices", and "compositeur·rices" instead of relying exclusively on the masculine plural form. This example from the French language offers a blueprint that can easily be implemented in other European languages.

<sup>26</sup> Keychange is a global network and movement funded by Creative Europe to promote gender equality in the music industry, <https://www.keychange.eu/about-us>

<sup>27</sup> Read more at <https://composeralliance.org/advocacy/working-groups/working-group-on-diversity-and-inclusion/#:~:text=Under%20this%20pledge%2C%20we%20committed,the%20movement%20nationally%20and%20internationally>.

<sup>28</sup> United Nations, *Gender-inclusive language - Background and purpose*, <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/>

<sup>29</sup> United Nations, *Guidelines for gender-inclusive language in English*, <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>

<sup>30</sup> The term "gender-diverse" refers to people whose gender identity falls outside of the female/male gender binary. See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/ie-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity/struggle-trans-and-gender-diverse-persons>



- **Using non-discriminatory language.** This consists in using forms of address that are consistent with the gender identity of the addressed individual, as well as avoiding using gender-biased expressions.
- **Not making gender visible when it is not relevant for communication.** In contexts where gender is not relevant, gendered forms and terms should be avoided. For instance, by using gender-neutral words (“humanity” instead of “mankind”, “they” instead of “he or she”). This is the **most inclusive form of language**, as it goes beyond the gender binary does not exclude gender-diverse people. One example from European languages is visible in the Norwegian Copyright Act, in which the legislators introduced in the text the gender-neutral term “**opphaver**” (**originator**) to describe the creator of a work, replacing a masculine term previously used to refer to all creators.

### 3. Raising awareness about gender equality by sharing or collecting relevant information

Collecting relevant data and sharing information about gender equality within your organisation is an important step to raise awareness about these issues and also to monitor the situation and track progress. These practices can span from monitoring and collecting information on the gender balance in your organisation to sharing studies and information about gender equality with your members. The data presented in this report on the gender composition of ECSA’s Committees, Boards and delegates also provide an example of the type of data that can be collected and compared over time in order to improve gender balance and equality within an organisation.

Additional useful examples and practices include the following:

- **Autor**, the Danish association for composers and songwriters, offers a [knowledge bank on equality in the music industry](#). Through a collection of qualitative and quantitative studies on diversity and gender imbalance in the Danish music industry, it provides not only examples of people’s experience with discrimination, but also hard data that demonstrate bias in the industry.
- In 2020, ECSA drafted a **report on gender balance in the ECCO concert submissions and selections**.<sup>31</sup> The report looked at the gender balance of the composers of pieces submitted to and selected for the ECCO concert in each year from 2015 to 2020. Overall, the report found a slight increase in the submissions and selections of female composers over the years.

<sup>31</sup> ECSA (2020), *Gender balance in the ECCO concert submissions and selections: A preliminary report*, available upon request

- The **Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestras (SUOSIO)** publishes [annual reports on their activities](#) which include, among various statistics, the percentage of women among composers, conductors, soloists, and within their administrative staff.
- **FACIR** features different studies and articles on feminism and women's representation on a [dedicated section](#) of their website.

## 4. Combating gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are **generalisations about the attributes of men and women**. They can have a negative impact on the access and professional growth of women and influence the career choices of both men and women.<sup>32</sup> Gender associations are formed and reinforced in children from an early age, limiting beliefs and ideas about themselves, their hobbies and professions and influencing their current and future decisions, for example through the belief that musical instruments are gendered.

**Common stereotypes in the CCS** include the belief that women lack agency, the sexualisation of younger women, the desexualisation of older women, the ostracization of people who do not conform to gender norms, and the perception of women in leadership positions as aggressive.<sup>33</sup> Some stereotypes about professions in the music sector include the role of music producer being associated with men, and women conductors facing stereotypes about their lack of strength, remarks about their appearance, and sexualising comments by men.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, **stereotypes can negatively impact men, too**, for example by preventing them from embarking on career path or playing instruments that are commonly associated with women. It is therefore all the more important that men actively engage in dismantling gender stereotypes and creating change.<sup>35</sup>

- **Music Finland's various theses for "An equal music industry"** aim at tackling gender stereotypes by acknowledging that "children and adolescents have the right to choose their musical path without prejudice and irrespective of their background and gender" and encouraging them to make independent choices by setting good examples.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> EENCA (2022), *Gender gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors*, p. 27, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/92d621d1-bb99-11ec-b6f4-01aa75ed71a1>

<sup>33</sup> Menzel, A. (2021), *Towards gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors*, pp. 67-68

<sup>34</sup> Warren, E. (2023), *Tár's gender-balanced profession is a utopian fantasy. In the real world, conducting has a gender problem*, The Guardian, 20 February 2023, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2023/feb/20/tars-gender-balanced-profession-is-a-utopian-fantasy-in-the-real-world-conducting-has-a-gender-problem>

<sup>35</sup> Menzel, A. (2021), *Towards gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors*, p. 68.

<sup>36</sup> Music Finland, *An equal music industry*, <https://musiikkiala.fi/yhdenvertainenmusiikkiala-in-english/>

## 5. Adopting measures to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination

This can include measures such as requiring people working in the organisation to attend anti-discrimination and anti-harassment trainings, or creating guidelines and an action plan for preventing, reporting, and dealing with cases of inappropriate behaviour. Examples of such initiatives include:

- **The Safer Space Principles by DPA** (Danish Popular Authors), consisting of 5 rules to promote a safe environment for everyone at DPA's events and projects.<sup>37</sup> These include: (1) respecting other people's physical and mental boundaries, (2) taking responsibility for your own conduct and language; (3) intervening if you witness inappropriate behaviour; (4) avoiding assumptions and generalisations based on one's gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, or similar; (5) asking when in doubt about something you have said or done. DPA has also put in place **an action plan for responding to incidents of misconduct**.<sup>38</sup> This includes having a conversation with the affected party, and allowing them to decide whether they want to inform the other party of the violation. Cases are dealt with in a confidential manner and sanctions are determined in accordance with the severity of the case.
- **The Safer Space Principles by Finnish Music Creators**.<sup>39</sup> These include 9 guidelines: (1) respect others and their boundaries, (2) do not make assumptions or generalisations, (3) do not discriminate, (4) approach and listen, (5) recognise and act taking into account your position of power, (6) give space and try to use understandable language, (7) dare to ask – don't be afraid of ignorance, (8) interfere if you see or hear discrimination or inappropriate behaviour, (9) if you feel uncomfortable at an event, ask for help from others around you. If you are a member of the Finnish Music Creators, you may also contact our harassment contact person. Finnish Music Creators also has a designated harassment contact person for members who run into issues.
- **The ethical guidelines of the Norwegian Society of Composers and Lyricists (NOPA)**.<sup>40</sup> The guidelines set rules to follow for everyone working for NOPA or participating in NOPA's events with the aim of creating a safe and respectful environment for all. Alongside these guidelines, NOPA also provides detailed information about its procedures for handling guideline violations and reports of misconduct. For instance, these reports are dealt with by a dedicated committee that is separate from the Board.

<sup>37</sup> Available (in Danish) at <https://imageland.ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/dpa/S1CZ8bF8E0F66pVXy1vLEXruT97ZEYlmtolcvf41.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> Available (in Danish) at <https://imageland.ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/dpa/cc8MPjyAwrmKJntMM1RyQmbhIPVnvwBO3exv2cxep.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Available (in Finnish) at <https://musiikintekijat.fi/yhdistys/turvallisemman-tilan-periaatteet/>

<sup>40</sup> Available (in Norwegian) at <https://nopa.no/nopas-etiske-retningslinjer/>

- **The ethical guidelines of the Society of Finnish Composers.** The guidelines provide instructions for leading respectful discussions, guidance to help members to recognise and respond to harassment or inappropriate behaviour, as well as a form to anonymously report instances of harassment.<sup>41</sup>
- **Balansekunst**, a Norwegian organisation promoting diversity and equality, provides a list of risk factors for harassment in the CCS. Balansekunst also launched *Balansemerkt*, an initiative to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination. It consists of a certification awarded to organisations upon completing a training and implementing a series of measures such as mapping risks and establishing guidelines and internal procedures for reporting incidents.
- **The Safe Room (*Trygt Rum*) Network**, a Danish initiative launched by a coalition of 15 organisations from the music industry with the aim of preventing misbehaviour and promoting a safe and professional work environment.<sup>42</sup> The initiative consists of a free phone line offering people in the music and cultural sector who have experienced sexual harassment a place to talk about their experiences and provide them with anonymous and confidential advice.

## 6. Promoting equal access to opportunities, leadership positions, and fostering female role models

Not only are women less represented, but female artists and creators are also less visible in the cultural and media landscape compared to their male peers.<sup>43</sup> Women face **significant challenges in gaining artistic and professional recognition**, as their works are often unfairly disregarded or judged by higher standards than men's.<sup>44</sup> Promoting **equal access to jobs and opportunities for visibility** is an important step to ensure that women and gender-diverse individuals are fairly remunerated and recognised. In addition, as diversity in positions of power can also help drive positive impact in the music industry,<sup>45</sup> it is essential to **promote women and gender-diverse role models for young artists** who are in a process of trying to find their identity and direction.<sup>46</sup> The following are examples of initiatives that recognise and promote women's work and support female role models:

- **Introducing gender balance in calls for awards.** Since 2018, the call for submissions for the **ECCO Concerts** has included wording encouraging members to consider **gender balance** in the selection of the works. Similarly, the guidelines for nominating

<sup>41</sup> Available (in Finnish) at <https://composers.fi/suomen-saveltajien-eettiset-toimintaohjeet/>

<sup>42</sup> Available (in Danish) at <https://trygtrum.dk/om-trygt-rum-netvaerket>

<sup>43</sup> Menzel, A. (2021), *Towards gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors*, p. 92.

<sup>44</sup> Kahlert, H., Cirisano, T. & Oleksiyenko, S. (2024), *BE THE CHANGE*, p. 13, <https://www.midiaresearch.com/reports/be-the-change-gender-equity-in-music>

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>46</sup> ConductIT (2021), *Perspectives on Gender in Conducting (2021)*, <https://conductit.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2021/10/Perspectives-on-Gender.pdf>

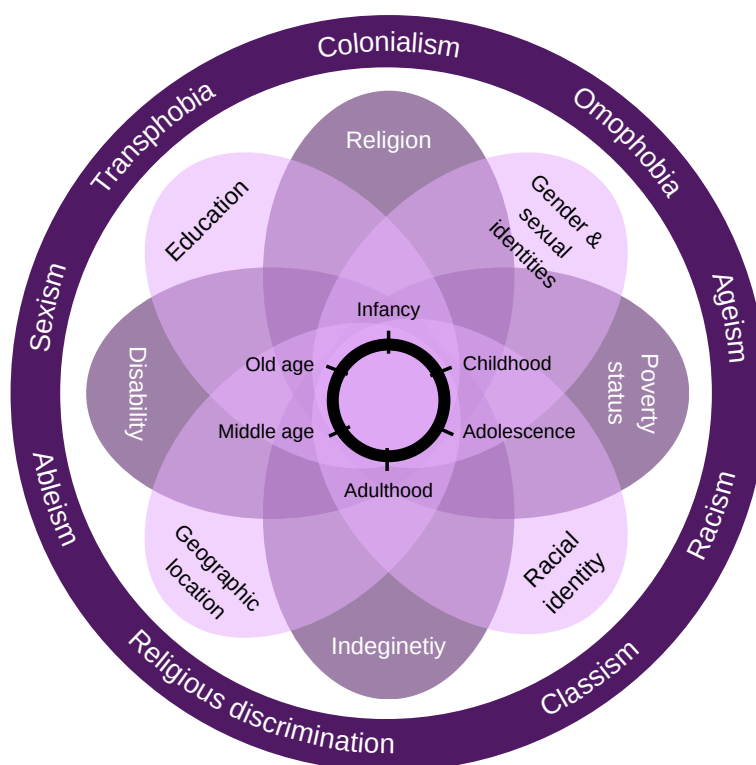
candidates for the **Camille Awards** strongly encourage all ECSA Members to consider gender balance and diversity in their nominations.

- The [ECSA-AEC-EJN mentorship programme](#) provides an example of an initiative to **connect young female and non-binary composers and songwriters with female role models in the music industry** with the ultimate goal of **empowering a new generation of female and gender-diverse music creators**. The first call for six mentors and mentees was opened in September 2022. After a kick-off meeting in March 2023, individual mentoring sessions began in April, for a total of three, held every two months. The programme received positive feedback from both mentors and mentees, with the latter mentioning how they benefitted from the networking and career advice, having someone they can ask for advice, as well as connecting with other mentees.
- The [Female Film Composer Revelation Award](#) by the Lab Femmes de Cinéma, Sacem, and the Arcs Film Festival. In 2022, the Lab Femmes de Cinéma, Sacem, and the Arcs Film Festival launched the Female Film Composer Revelation Award. This annual award was created with two objectives: first, to **highlight and raise awareness of the work female film music composers** among the media, professionals, and the general public, promoting female role models; second, to **draw attention to the low number of female film music composers** and the necessity to work towards gender equality in the sector. The prize is awarded at the Les Arcs Film Festival.
- As part of the [requirements to obtain the Balansemerkt certification](#), the Norwegian initiative **Balansekunst** requires organisations to **recruit more diversely**. This includes setting goals for diversity in a way that mirrors the composition of society, and recruiting in a way that is conscious of diversity and the barriers that certain minorities and underrepresented groups face.

## 7. Adopting an intersectional approach to gender equality

As recognised in its definition of D&I, the Working Group acknowledges the importance of taking into account all forms of discrimination and is committed to promoting an **intersectional approach to gender equality**. Intersectionality, often described as an approach, a framework or a lens, recognises that people's lives are affected by various and overlapping forms of discrimination influenced by their identities, relationships, and social factors. These include aspects such as race, religion, gender and sexual identity, disability, power status, and education.<sup>47</sup> Some resources on intersectionality include:

- The [Intersectionality Resource Guide and Toolkit](#) created by UN Women to help organisations, individual practitioners and experts tackle intersectionality across their programmes and policies. The document features an intersectionality wheel (below) that can be used as a visual tool to better understand the different forms of privilege and oppression that can be at play in people's lives.
- The **Diversify Nordics Summit's** 2022 [handbook of best practices](#), which includes various examples of how organisations can improve gender equality and equity for all genders through an intersectional approach.



**Intersectionality Wheel**

From UN Women's Intersectionality Resource Guide and Toolkit (2021), adapted from an original design of The Equality Institute.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> UN Women (2021), *Intersectionality Resource Guide and Toolkit*, p. 8, [https://wrd.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit-en\\_0.pdf](https://wrd.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit-en_0.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> See <https://unwomen.org.au/our-work/focus-area/intersectionality-explained/>

# Conclusion

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Drawing on the insights and lessons learned collected by the Working Group over the past three years, this report provided **seven recommendations to enhance gender equality across the ECSA network**, each accompanied by examples of concrete initiatives. Rather than being prescriptive, these recommendations aim to serve as guidelines that can be **tailored and implemented by ECSA Members according to their circumstances and needs**.

**The recommendations are the following:**

1. Setting goals, guidelines or commitments for gender equality
2. Adopting gender-inclusive language across all communications
3. Raising awareness about gender equality by sharing or collecting relevant information
4. Combating gender stereotypes
5. Adopting measures to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination
6. Promoting equal access to opportunities, and leadership positions and fostering female role models
7. Adopting an intersectional approach to gender equality

**ECSA hopes these recommendations will serve as a starting point to provide advice and rekindle focus on improving gender equality and diversity within our network. We look forward to strengthening our commitment to promote diversity and inclusion over the coming years with the support of the Creative Europe programme.**



The European Composer and Songwriter Alliance ([ECSA](https://composeralliance.org/)) represents over 30,000 professional composers and songwriters in 29 European countries. With 58 member organisations across Europe and beyond, the Alliance speaks for the creators of art and classical music (contemporary), film and audiovisual music, as well as popular music. ECSA's core mission is to defend and promote the rights and interests of composers and songwriters with the aim of improving their social and economic conditions, as well as enhancing their artistic freedom.

For more information about our organisation, please visit: <https://composeralliance.org/>.

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