BLACK
LIVES IN
MUSIC

REPORT

BEING BLACK
IN THE UK
MUSIC INDUSTRY

MUSIC CREATORS - PART 1
SEPTEMBER 2021

BLACK LIVES IN MUSIC

Black Lives in Music are at the vanguard of the effort to combat racism, uniting organisations and musicians to create a truly inclusive and diverse music industry. We use data and insights to campaign for equity and we support the empowerment of Black musicians and professionals to realise their aspirations. Black Lives in Music wishes to work with organisations, ensembles and companies throughout the UK music industry. To open dialogues and build relationships in the true spirit of working together. We want to collaborate with all agents of the UK music industry to achieve equality for people of colour so they can express themselves in all genres and in all areas of our music ecosystem.

You can find out more about Black Lives in Music at **blim.org.uk**

Op
Opinium

Founded in 2007 OPINIUM is an award-winning strategic insight agency built on the belief that in a world of uncertainty and complexity, success depends on the ability to stay on pulse of what people think, feel and do. Creative and inquisitive, the Opinium team is passionate about empowering clients to make the decisions that matter. Opinium works with organisations to define and overcome strategic challenges – helping them to get to grips with the world in which their brands operate. It uses the right approach and methodology to deliver robust insights, strategic counsel and targeted recommendations that generate change and positive outcomes.

believe.

In 2020 we stood in solidarity with the music industry and the community of black professionals, initially we participated in #BlackoutTuesday. Since then our teams have been building initiatives, strategies and finding leading partners to help break down the barriers of structural racism which are not only pervasive within the music industry but throughout society. At Believe we feel passionately that things need to change and this change is being sought by our people at every level. We have been extremely happy to have found and work with the team at BLiM here in the UK. We thank them for creating this first of a kind report. The report makes for uncomfortable reading but we are fully supportive of it and its findings.

Help Musicians

"Thanks to Black Lives in Music, the data in this report proves that the individual stories we hear from professional musicians cannot be explained away as rare, one-off incidents but are illustrative of significant, widespread problems that we must all work together to address. It is clear there is more that Help Musicians should do, collaboratively, to create lasting change within the music ecosystem and we look forward to engaging with the BLiM team to work out where we can be most impactful. It is a privilege to be a major funder of BLiM and we hope that the creation of this report will help us, and others make a difference to improving the lives and careers of black musicians."

James Ainscough
CEO, Help Musicians

PRS Foundation

The UK music sector has a lot more work to do to tackle the anti-Black racism which prevents Black music creators and music professionals from fulfilling their potential and is therefore holding the whole industry back.

The Black Lives in Music Report 2021 lays out severe inequalities and differences in experiences in a way that makes it easy to see how underrepresented, marginalised and under-supported Black people in music are, and how urgently we must all address these issues.

As CEO at PRS Foundation, I am more determined than ever to address the issues shown in the report, and through POWER UP we are proud to work closely with Charisse, Roger and the Black Lives in Music team, aligning approaches to achieve the meaningful change many survey respondents and those in the wider music community demand."

Joe Frankland
CEO, PRS Foundation

tuneCORE

Black Women Matter: We still need to identify, acknowledge, and tackle the problem of intersectional racism in the music industry that hits black women the worst. This report clearly highlights this, and it is so important to have research done that focuses specifically on the challenges black creators and industry professionals face, because we know that much of the industry has and continues to profit off of black people and appropriates black culture; and yet they are the most disadvantaged community in the industry today. BLIM's report should serve as a catalyst for industry-wide change. As a woman of South Asian descent, it's important I recognize my various privileges but also solidarities with black communities, that lead naturally to developing an allyship with them, especially black women creators in the industry. There is a lot of work to be done, and I commend BLIM for their groundbreaking research study and will do whatever I can to support their mission.

Faryal Khan-Thompson
VP of International, Tunecore

FOREWORD

The road to success in any industry involves talent, commitment, hard work and luck. The road to success in the music industry is at least as tough but minus the most obvious pathways. In many aspects, it's an industry that lacks an obvious roadmap to success. As an artist you can start from the bottom and work your way to the top or very quickly do the opposite! The ongoing issues for Black music professionals can make the journey more of an odyssey, with violent twists and turns of fortune along the way – I know this, it's been my life.

Earlier this year, Black Lives in Music commissioned a survey on the personal experience of Black music creators and industry professionals. The survey engaged with nearly 2,000 respondents. The subsequent report now published has produced key information and an insight into the experience of the Black professionals in today's music industry. It clearly shows that prejudice continues to be an issue – both implicit and structural.

The resulting effect on the wellbeing of those concerned can be no surprise. It's testimony to the determination of Black music artists and their love for creativity that their talents continue to shine through. Despite the knockdowns, Black music creators and professionals in the UK stand up again and again. Despite the lack of support from the industry, those Black professionals who are able to shine a light do so in the interests of a better tomorrow for generations to come.

There can be no doubt about the extraordinary level of Black talent in the UK music industry. The legacy of many Black artists still infuses and inspires the work of many of the finest music creators in today's wider music community. Where there is doubt is in the acknowledgement of this contribution, not to mention the integrity of an industry that owes so much to music of Black origin and the contribution of Black music creators and industry professionals.

Our report serves to highlight the plight of those who should have every right to belong to this industry. It's time for the music sector to take a good look at itself. It must now acknowledge that it needs to support the whole community, not just the few who are born in the image of the powerbrokers. These industry leaders are responsible for so much more than the success of a product; they are also responsible for the success, prosperity and wellbeing of real people – real people whose talents have helped to put these very same individuals into the positions of power they occupy today.

Roger Wilson
BLiM, Director of Operations
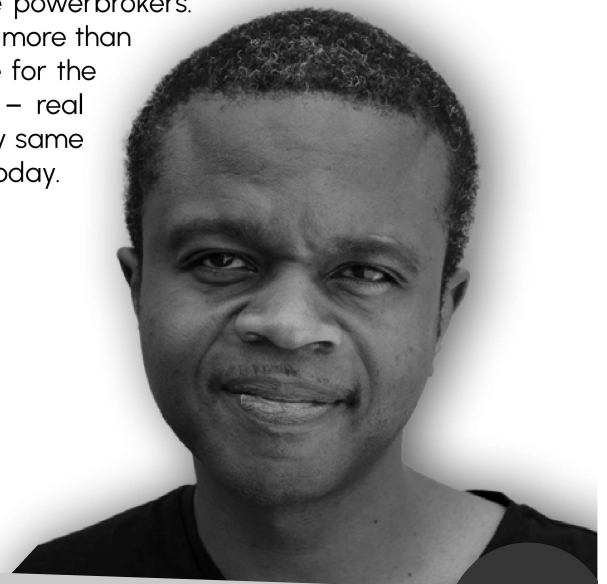
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Here in the UK, the campaign to fix streaming and artists' pay has reached governmental level, yet structural racism continues to be prevalent in the music industry, affecting the mental health of potentially thousands of Black music creators and industry professionals.

We have moved the needle with major corporations who are finally publishing reports on the gender pay gap, but what about the ethnicity pay gap?

We have had Black female artists speaking out in the media about discrimination and their mistreatment whilst in the music industry, but their voices appeared to be ignored by the sector which they are calling out.

Prompted by Jamila Thomas' and Brianna Agyemang's Blackout Tuesday campaign we saw there was a need to provide concrete proof of the issue of inequality in the UK music industry. In March 2021 we launched a first-of-its-kind survey on 'the lived experience of Black music creators and industry professionals' and reached 1,718 respondents.

'Being Black in the UK music industry' is the ground-breaking report based on findings from the survey. The findings reveal that racism is prevalent in work place culture and structural racism is revealed throughout the industry from grass root education through to the largest music corporations, and remains a barrier for career progression of the Black music creator and industry professional. We report from our findings the mental health implications Black people experience from their discriminatory treatment within the music industry.

This is the first part of the report and covers the following themes:
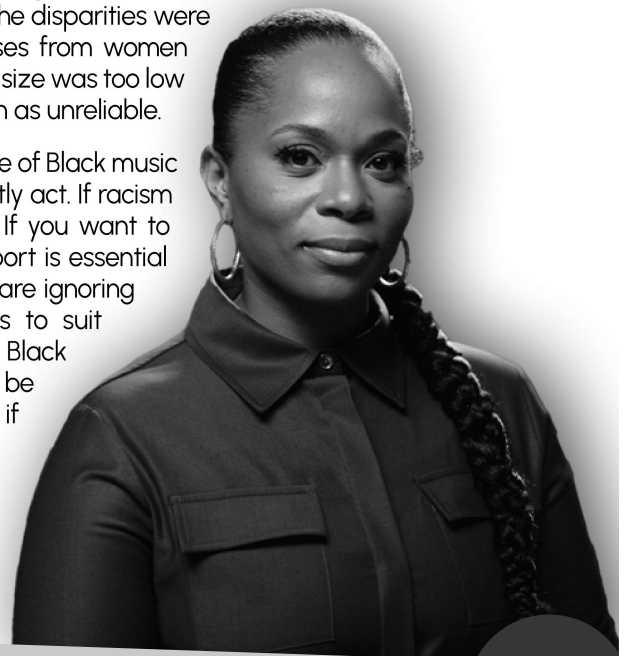- Barriers to Progression
- Gender and Ethnic Pay
- Black Women in Music
- Mental Health

The subsequent parts will look at the granular data and themes such as intersectionality, disability, music roles, music genres and more.

Throughout this report you will also see a focus on Black Women in Music. This was not an intentional narrative but this is what the data revealed. The discrimination and disadvantage Black women face in the music industry could not be ignored. We made comparisons to their non black counterparts to ensure the disparities were clear. Unfortunately, we only received enough responses from women who identified their ethnicity as Black or White. The base size was too low from other ethnicities and if used, the data could be seen as unreliable.

I hope this report will help you understand the experience of Black music creators and industry professionals, and most importantly act. If racism disgusts you then this will be an uncomfortable read. If you want to see equality in the music industry, then reading this report is essential to change. If you choose to ignore this report, then you are ignoring your friends', colleagues' and employees' experiences to suit your own needs and that is a problem. The voices of Black music creators and industry professionals can no longer be ignored. Change must be achieved but can only happen if it is done together.

Charisse Beaumont
BLiM, Chief Executive

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INTRODUCTION

Findings from the UK Music 2020 Music Industry Workforce Diversity Survey revealed increasing ethnic diversity in the workforce since 2018. In 2020, representation of Black, Asian and other ethnically diverse people aged 16-24 in the music industry was 30.6%, up from 25.9% in 2018. In addition, the number of people from Black, Asian and other ethnically diverse communities at entry-level rose from 23.2% in 2018 to 34.6% in 2020. Representation of Black, Asian and other ethnically diverse people at senior executive levels also had a small increase from 17.9% in 2018 to 19.9%. Black and ethnically diverse people only fill just one in five senior roles within the industry. People from Black, Asian or ethnic minority backgrounds are overrepresented at intern and entry career levels (42.1%) and underrepresented at higher levels.

Given this representation of Black and other ethnically diverse backgrounds within the industry, any issues of racism must be first swiftly identified, then acknowledged, and finally tackled appropriately. This approach ensures that the industry, its workforce and consumers continue to benefit from having the best talent available, reaching their full potential without the hindrance of racism or any other form of discrimination. In this report, 'Black' is defined as people of Black African and/or Caribbean descent, including Mixed/Dual heritage.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report is fundamentally different from most others, looking at racism and racial discrimination. It is based primarily on a dataset that directly captures Black people's experiences in the music industry. In addition, while some studies report having to be cautious in their reporting because they have a small representation of minority groups, the survey for this research achieved seventy% representation from Black, Mixed and Asian ethnicities.

The research sought to capture intelligence and data on the experiences of music creators and music industry professionals across all genres and from grassroots through technical and to signed artists. The quantitative and qualitative survey responses cover equality, diversity and inclusion insights and intelligence across a wide range of topics and themes, including earnings, racism and discrimination and the mental health and well-being of Black Music Creators and Black Music Industry Professionals in the UK. The survey analysis used in this report highlighting practice across the music industry and, based on these, propose a set of recommendations to combat racism and discrimination in the music industry.

The online survey gathered quantitative and qualitative information from music creators, representatives, students, practitioners and stakeholders, and provided feedback on their experiences across the sector. The analysis and reporting acknowledge that many forms of discrimination such as racism, colourism, sexism, ageism or ableism may be present and active in combination at the same time for individuals. Therefore, the approach to this report considers intersectionality to understand and communicate the multifaceted nature and impact of discrimination and disadvantage on individual well-being.

REPORT STRUCTURE

The first section of this report provides the overall aims of the research and the methodological approach to data collection and analysis. To provide a flavour of the research environment, it also includes a comprehensive profile summary of the participants taking part in the survey, including social and demographic characteristics.

The main section of this report is presented in two equally important areas. The first section presents the findings, implications and recommendations as they apply to music creators, and the second section presents the results as they apply to music industry professionals. Each section will focus on the themes of Black women in music, barriers to progression, pay disparity, mental health and intersectionality.

Throughout the report, the statistics, while informative, provide an idea of the frequency and extent of the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by Black music creators and industry professionals. However, this does not communicate on their own the combination of intersectional elements of race, gender and particularly mental health and wellbeing elements that have a fundamental impact on Black women in particular. Therefore, the qualitative contributions are analysed and included in the report sections to evidence and illuminate the compelling and credible accounts essential for communicating the varied experiences of the providing them.

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WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR THIS RESEARCH?

The research was specifically designed to provide insights into the experiences of Black music creators and Black professionals in the UK music industry. The survey incorporated a particular focus on people's experiences and manifestations of racism and discrimination in its various forms.

Specific research aims were:

● To determine and generate an in-depth report highlighting Black people's experiences as music creators and professionals in the UK music industry. To provide current information related to prevalence, nature, type and manifestation of racism, discrimination, and other forms of disadvantage witnessed or experienced within the music sector.

● Identify the prevalence, experiences and impact of responses of different forms of racist behaviours and microaggressions.

● Interrogate the differences between the experiences of Black music creators and professionals in the music industry in terms of gender and ethnic differences, barriers to progression, gender and ethnic pay and earnings disparities and mental health; with particular focus on the intersectional nature of the discrimination and disadvantage experienced on an individual basis.

● Produce a report with results and recommendations that intend to inform the UK music industry, stakeholders and the broader public of the range and extent of discrimination and disadvantage prevailing in the industry and the pressing need to develop support mechanisms to ensure a fairer and more inclusive music industry in the UK.

The survey ran for six weeks over March and April 2021.

METHODOLOGY

The research survey was designed to feature both quantitative and qualitative components. The questionnaire collected statistical information on demographic profiles of those completing the questionnaire, including gender, age, ethnicity, disability and location. The qualitative provision enabled research participants to highlight and elaborate on their experiences within the music industry as music creators or as music professionals. In particular, where they experienced or witnessed discrimination on the grounds of race and other characteristics.

A review of selected diversity and inclusion research was undertaken and reported to give context to this report to supplement the survey data. By extension, highlight the essential findings and conclusions from existing studies and highlight any effective practice. The rationale behind this approach was that this report's conclusions are cross-referenced where it will help to illuminate the results or to show where change has or has not taken place over time. The review forms a separate section in this report and is also referenced at appropriate points.

It is important to note that the Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected music and other industries in the UK and internationally over the survey period. It must also be acknowledged that this survey was undertaken at a time of great uncertainty due to unprecedented conditions of a global pandemic that led to changes at places of work, ways of working and restrictions on performing and attending music events. Therefore, the responses were provided within a context of increasing restrictions on individuals' lives in several areas, including their freedom of movement, work and work opportunities.

PROFILE OF RESEARCH CONTRIBUTORS

The survey drew responses from 1718 participants. It captured both quantitative and qualitative responses from various music creators and music professionals across the UK. The diverse representation of the survey participants highlighted the intersectional nature of the issues presented in the findings and presented significant implications for sector organisations and individuals within and outside of the music industry.

Our diverse profile of research participants represented approximately half (51%) who identify as female and 46% who identify as male. The remaining 3% identified as Non-binary, Trans-female, Trans-male Other and those who preferred not to provide a gender identity.

2%
prefer not to say

46%
male

50.5%
female

1.4%
non-binary

0.1%
trans-female

0.1%
trans-male
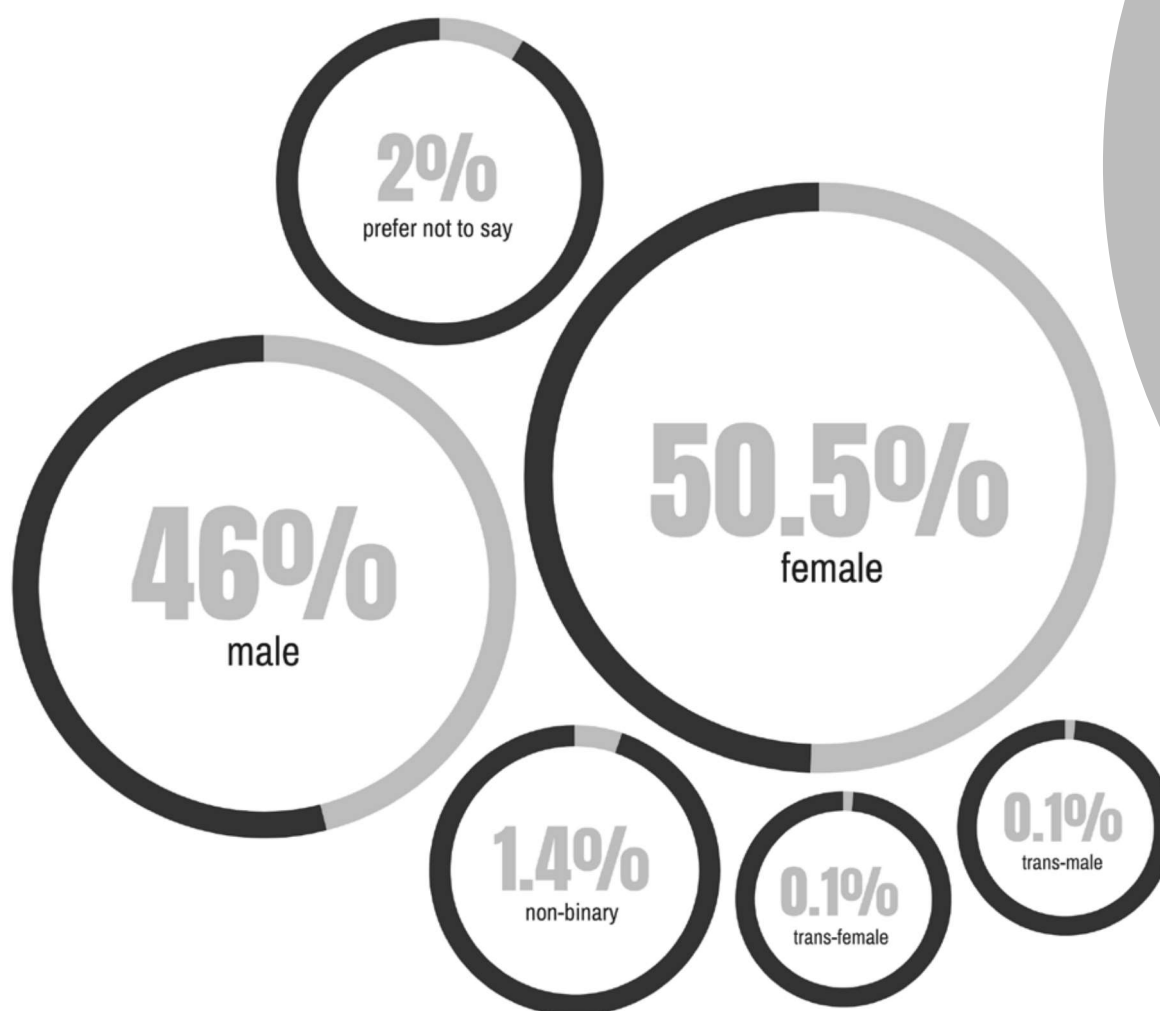
THE ETHNIC PROFILE OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

| Ethnic group	Percentage
Caribbean	25%
English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	21.6%
African	17%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	7.4%
White and Black Caribbean	7.1%
Any other White background	5.4%
Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background	4.2%
White and Black African	3.2%
Indian	1.2%
White and Asian	1.2%
Irish	1%
Any other Asian background	0.9%
Pakistani	0.4%
Chinese	0.2%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.2%
Bangladeshi	0.1%
Arab	0.1%
Prefer not to say	2.4%
Any other ethnic group	0.7%
Don't think of myself as any of these	0.7%

The age profile shows that 60% of the participants aged between 25 and 49 years overall. The largest representation of people is within the 30-39 age group (27%), with 19% between 18 and 24 and 22% aged 50 years and over.

Within the diverse ethnic profile, 64% of the survey participants identified as coming from Black African and Caribbean and Mixed backgrounds. Nearly a quarter (23%) identified as White British, Irish or Northern Irish, 3% East Asian, South Asian or South-East Asian. The remaining respondents identified as Other ethnic backgrounds or preferred not to identify as part of a specific ethnic group.

photo © jazz refreshed

LONG-STANDING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENT, CONDITION, ILLNESS, OR DISABILITY
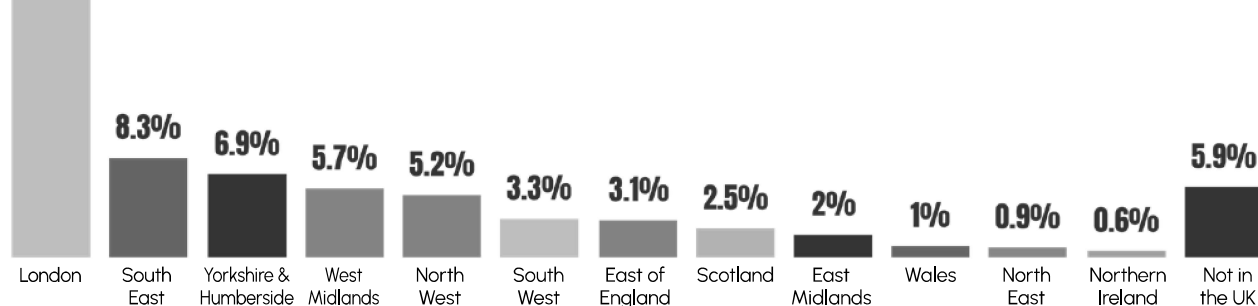
A small proportion of survey participants (17%) identified as having a long-standing physical or mental impairment, condition, illness or disability. Within this group, 10% reported that their condition limited their day to day activities a lot, and 65% said it restricted their day to day activities a little. However, most of the respondents (77%) did not identify as having a long-standing physical or mental impairment, condition, illness or disability.

Prefer not to say 6%
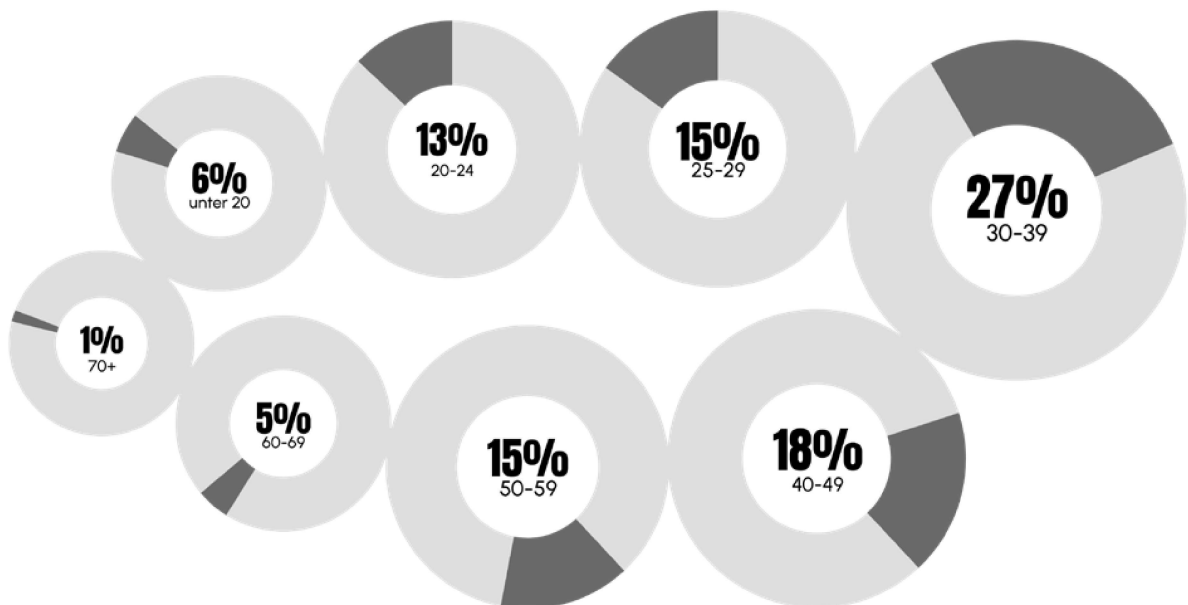
Yes 17.3%

No 76.7%
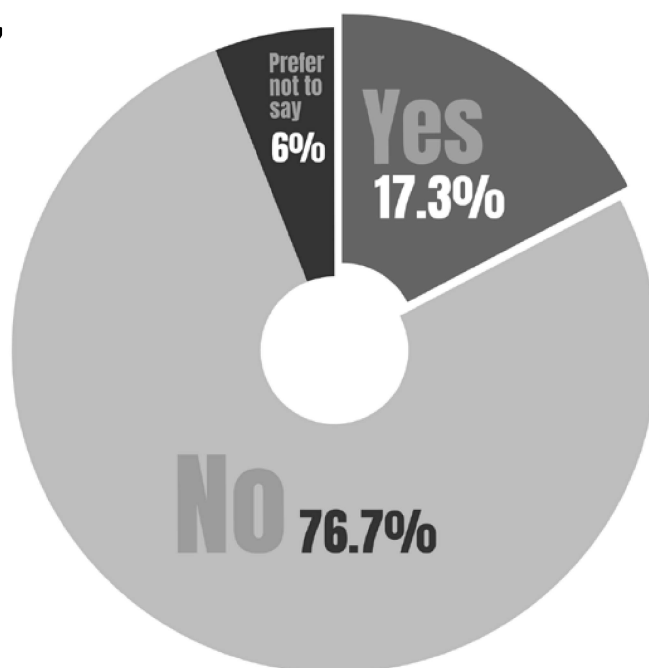
WHERE DO YOU CURRENTLY LIVE?

Regionally, of the people who identified where they lived when participating in the survey, the majority (55%) lived in London. The others were located across all of the other English regions, with others located in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. 6% indicated that they lived outside of the UK. It is particularly noteworthy that musicians in the survey report the perception that relocating to London from other parts of the UK is likely to increase their chances of success in the music industry.

London	South East	Yorkshire & Humberside	West Midlands	North West	South West	East of England	Scotland	East Midlands	Wales	North East	Northern Ireland	Not in the UK
54.6%	8.3%	6.9%	5.7%	5.2%	3.3%	3.1%	2.5%	2%	1%	0.9%	0.6%	5.9%

WHO WE SURVEYED?

BLACK MUSIC CREATORS AND PROFESSIONALS

60% of the survey participants identified as music creators. The remaining 40% are music professionals.

39.9%
Music Professionals

60.1%
Music Creators

6%
unter 20

13%
20-24

15%
25-29

27%
30-39

1%
70+

5%
60-69

15%
50-59

18%
40-49

ETHNICITY

49% African or Caribbean

3% East Asian, South Asian or South East Asian

16% Mixed Heritage

23% White British, Irish or Northern Irish

6% Other White background

1% Other Ethnic background

2% Prefer not to say
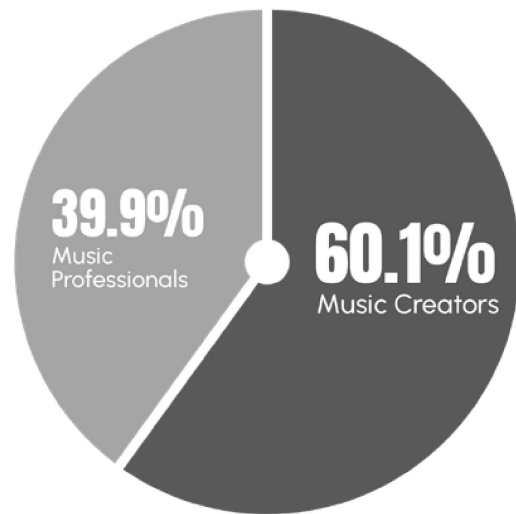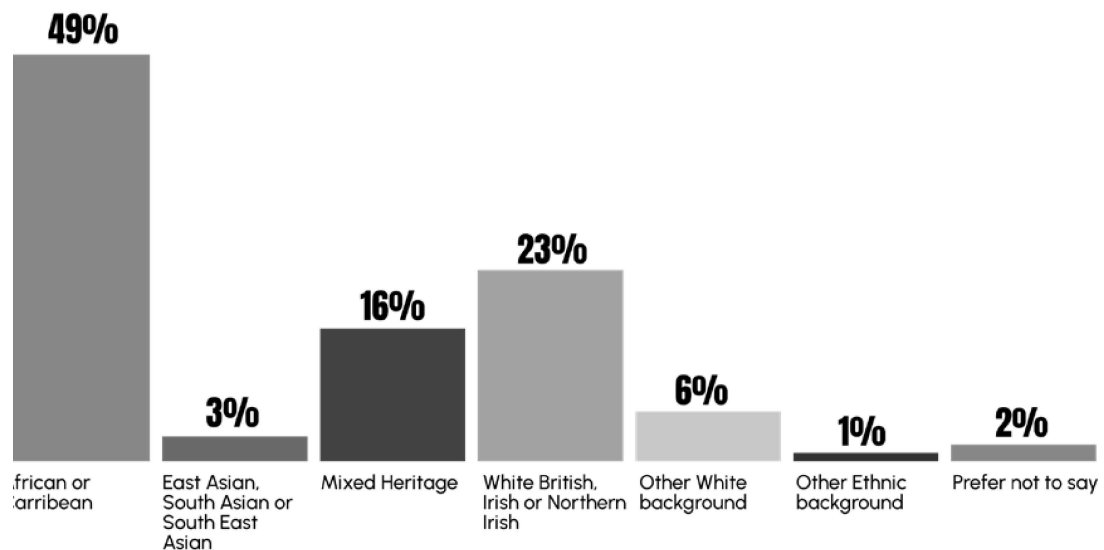
BLACK MUSIC CREATORS REPORT

KEY FINDINGS

- **86%** of all Black music creators agree that there are **barriers to progression**. This number **rises to 89% for Black women** and **91% for Black creators who are disabled**.
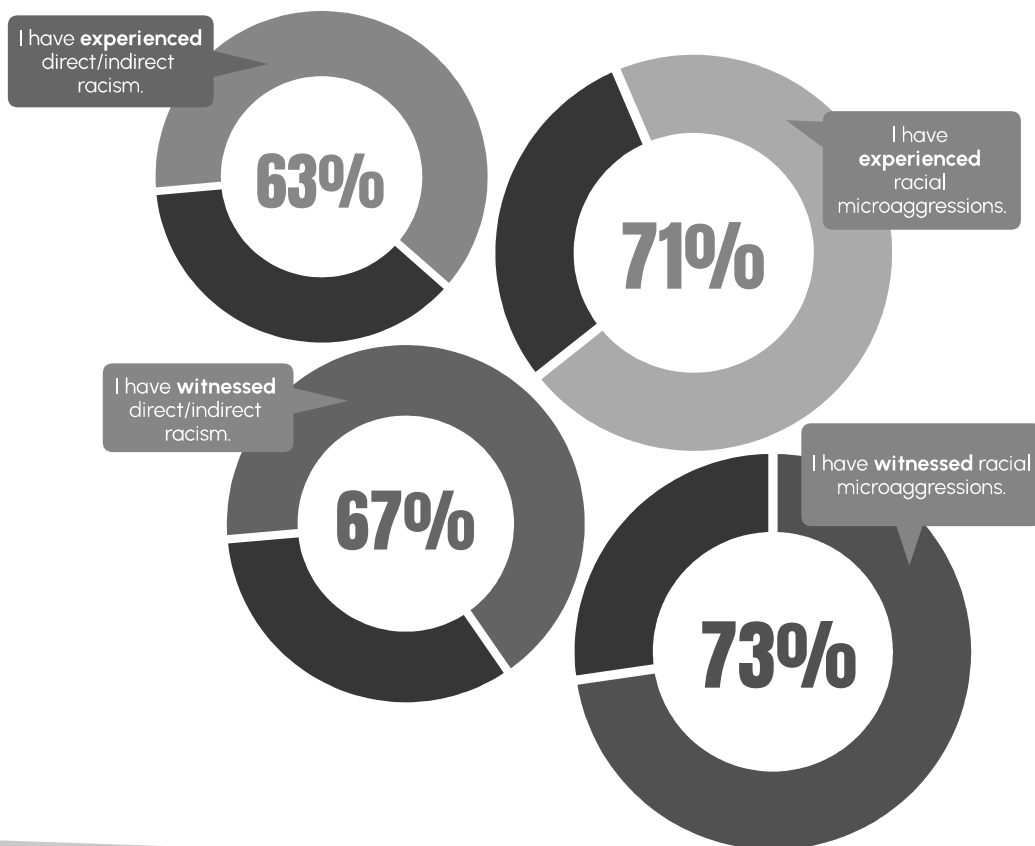
- Three in five (**63%**) Black music creators have **experienced direct/ indirect racism** in the music industry, and more (**71%**) have experienced **racial microaggressions.**

- **35%** of all Black music creators have felt the need to **change their appearance** because of their **race/ethnicity**, rising to **43% of Black women.**

- **White** music creators **earned more** than Black creators for their work within the industry pre-covid (**£1,454 vs £1,155 per month**).

- **Black women** made **£1,026** per month compared to **white women** who earned **£1,282** pre-covid - a **difference of almost 25%**.

- More than three in five (**67%**) **Black music creators** surveyed have **earned less** than usual from the music industry due to Covid-19.

- **65% of Black music creators** who identified as disabled have experienced discrimination due to their race, 35% of the same respondents experienced gender discrimination and just 7% of Black music creators who identified as disabled were subject to discrimination due to their disability.

- Almost three quarters (**74%**) are **dissatisfied** with how the music industry supports **Black music creators**, compared to just **8%** who are **satisfied.**

- **White** music creators are **32% more likely** to have a music-related qualification than their **Black colleagues**.

- **21% of Black** music creators **earn 100% of their income** from music compared to **38% of white** music creators.

- A deep dive into the data showed just **19% of Black femal**e creators earn 100% of their income from music compared to **40% of female white** music creators. This figure drops to **17%** if you are a Black and disabled music creator.

- **Earning enough to make a living from the music industry** and **financial stability** are considered to be the **top signs of success** within the music industry amongst Black creators.

- **31%** of all Black music creators believe their mental wellbeing has **declined** since starting their music career, rising to **42% of Black women**.

EXPERIENCING RACISM IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Systemic racism has been defined as a form of racism found in the practices and rules of institutions that maintain racial inequality. It can lead to discrimination in the ways system or industry operates and in the behaviours of individuals within an organisation that supports such discrimination over the long term.

Within the BLiM survey, when looking at systemic racism in the music industry, nearly three quarters (72%) of the Black music creators surveyed reported experiencing discrimination in the music industry in industry culture and behaviours. Discrimination of grounds of race was most common (58%), followed by nearly a quarter reporting bias based on their gender (24%). The results showed that discrimination based on their gender was significantly higher for Black women (44%) than for Black men (4%).

Further analysis into the type of discrimination experienced revealed that six in ten (63%) of the music creators said they experienced direct or indirect racism in the music industry, with a higher proportion (67%) indicating that they were witnesses to discrimination on the grounds of race. Similar patterns are reported in relation to micro-aggressions, with 71% of those surveyed reporting that they experienced this first hand and slightly more (73%) saying that they witnessed it.

I have **experienced** direct/indirect racism.

63%

I have **experienced** racial microaggressions.

71%

I have **witnessed** direct/indirect racism.

67%

I have **witnessed** racial microaggressions.

73%

While the statistics indicate the range and extent of discrimination and micro-aggressions, the examination of the detailed qualitative responses reveals the damaging impact of such behaviours on Black music creators in the industry, revealing aspects of the sometimes hostile working environment for Black music creators. It is noticeable that the racism and/or micro-aggressions they reported witnessing and/or experienced directly included explicit racist language being used toward them, being treated differently because of their race or ethnicity.

Lack of Black representation in the music industry was reported as a factor in this research. While some incidents were reported as isolated occurrences, other survey participants reported consistently being mistreated because of their race or ethnicity.

These are sadly demonstrated in the following statements:

"Having to repeatedly ask other artists to stop using the N-word."

"Jokes about skin colour, Africa, persistent questioning about where I really come from."

"In orchestra settings, I have experienced people suddenly addressing me in ways that mimic Black vernacular. Such as saying, "Yo! What's up?" even though they do not typically speak in such a way."

Specific examples were given on incidences of Black music creators not being given the same amount of studio time as white music creators, being refused opportunities to perform at events and being told to change the type of music they make.

"... not given same studio session opportunities as white counterparts even when my music is preferable."

"I was told quite blatantly by [...] that they were not interested in Black male artists as they were linked to 'So Solid' and other rappers who were getting bad press, even though I was a singer singing about love."

"...being refused to perform at shows to booking venues."

"Being asked if you have a song by a Black artist. Assuming you sing R&B because you are Black. Immediately calling you an urban artist before they have heard anything."

This key theme emerged from this research whereby many music creators discuss being denied access to opportunities and the ability to progress compared to their non-Black counterparts.

MUSIC INDUSTRY CULTURES AND BEHAVIOURS

This BLiM research explored the question if survey participants agreed that diversity and inclusion were a priority for the music industry? The results suggest that while there is a strong level of agreement, the majority of participants felt there was work to be done in making this an industry priority.

When asked how satisfied they were with how the music industry supports Black music creators, **70% of those responding to this question were somewhat or very dissatisfied**, whilst 8% said they were very or somewhat satisfied.
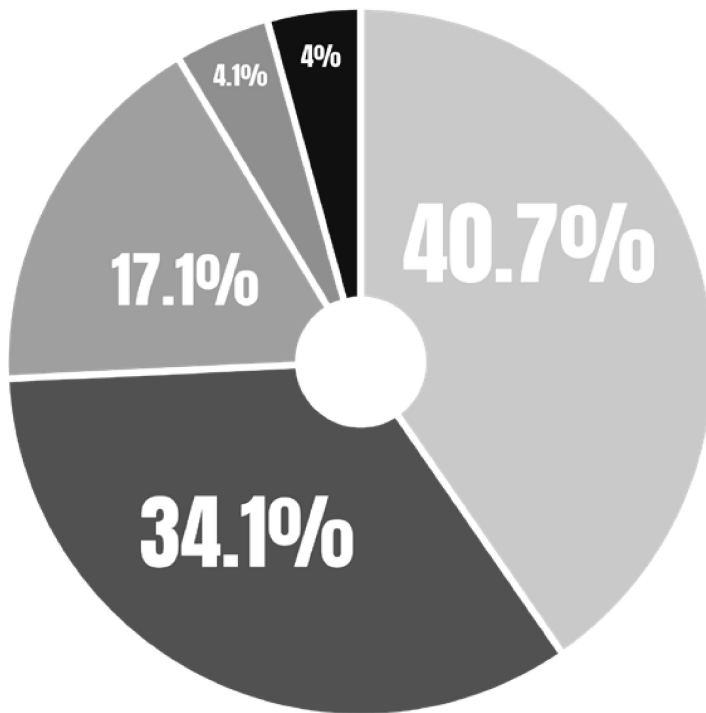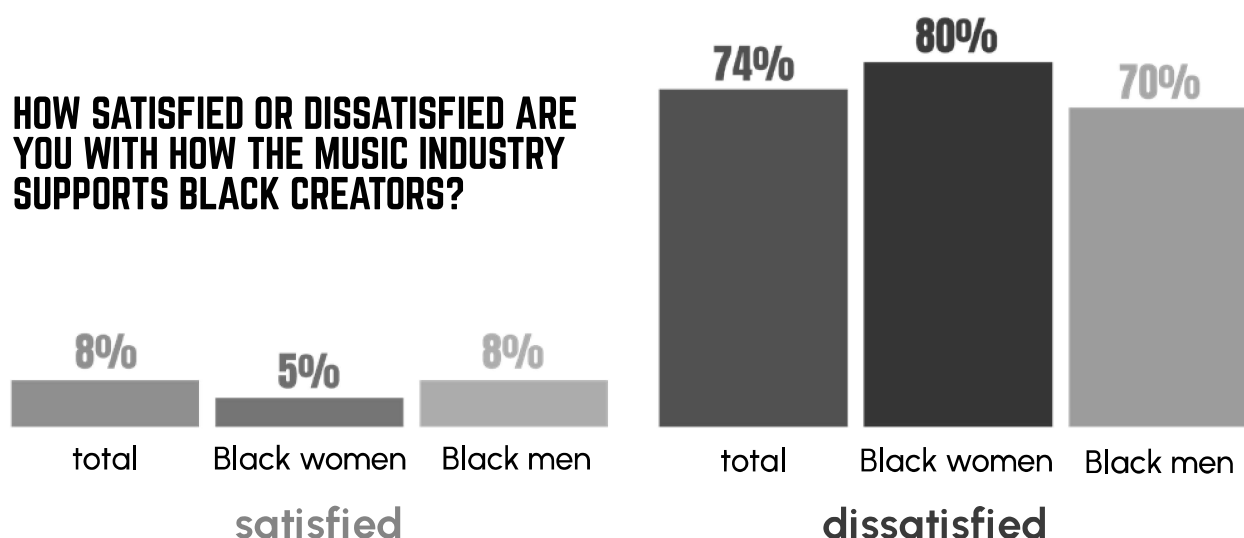

4%

4.1%

17.1%

40.7%

34.1%

HOW SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED ARE YOU WITH HOW THE MUSIC INDUSTRY SUPPORTS BLACK MUSIC CREATORS AND/OR PROFESSIONALS?

very satisfied | somewhat satisfied | neutral | somewhat dissatisfied | very dissatisfied

Here is a suggestion by a male white music creator for action that the music industry needs to take to eradicate racism / racial disparity:

"Frank conversation and real action. As a white man, 'positive discrimination' could negatively affect my career, but this is the only real action that I can think of to change the music industry into one I'm proud of being a part of. 99% of the people I play with are white British (and majority male), but many of the musicians I look up to and aspire to play with are BAME. I'm currently trying to facilitate a systemic change within one of the bands I play with so that our 'pool' of players reflect the makeup of our society. We have struggled to make this change for a while now but we are at a point where the band will most likely cease to exist if it is not meaningfully addressed."

Consistent with the response on the level of discrimination communicated in the survey, nearly three quarters (74%) are dissatisfied with the way the music industry supports Black music creators; this is higher for Black women (80%) compared with Black men (70%).

HOW SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED ARE YOU WITH HOW THE MUSIC INDUSTRY SUPPORTS BLACK CREATORS?

74% total
80% Black women
70% Black men

8% total
5% Black women
8% Black men

satisfied

dissatisfied

"They would much rather support a white artist with "urban" appeal than a Black artist."

"The industry does not invest enough in Black artists or support them with contracts and promotions; they have often said Black artists don't sell. 'The fact of the matter is the industry does not support us, and that needs to change!"

"Labels/management saying they can't/don't know how to market a Black female artist. Too focused on the "RnB" genre even if your music isn't!"

"The industry does not invest enough in Black artists or support them with contracts and promotions; they have often said Black artists don't sell. 'The fact of the matter is the industry does not support us, and that needs to change!"

"There is little to no funding..."

Further reflecting the negative experiences and incidences of racial discrimination, more than half of the Black music creators in the survey felt their contributions to the music industry were not adequately recognised.

More than half of these felt that was because they were Black, with 20% saying specifically that it was because of their race or ethnicity. The comments provided indicate a perceived lack of visibility as well as being overlooked despite their achievements as musicians. These factors were highlighted as a key reason for disappointment with a lack of acknowledgement and support within the UK music industry.

56% of the surveyed Black music creators felt their contributions to the music industry were not adequately recognised.

The evidence the Black female creators provide to demonstrate their experience of discrimination in the industry make it explicit, clear and unambiguous:

> *"As a Black female singer, I can't say I see anyone who looks like me in the charts, I can't see anyone with an R'n'B, Gospel sound being appreciated and valued, and that can be discouraging."*

> *"Because Black women (like myself) who are more than competent in the roles that they undertake are often overlooked and not taken seriously. Our skin colour isn't as palatable within the office, within the board meeting room, on the stage/online platforms and or in society, and unfortunately, it's been an ongoing issue for decades!"*

> *"Because in England in classical music there is little support for artists of colour. I have made a career in classical music as an opera singer but mostly abroad."*

The range of behaviours and culture of unsupportive practices that are perceived to be limiting the opportunities and progress of Black music creators were communicated by survey participants such as the following:

> *"A range of issues pertaining to a lack of support, recognition, and visibility within the UK music industry as a female Black British creator. Gender inequality and underrepresentation, marginalisation as a female creator within the mainstream UK jazz market. There is also a lack of inclusion for women of colour within the industry and barriers surrounding "marketability". I have observed that it is a very male-dominated field and one that can potentially cause a female artist to feel disempowered and marginalised".*

> *"I have many musicians and artists in my family, and there has never been a consistent platform to help them further their careers."*

Despite the evidence of racism and other forms of discrimination, particularly towards Black women, a small minority (8%) of the Black music creators surveyed said they are satisfied with how the music industry supports them. Furthermore, they were optimistic that they would benefit from opportunities created as a direct response to the recent climate of openness and debate around systematic racism in the wake of Black Lives Matter protests—also, the subsequent recognition of and commitments to tackle systemic racism in the UK.

> *"Encouraged by the more honest debate being sparked by the BLM protests and Blackout Tuesday. It has opened up a direct dialogue about inequalities and systematic racism faced by Black people."*

> *"I am satisfied as more opportunities are being created for us. I also love that people are now taking the time to research composers from the past from African or Caribbean descent who have been overlooked."*

Related to the illuminating accounts quoted above, McKinsey & Company's 'Diversity Wins' report suggests that, to achieve lasting progress, companies must go beyond the systematic approach to inclusion and diversity to ensure representation of diverse talent and to strengthen leadership and accountability for inclusion and diversity. They must also be ready to tackle sensitive topics around cultural norms and highlight and apply consequences for individual behaviour, including that in management and leadership, sustaining these efforts over time. The report concluded by reinforcing the message that fostering a diverse and inclusive culture is a critical success factor that enables individuals to shine in their own right and pull together as a team.

BARRIERS TO PROGRESSION

For Black creators in the BLiM survey who feel that they cannot achieve some of the key signs of success, over half (52%) believe it is specifically because of barriers related to their race or ethnicity. In comparison, 19% feel that their race or ethnicity is not a factor. Not being afforded the same opportunities to be successful as white counterparts was cited as a significant barrier to success for Black music creators, while others cited as obstacles to success the lack of opportunities afforded to them and lack of industry support.

"In the UK there is not as yet the acceptance that Black musicians in Classical music have a valid place in what classical music ensembles put out."

"Because we're not allowed to be above average. We have to be the best at what we do to even get the financial support or interest that white people can get for a very basic skill. We're expected to be perfect; we're expected to be the full package before our career has even started, other people are given the opportunity for development, and thus, it's easier for them to break into the mainstream."

The barriers to progression reported in the survey are wide-ranging, as indicated in the examples below.

"I think that Black musicians are relegated and pigeon-holed to certain areas of the industry."

"Black music is always viewed as having to come up with something that's so-called original, and that has never been done before... however, that's not the case for white music and musicians. It's still ok to sound like the Beatles or Oasis. But if you're Black and play a guitar, you're told you sound like Hendrix - it's been done before!"

"Black musicians and artists are not provided with the freedoms that white musicians are. We are far more often forced to put ourselves into boxes and strict style/genre parameters that our white counterparts don't have to. We are also expected to create and play music at a much higher standard than white musicians and are rarely given due credit for it".

> *"Black vocalists - even exceptional ones don't get the opportunities that white artists do. From finding management, agents, to support slots, radio coverage or press. Black female artists are not seen as marketable and thus receive very little backing from the music industry. This isn't the case in the music charity sector but making that leap from being an aspiring musician to a working musician is very difficult without endorsement from music heavyweights - who in turn don't see Black women as a good commercial investment. Overt and unconscious racism plays a part, on top of sexism."*

68% of Black creators said they had to find their own way of becoming successful because they did not receive the support they would like and believe that they deserve within the industry.
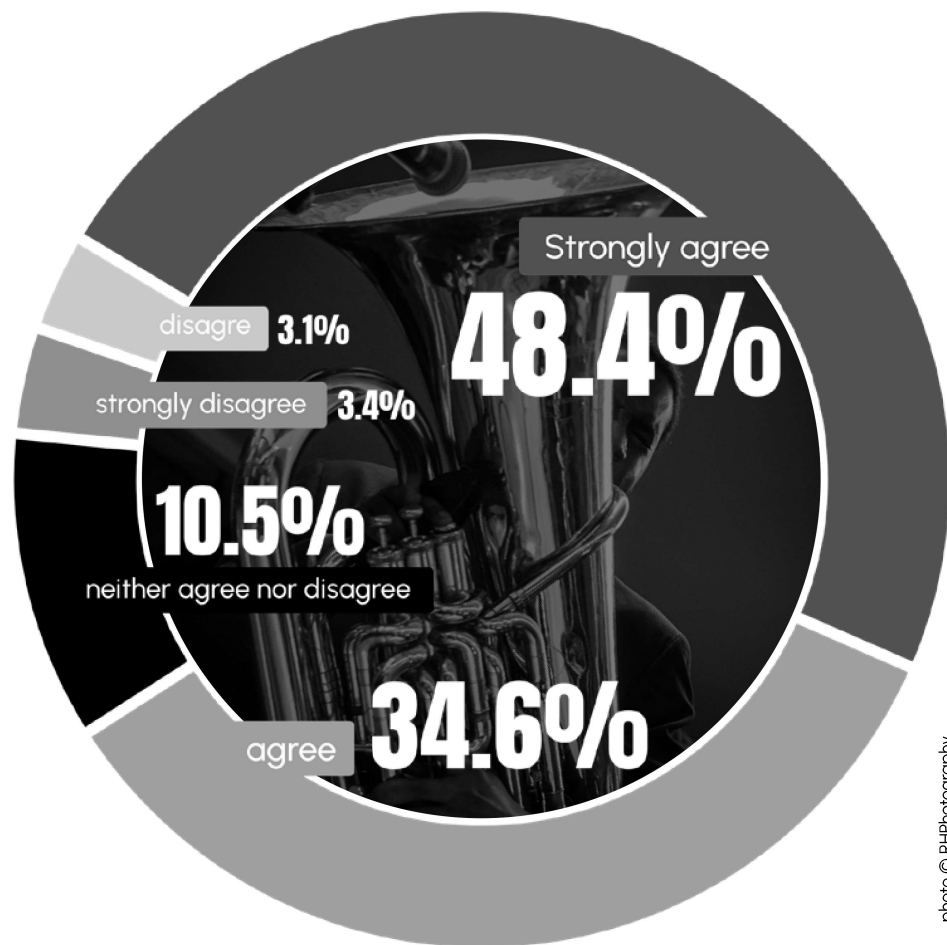
There was a mixture of responses in terms of support, with 21% saying they had help at every step of their career to enable them to get to the next stage and nearly three times that (56%) indicating that they had not received such support. Similarly, just over two thirds (68%) of Black creators said they had to find their own way of becoming successful because they did not receive the support they would like and believe that they deserve within the industry.

> *"There is little to no support - Firstly, the level of representation in labels etc., is awful. As a dark-skinned Black woman, I have found it hard to gain opportunities that have been very easy for my white counterparts to get. This is something that people at the top who are white will never be able to relate to. There should be mentors of colour to help those coming up as well as more representation. There is so much to be done."*

> *"People often use Black composers for Black history month and expect them to write something based on their heritage. There isn't a lot of mentoring, guidance or support outside of that."*

HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING?
PROMOTION AND RECOGNITION HAPPEN LESS FREQUENTLY FOR BLACK PEOPLE IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY COMPARED TO PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT BLACK.

Strongly agree **48.4%**

disagre **3.1%**

strongly disagree **3.4%**

10.5%
neither agree nor disagree
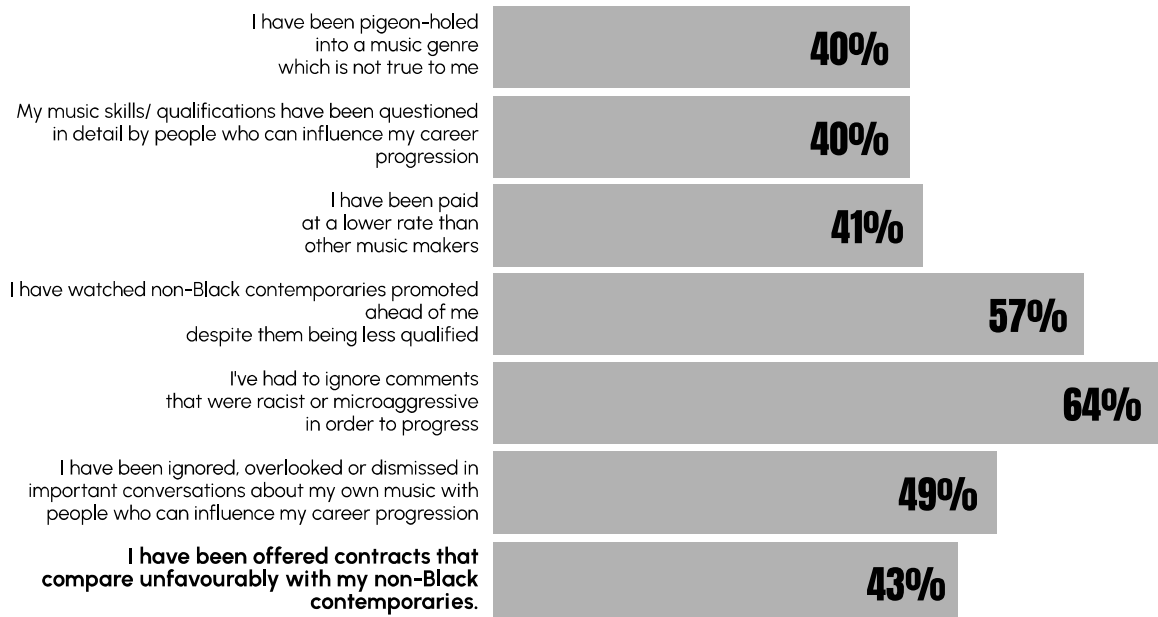
agree **34.6%**

photo © RHPhotography

Throughout this research, the lack of support is a consistently recurring theme in the research findings.

Removing barriers to career progress has been highlighted in the survey results as needing urgent attention to bring about more significant opportunities and success for Black music creators. The survey results show that 86% of Black music creators feel there are barriers to their progression in the music industry. Furthermore, 82% believe that Black people in their industry are less likely to be promoted than their white counterparts. These rates increase in the responses given by Black women (89%) who believe that there are barriers to progression for Black people in the industry and that promotion and recognition happen less frequently for Black people within the industry (89%).

photo © Jazz refreshed

PROPORTIONS OF BLACK MUSIC CREATORS WHO AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

Statement	%
I have been pigeon-holed into a music genre which is not true to me	**40%**
My music skills/ qualifications have been questioned in detail by people who can influence my career progression	**40%**
I have been paid at a lower rate than other music makers	**41%**
I have watched non-Black contemporaries promoted ahead of me despite them being less qualified	**57%**
I've had to ignore comments that were racist or microaggressive in order to progress	**64%**
I have been ignored, overlooked or dismissed in important conversations about my own music with people who can influence my career progression	**49%**
I have been offered contracts that compare unfavourably with my non-Black contemporaries.	**43%**

There have been incidences of Black music creators being offered unfavourable contracts. With 40% of participants having their musical talent questioned by people in a position to influence their career progression were cited as reasons for this view. In addition, three in five (57%) have watched their non-Black contemporaries be promoted ahead of them despite being less qualified. In addition, 41% were paid at a lower rate than other music makers working on the same event, rising to 44% of Black women. Finally, in considering the barriers to their progression, 40% of the Black music creators felt they were pigeon-holed into a music genre where they disagreed with the genre classification.

THE JOURNEY FOR A BLACK MUSICIAN

The journey for a Black musician can be a treacherous one. Like anyone else in the industry, they're there because they have a passion—a desire to hone their craft into a fulfilling and sustainable career. Many aspects of what it means to have a career in the music industry have changed, though. Nowadays musicians must develop all kinds of new skills to maintain successful careers, from community engagement to social media marketing. There is one skill, however, that is nothing new for Black musicians: survival. When speaking about career sustainability, we often end up discussing issues like work-life balance and company culture. But all too often, long before they can even think of reaching those concerns, Black musicians are inundated with systemic barriers to progression. These barriers often affect them from the very inception of their musical journeys, and from then on they carry the burden wherever they go.

One of the most persistent hurdles that exists for any musician is the cost of participation. The details of this financial impact were recently laid out in a series of social media posts by Protestra, a U.S. based organisation of activist musicians focused on combating systems of injustice. These posts not only pointed out the initial cost of buying an instrument, but also the recurring costs of instrument maintenance, upgrades, private instruction, and higher education. While many may view the costs of musical study as par for the course, there is a larger issue of gatekeeping that must be addressed. On the collegiate level, music festivals, conservatoires, and universities with big names and even bigger price tags open doors to career and networking opportunities for their students and alumni, leaving musicians who may not be able to afford these luxuries out of the picture, and perpetuating a sense of exclusivity. With recent data showing a jarring racial wealth gap among UK families, the consequences of being unable to afford these opportunities disproportionately affect Black musicians. Additionally, the effects of these experiences do not solely impact musicians on the conservatoire level. Professional audition practices such as resume rounds (the act of screening an applicant pool's resumes to determine if they will be invited to audition) no doubt favour those who are able to list "elite" institutions on their applications.

Systemic racism in the music industry, however, is not always rooted in financial inequity. All too often, Black musicians are also fighting stereotypes and navigating an industry culture that isn't particularly welcoming to them. Both implicit and explicit biases permeate many professional environments in the music industry, and often lead to the harassment and racial profiling of Black musicians. This, in turn, makes the working in the industry unsustainable for those who have to endure unjust treatment on a regular basis, and unwelcoming for those looking to establish a career. Additionally, Black musicians are often the only (or one of very few) Black people in their environments, and have no support system in place. While many Black musicians have gone on to create successful and worthwhile initiatives that help make the industry a more welcoming place for future musicians, it should not be their job to create these spaces. Succeeding in a competitive industry requires intense study, and while their peers are able to focus on this, Black musicians are balancing their artistic disciplines with dismantling an inequitable system they did not create. Instead, the onus of recruiting and supporting Black musicians through the systemic barriers they encounter should belong to the music institutions that have upheld these barriers for so long.

Another way in which Black musicians have been excluded is through the music itself. Recent data shows that globally, orchestral repertoire remains overwhelmingly white and male.

The massive underrepresentation of Black composers further perpetuates a narrative that Black people and their artistry do not have a place within the music industry. The frequent erasure of works by Black composers has often been fueled by the desire to erase Black culture from the music audiences hear. In many cases, music that has been inspired by Black culture is deemed "less than," and therefore not performed nearly as often as music by white composers, if ever.

Black Lives in Music an organisation with a focus on advocacy and research in the music industry the latest report cites that the majority (86%) of Black music creators agree that there are existing barriers for Black people in the music industry, and it is important to note that this number consists of those currently working within the industry. The social and economic circumstances that restrict Black musicians are largely only measurable within this group, which does not encompass those who did not make it past barriers earlier in the pipeline. For this reason, and many others, it is essential that we prioritise breaking down barriers at all points. Black creators have brought a wealth of knowledge, talent, and artistry to our lives through music, and we must do all that we can to cultivate as many opportunities for them to thrive as possible.
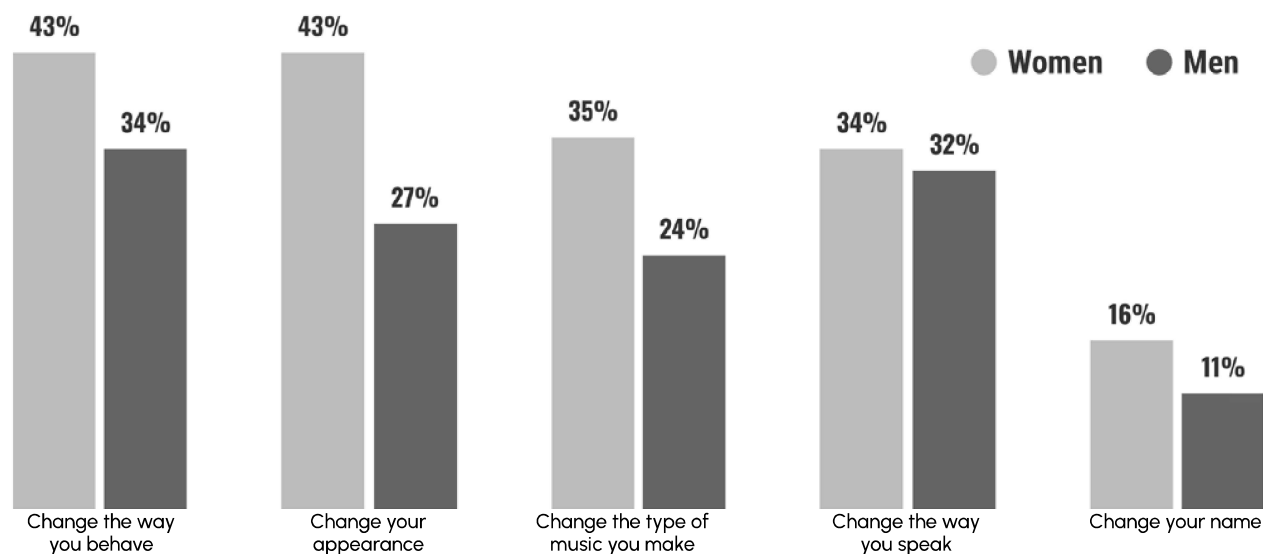
— *Dalanie Harris*

BLACK WOMEN IN MUSIC

The BLiM survey results suggest that in their efforts to combat discrimination and fit in with their external expectations, Black women are more likely to change their behaviour and appearance. Specifically, this is because of one or more aspects of their overall identity related to their ethnicity than Black men. The data shows this is evident in the 43% who reveal that they change the way they behave or the way they speak because of concern about how these characteristics would be received by those who can influence their work and career opportunities. It is also concerning that a further 35% said they felt they needed to change their appearance and 14% felt the need to change their name to reduce the chance of discrimination against them.

It is also concerning are the mental health implications for those Black music creators who reported feeling that they have to ignore comments they perceive to be racist or micro-aggressive (64%) in order to progress in the industry.

Overall, 70% said they felt they had felt the need to change something about themselves in order to get ahead and be accepted by the industry.

PROPORTIONS OF BLACK MUSIC CREATORS WHO HAVE FELT THE NEED TO CHANGE TO BE APPRECIATED

● Women   ● Men

| | 43% | 43% | 35% | 34% | 16% |
| Women/Men | 34% | 27% | 24% | 32% | 11% |

Change the way you behave | Change your appearance | Change the type of music you make | Change the way you speak | Change your name

The data suggests that 43% of Black women have felt the need to change some aspect of their behaviour compared to 34% of men. By extension, 43% of Black women stated that they had changed some part of their appearance or behaviour as a direct result of negative experiences to fit in with industry expectations. Again, this data is direct in comparison to just 27% of Black men.

Such pressure to change their cultural characteristics and behaviour to feel accepted is likely to have adverse effects on their mental health and well-being.

Of more significant concern is the realisation in the survey data that Black female creators have mental health concerns at a disproportionate rate to Black men. Black women are more likely to feel the pressure to alter their identity or another characteristic to assimilate within the industry and make specific changes to themselves than Black men.

42% of Black women say their mental wellbeing has significantly worsened since starting their career in the music industry, and 16% of Black women have sought counselling due to racial abuse. A further 20% haven't sought therapy yet but intend to.

> *"My mental health was the worst while I was signed. I would only sign an admin deal moving forward, and even then, I'd want a Black female A&R."*

> *"All throughout my musical career, I was never good enough... too dark, too young, too slim for a Black singer, too old, we have a Black singer on our label, you're too good for our label, your music is too good for a British Black singer."*

The survey analysis suggests that Black women and Black men within the UK music industry are consistently treated unequally compared to their white counterparts. They highlight why the music industry must work to improve the experiences and opportunities for non-white creators and professionals and bridge the gender gap in a sector heavily dominated by men and particularly white men in general.

These quotes from the survey sum up this statement:

> *"There is also a lack of inclusion for women of colour within the industry and barriers surrounding "marketability". I have observed that it is a very male-dominated field and one that can potentially cause a female artist to feel disempowered and marginalised."*

> *"Black women can't make rock music, sexual comments about the size of my lips, etc., racial comments about my 'crazy, unruly' afro, etc. I don't give these comments my energy anymore but feel it's important that people are aware."*

This comment also resonates with singer-songwriter VV Brown's suggestion to the Guardian (Brown 2021) that *"Black female artists are used, abused, discarded and mistreated. The patterns of disparity are undeniable. Our careers have quicker expiry dates than our white counterparts, and we are not promoted or treated with the same intent. There sometimes seems to be a one-in, one-out rule so rampant it can feel like a factory line of disposable Blackness".*

> *"I think women of colour get it much worse because I feel even though it's hard for Black culture, the men take care of each other, as a woman of colour I feel like a lot of the men only want to communicate with me because they are interested in talking to me for things that have nothing to do with music work, and when they realise they are not going to get what they want from me, they slowly lock-off communications. So I feel like there could be more support systems and opportunities for women of colour and more opportunities for us to support each other like the men do."*

"We can never seem to get through the door, and we are often overlooked at every turn - and if you have kids, it's even worse. The music industry makes it harder for Black women overall, but especially for dark-skinned women who are just as beautiful, radiant, talented, intelligent, driven and credible as the next person! But when we bring these facts to the table, we are often labelled too outspoken, forthright, feisty, aggressive, angry, bitter, argumentative, sensitive, ungrateful and or that we have an inferiority-complex when the truth is we are natural-born leaders who shouldn't have to dumb ourselves down to appease others."

There is a need for support targeted at Black women as suggested here, giving the example of how the situation for Black men is different from that for Black women in the industry.

"I have always wondered if having more female promoters or at the top in the music industry would help combat some barriers for Black female artists."

"Black vocalists - even exceptional ones - don't get the opportunities that white artists do from finding management, agents, to support slots, radio coverage or press. Black female artists are not seen as marketable and thus receive minimal backing from the music industry. This isn't the case in the music charity sector but making that leap from being an aspiring musician to a working musician is very difficult without endorsement from music heavyweights - who in turn don't see Black women as a good commercial investment. Overt and unconscious racism plays a part on top of sexism."

"I believe issues are worse as a Black woman as we have to face different additional harmful stereotypes and discrimination, and the double barriers we face are rarely addressed in women in music."

"Being a valued member of the music community was the most important sign of success to Black female creators in the music industry at 76% next was earning enough to make a living from the music industry (75%)."

CASE STUDY
Carla Marie Williams, songwriter, producer, and founder of GirlsIRate

Now a celebrated songwriter and producer, Carla Marie Williams began her career in a girl group and quickly learnt how the industry treated Black women. "They found it very difficult to market a Black girl group and after the group disbanded, I wanted to move into doing more rock, soul music because I was heavily into writing poetry as a teenager," Williams explains. She found that moving outside of the limited boundaries the industry creates for Black women only hindered her. "They'd hear my music, but then when they'd meet me, they couldn't make the connection between the Black woman wanting to do something alternative."

After losing her voice for a year, Williams began to work with pop production team Xenomania and focused on her career as a songwriter and producer. Despite her success as a songwriter when she began to work as an a&r for a new girl group she again felt the dismissive attitude of the industry and was cut out of key meetings and decisions. "I was young, I was a woman. I was Black, [they thought] I should be singing, what am I trying to do here at this table, having all these opinions. Like, know your place, know your role."

"There's a lot of stereotypes that come with [Black women]. We voice our opinion on things and it's 'she's aggressive, she's difficult, she's this'. We could be saying the same thing as a man, but we will be labelled something different." She adds that the resistance means that Black women rarely get the same amount of support as white women and often have to work much harder to succeed.
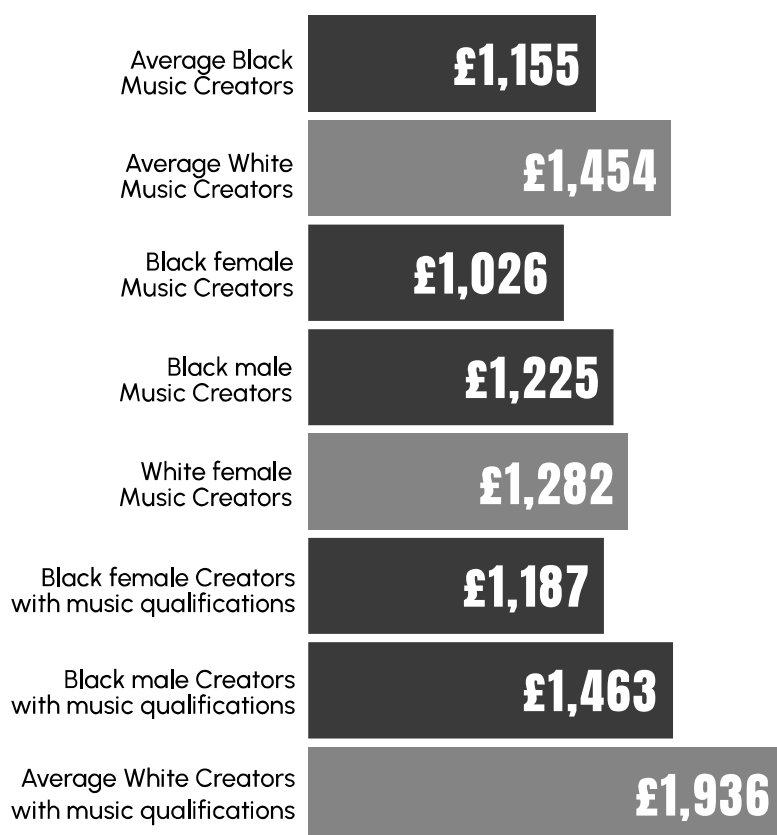
For Williams, a route out of this is for Black women to create spaces of their own much like in the US music industry. "All the women know each other. It's a syndicate, it's a click, they go to these events, they host brunches. In England, everyone's heads down. We don't really support each other in that way."

She adds, "I think it's really important, even if we've got opposition platforms or businesses, that we come together and as women learn how to conversate and support each other because we are probably all going through the same thing."

GENDER AND ETHNIC PAY DISPARITY

Black music creators in the survey reported that they started earning an income from the music industry on average six years prior to 2021. They said further that before Covid-19, they were earning on average £1,155 per month from relevant work in the music industry. This figure compares with the £1,454 on average per month for White music creators. Almost half of the Black music creators surveyed said they have to supplement their income with work outside the music industry.

Category	Amount
Average Black Music Creators	£1,155
Average White Music Creators	£1,454
Black female Music Creators	£1,026
Black male Music Creators	£1,225
White female Music Creators	£1,282
Black female Creators with music qualifications	£1,187
Black male Creators with music qualifications	£1,463
Average White Creators with music qualifications	£1,936

In the gender analysis, Black female creators report earning £1,026 on average. This is less than the £1282 earned by White female creators and £1,225 per month earnings in the industry reported by Black men. This gender difference is consistent when looking at Black women and Black men with qualifications. Black creators with music qualifications earned less at £1,463 than white creators who were paid an average of £1936. Black women with qualifications are paid significantly lower at £1,187.

The relationship between the length of time spent working in the music industry, and the level of earnings does not seem to be linked in the analysis. However, the results show clearly that Black music creators have felt the need to do additional work outside of the industry to supplement their income to provide an adequate standard of living. For nearly half (46%) of Black music creators, less than half of their revenue comes from work within the music industry.

Just 21% of Black music creators earn 100% of their income from music compared to 38% of white music creators. A deeper dive into the data showed that just 19% of Black female creators earn 100% of their income from music compared to 40% of White female music creators. This falls to 17% if you are a Black and disabled music creator. 32% of Black women surveyed reported less than 25% of their income comes from music, this compares to 24% of White female creators who earned less than 25% of their income from music.

MUSIC CREATORS WHO EARN
100% OF THEIR INCOME FROM MUSIC

38%

40%

21%

19%

17%

of all Black
music creators

of Black female
music creators

of Black disabled
music creators

of all White
music creators

of White female
music creators
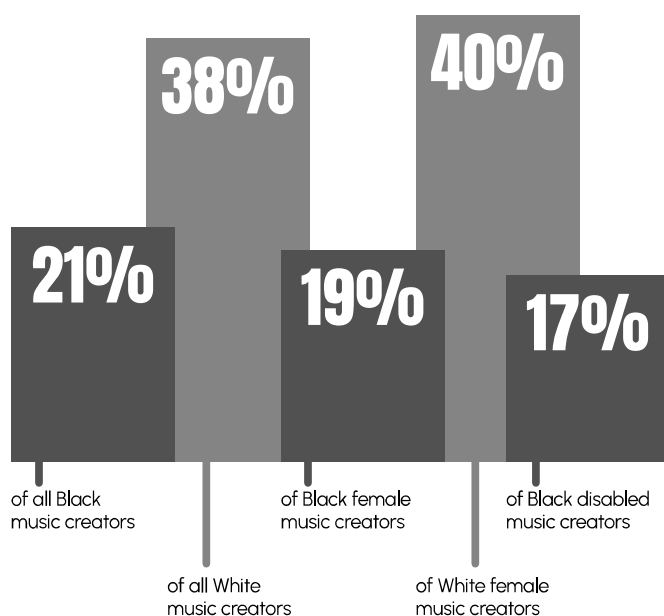
MUSIC CREATORS WHO EARN
LESS THAN 25% OF THEIR INCOME FROM MUSIC

23%

24%

32%

32%

of all Black
music creators

of Black female
music creators

of all White
music creators

of White female
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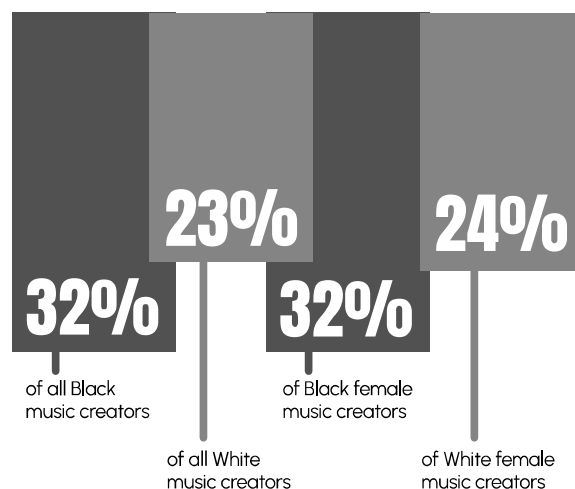
43% of Black music creators agree that they have been offered contracts that compare unfavourably with their non-Black contemporaries.

The most common sources of supplementary income include regular employment outside the music industry (57%), running their own business (18%) and zero-hours contracts outside the music industry (14%) with some respondents finding other ways to supplement employment (11%).

> *"Although my main income is currently a teacher, I'm an instrumentalist/session musician/composer/producer and, like so many have to diversify to survive."*

> *"And even when we are absolutely talented at what we do, we often get the short end of the straw and or just end up saying "f*** it", I'm going to go it alone and make it work for myself."*

WHERE DOES THE REST OF YOUR INCOME COME FROM?
Base: Black creators who earn less than 50% of their income from the music industry

Other 11%

Zero hour contract(s) outside of the music industry 14%

Running my own business 18%

Regular employment outside the music industry 57%
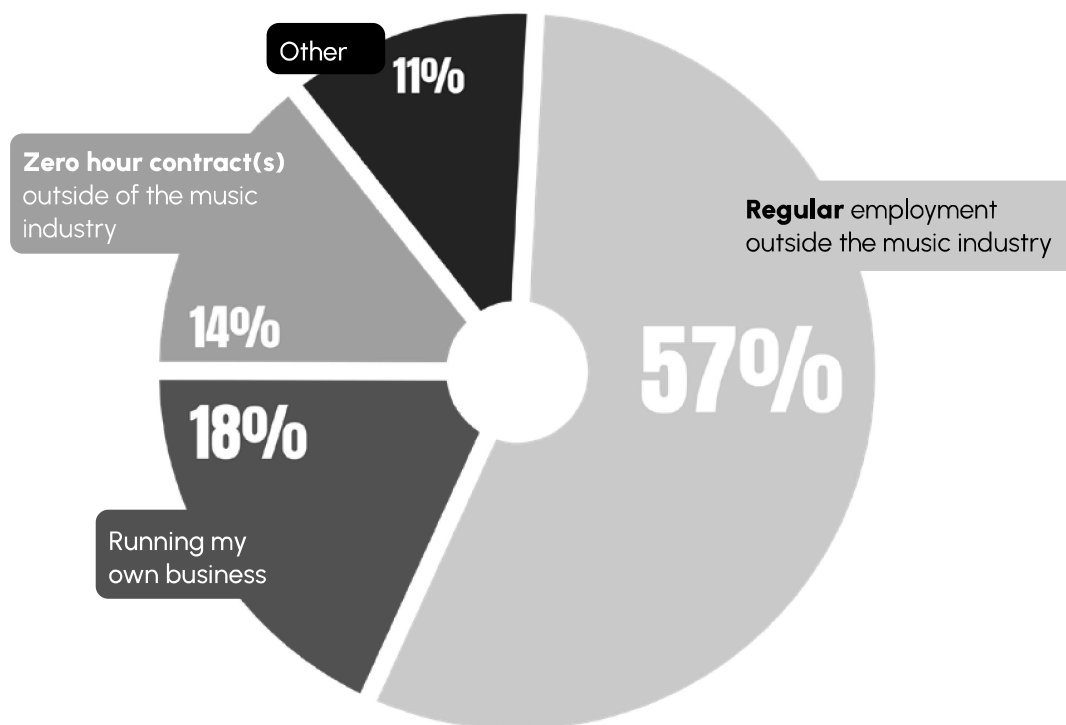
The Black Music Action Coalition's inaugural Music Industry Action Report Card report suggested that some employers' resistance to sharing details about artist contracts, pay rates, employee demographics, and salaries was a challenge to transparency. Yet, that is the most crucial element in making progress as it encourages more companies to take that next step towards honest and transparent dialogue moving forward.

CASE STUDY

Kienda Hoji, law consultant and principle lecturer in media law and music business at University of Westminster

There have been countless examples of Black musicians who have publicly called out their labels for trapping them in unfair, exploitative contracts. For Kienda Hoji, a law consultant and lecturer at University of Westminster, the scourge of unfair contracts being handed out to Black people in the music industry is widespread and the result of both insidious and subconscious practices.

The three key areas that are considered when breaking down these contracts are "how long the agreements are, longevity, secondly investment, and then thirdly, ownership of music ownership of masters of the recorded material," Hoji explains. When an artist is about to be signed, the label will make an assessment of an artist's potential profit and then make an offer in the form of an advance or royalties. Where the problem lies is that a pop artist will often be offered a bigger advance than an r&b artist because Black music genres are, according to Hoji, "very under assessed".

"Various organisations in the music industry don't necessarily possess the knowledge about what the marketability of these artists is," states Hoji, adding that to correctly asses the value of Black music we need to look beyond the boundaries of genre. "If we start to think about the wealth and the amount of potential earnings for music of black origin and black music then we start to see an incredible figure."

The ownership of masters is a huge issue when it comes to contracting as labels often take ownership of Black artists' material for a longer length of time than they would with other genres. "You might find a pop artist being able to negotiate a deal where the label will own the masters for maybe 15 years or so, but regularly with Black artists we're beginning to see a pattern where the masters are owned either in perpetuity, which means for the life of copyright, or for much longer." This gives labels the opportunity to capitalise on Black music through advertising and other avenues without the artists who created the work seeing a penny.

If labels are aware of the potential of Black music and as Hoji states many labels "survive because of these genres" then why hasn't the industry properly reassessed the profitability to music of Black origin. "Therein lies the darker side of the story, because it's not as though they necessarily haven't done that analysis. They potentially do understand the commerciality but they don't reflect that in the way that they contract," Hoji states.
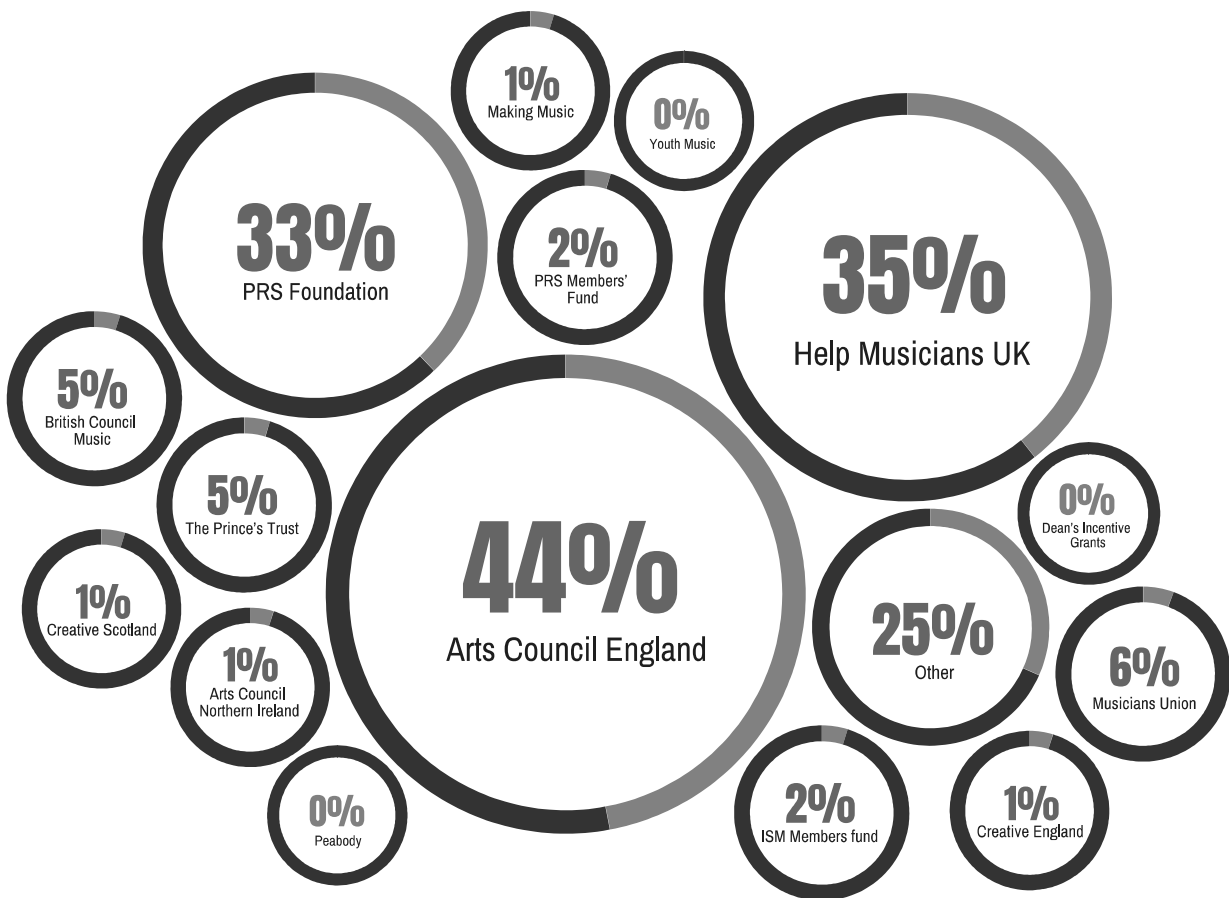
Though the road is long, Hoji believes it is possible for the industry to change and points to record label and publisher BMG's admission that Black artists on their roster were being paid less than white artists as a step forward. "What we're praising BMG for is the fact that they did that without being asked." As for a way forward for the industry and the way it contracts artists, Hoji believes it will take time but will be possible through gathering data on the wealth of the industry, education around systemic racism, and, most importantly, building Black owned infrastructures. "It's a holistic solution that we need, and a holistic approach which also involves us building up our own repository of knowledge about the value of our industry," he states, adding, "Therefore, when we start contracting, we will contract fairly."
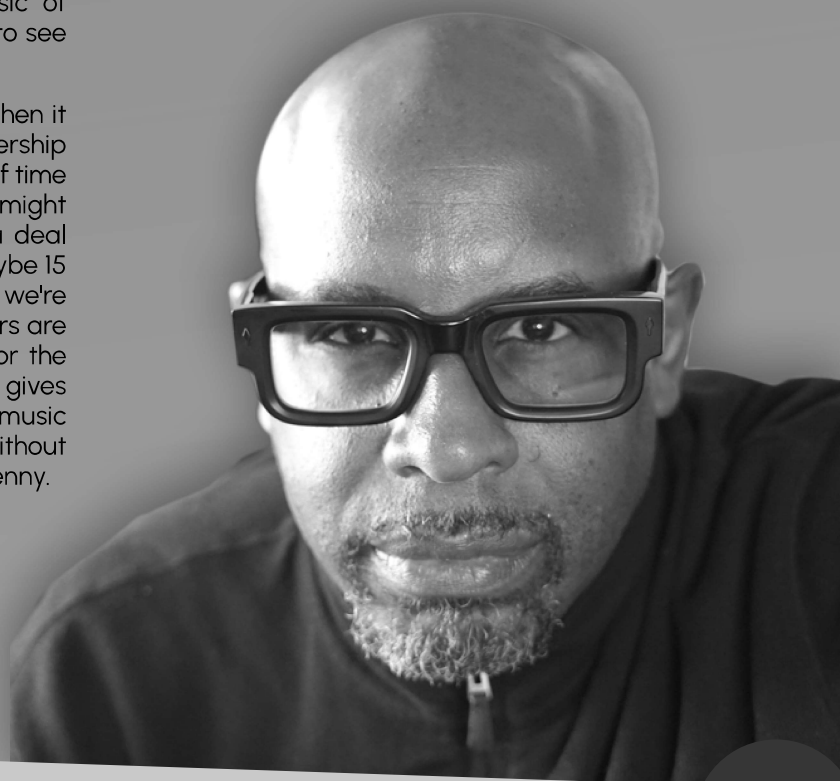
FUNDING

Successful funding application is a valuable source of finances to support music creators and professionals throughout their careers and supplement earnings. However, the Black music creators are not always aware of the sources of funding available, the conditions, the application process and how their applications would be assessed.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING FUNDING BODIES HAVE YOU RECEIVED FUNDING AND GRANTS FROM?

1% Making Music

0% Youth Music

33% PRS Foundation

2% PRS Members' Fund

35% Help Musicians UK

5% British Council Music

5% The Prince's Trust

44% Arts Council England

25% Other

0% Dean's Incentive Grants

6% Musicians Union

1% Creative Scotland

1% Arts Council Northern Ireland

0% Peabody

2% ISM Members fund

1% Creative England

In the survey, half of the Black music creators reported that they applied for funding to support their career in the music industry. This included 34% who had applied for the financing more than once. Whilst there are numerous appropriate funders and funding streams, Arts council England (44%), Help Musicians UK (35%) and PRS Foundation (33%) were identified as the most common funding bodies Black music creators received funding from.

Of those Black music creators who applied for funding, more than half (52%) have had at least one successful application compared with 42% who were unsuccessful. White creators in the survey were more likely to have at least one successful application (72%). 46% of Black female creators had one successful application compared to 74% White female creators who were successful.

BLACK MUSIC CREATORS FUNDING APPLICATION SUCCESS RATE

52% — Black creators with at least one successful application

72% — White creators with at least one successful application

42% — Black creators who were unsuccessful

46% — Black female creators with at least one successful application

74% — White female creators with at least one successful application
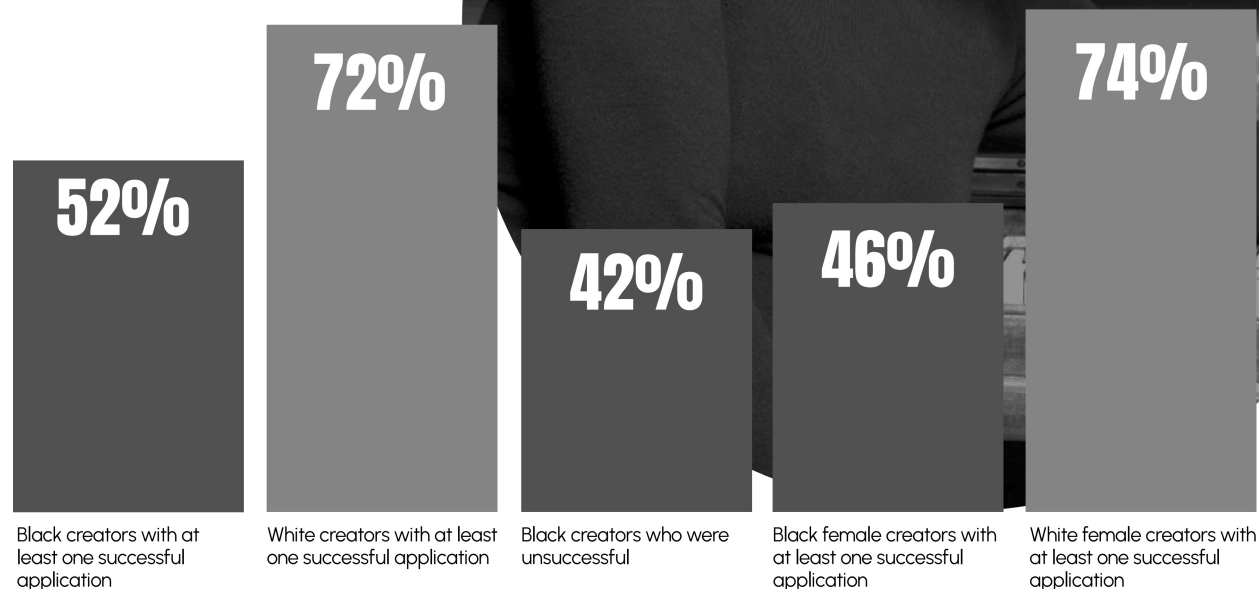
It is evident in the survey results that there is potential for more and better quality funding applications if the knowledge and extra support can be made available to potential applicants. For example, the most common reasons some Black music creators gave for not applying for funding was that they did not know the funding was available (45%) and did not know where to apply (34%). 13% of the Black music creators in the survey who said they had not applied for funding because they felt that funders would not award money to people like them.

This research demonstrates a need for clear information about relevant funders, funding streams, and the application process to be made available to music creators and professionals in a timelier manner. However, even those who were successful with their funding application agreed that the application process was confusing (61%). In addition, more than half (56%) said they became aware of the funding opportunities relatively late, making it difficult for them to meet the application deadline. These may have been factors in the situation where only around a quarter (24%) felt confident their application would be successful.

Inequitable financial rewards were cited in the recent PRS Foundation report (2020). This report highlighted inequitable financial rewards and argued that the mainstream popularity of Black music in the UK means the music industry is profiting from Black music and Black culture's significant impact on the commercial music industry.

Further, it highlighted the effect of systematic racism. Finally, it suggested that this has resulted in the Black music community receiving a disproportionately low share of the financial rewards of Black Music's success.

TOP 5 REASONS
FOR NOT APPLYING FOR FUNDING TO SUPPORT THEIR MUSIC CAREER

45%
I didn't know funding was available to me

34%
I wouldn't know where to apply

24%
I wasn't sure how the application process worked

13%
I didn't need extra support

13%
They never give funding to someone like me

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Sweney (2020) reported that the industry body UK Music published a report in 2020 that claimed that music creators – which include global artists and tens of thousands of other musicians, songwriters and producers – who rely "very heavily" on live music would have their income for the year mostly wiped out. It predicted that "in aggregate over 65% of music creators' income will be lost as a direct consequence of Covid-19, and this could extend to over 80% for those most reliant on live performance," the report said.

Covid-19 has also had impacts on the earnings of those in the music industry. Three in five (67%) Black creators have earned less than usual from the music industry, rising to 68% of White creators. Conversely, just over one in ten (12%) Black music creators say they've earned more during this time. Perhaps surprisingly, this is double that of White creators (6%).

Looking at the survey results, more than half (55%) of those surveyed have had their physical shows or performances cancelled or postponed, and more than a third (38%) have to spend money on buying equipment or instruments to use from home. This issue is likely to drain on financial resources as more than two-thirds (67%) of Black creators report earning less than usual from the music industry compared to just one in ten (12%) who made more during this time.

Moreover, over the past year, the Covid-19 pandemic changed the landscape of traditional work locations and routines. The survey results show that for Black music creators specifically, the impact has been disruptive, with more than half (55%) having had their physical performances and shows cancelled or postponed. Fortunately, nearly half (46%) of Black music creators reported that they have been able to work from home, with over a third (38%) working from studios in their homes.

Others report having to make changes to their career to enable them to carry on working. For example, 11% of Black music creators decided to start their own business, and 10% experienced an increase in their freelancing work. This compares favourably with the results for White music creators, of whom 4% reported that they started their own business, and 5% said that they had seen an increase in their freelancing work.

CAREER CHANGES THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Black music creators who have been able to work from home — **46%**

Black music creators who are able to work from studios in their homes — **38%**

Black music creators who decided to start their own business — **11%**

Black music creators who have increased their freelancing work — **10%**

White music creators who reported that they started their own business — **4%**

White music creators who reported that they had seen an increase in their freelancing work — **5%**

At the time of the survey, there was much debate about the potential take up of the Covid-19 vaccine. Much of the argument was around claims that some Black communities had lower intentions to receive a Covid-19 vaccine. Given the comparatively higher Covid-19 morbidity and mortality rates among Black ethnic groups in the UK, that was of considerable concern.

The survey explored the issue of the extent of vaccine hesitancy amongst Black music creators and Black music professionals and why they would or would not take the vaccine if offered.

For those Black music creators in the survey who were yet to take a Covid-19 vaccine, almost half (45%) of Black music creators said they would take a vaccine if it meant returning to work before they did before the pandemic compared to 20% who would not accept the vaccine. The results suggested that Black music creators were more sceptical than White counterparts, with 66% of white creators indicating they were willing to take a vaccine if offered and only 3% indicating they would not take it.

Given that the situation was constantly changing in a period of great uncertainty, there is limited evidence of the reasons underpinning vaccine hesitancy amongst the Black music creators in the survey. However, when asked why those surveyed wouldn't take a vaccine, at the time of responding and from the options provided, 45% of Black music creators indicated that the reason was that they did not trust the vaccines, 39% said they were worried about the side effects. A similar proportion said they thought the vaccine was not safe.

TOP 5 REASONS WHY BLACK MUSIC CREATORS WERE RELUCTANT TO TAKE A COVID-19 VACCINE

46%	39%	39%	36%	28%
I don't trust the Covid-19 vaccines	I'm worried about side effects	I don't think Covid-19 vaccines are safe	I don't think a vaccine is necessary	I don't think I need it
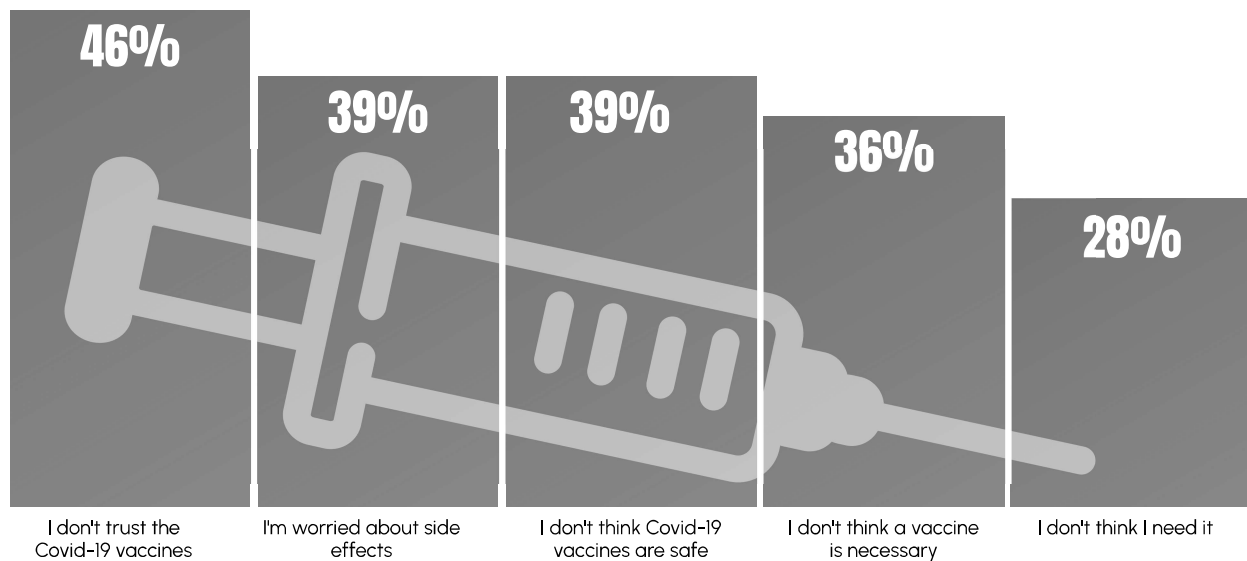
There is a historical element to the Black respondents who do not trust the Covid-19 vaccine. According to Winston Morgan (2020), Director of Impact and Innovation at University of East London, "For Black people both in Africa and in other parts of the world, there is a long legacy of poor medical treatment and questionable practices in drug development, which has negatively impacted them for over a century." Moving away from the historical context, Morgan continues, "There is extensive evidence to show that Black people are not receiving the same level of care in hospital settings as their white counterparts. The classic example is the reluctance of medical practitioners to give Black people pain medication for the same conditions as their white patients. And a key study in the US shows that over 50% of Black people perceive they have been discriminated against in hospital settings, with 43% believing they received poorer care. Most worrying is that 14% felt that doctors and nurses did not want to touch them."

It is important to note that the social and economic situation has changed significantly since the time of the survey, with evidence of being vaccinated being required to enable people in the music and other industries to return to their work as a matter of UK policy. Therefore, it is likely that the responses given at the time of the survey would have altered considerably and are now questionable given that much has changed, and having the vaccine is a mandatory requirement for travel and attending and performing carrying out work related to employment in the music industry.

INTERSECTIONALITY AND DISCRIMINATION

The survey analysis explored intersectionality as an approach to understanding and illuminating the interconnected and interdependent characteristics of participants in the survey. The results highlighted how a person's characteristics and identities combine to create their unique experiences of discrimination. The survey results demonstrate the combination of race and gender in perpetuating the disadvantage experienced by Black women sharing their experiences in the survey. The qualitative comments also highlighted age as a factor:

"I think gender disparity is a compounding issue in relation to race. The bias is against women in radio play and PR coverage, for example"

"The biggest barriers I have witnessed and encountered in this industry have been physical, sexual and emotional abuse. These were at times linked to the victim's ethnicity, gender or disability."

"Ageism within our music industry is also something that really should be discouraged. White musicians are celebrated as they get older, but with us, once you hit 30, you are automatically deemed undesirable. It should be about talent and business, are you a product that can be sold? That's it. In America, it is slightly better, most established rappers are 30 upwards and nobody says anything but here only a few are lucky enough to see success in comparison to the amount of talented 30+-year-olds there are here. We need to ask ourselves why Black music culture is so ageist, what is its purpose and who it benefits."

"There should be a focus on Black women in the industry, who face race/racism, sexism and very often ageism, all at once."

THE INTERSECTION OF RACE, GENDER AND AGE

Intersectionality in the survey results is evident in the many qualitative accounts provided by Black women in particular. The results suggest that whilst race and ethnicity are the primary grounds for discrimination in the survey, gender is a close secondary factor concerning Black women. The interconnection effects of the combination of race and gender are further by the lower pay and lower status in the industry for those women in the survey, demonstrating how these identities, perceptions and experiences combine to create unique experiences of discrimination and oppression. The situation for Black women in the survey is different and more pronounced than that for Black men.

The results highlight, for example, how race and gender, especially for Black women, intersect and overlap to amplify the negative experiences of Black women in the sector. When devising and delivering solutions, consideration should be given to the mental health and well-being consequences of such intersectionality. A focus on race or gender only would not always be appropriate due to the combination of factors that determine the experiences of many Black music creators.

HAVE YOU FACED DISCRIMINATION IN THE INDUSTRY AND ON WHICH BASIS?
BLACK MUSIC INDUSTRY CREATORS (WOMEN ONLY)

61% on the basis of my race

Yes

44% on the basis of my gender

23% on the basis of my age

1% on the basis of my disability

15% on the basis of my class / socio-economic background

8% on the basis of my sexuality
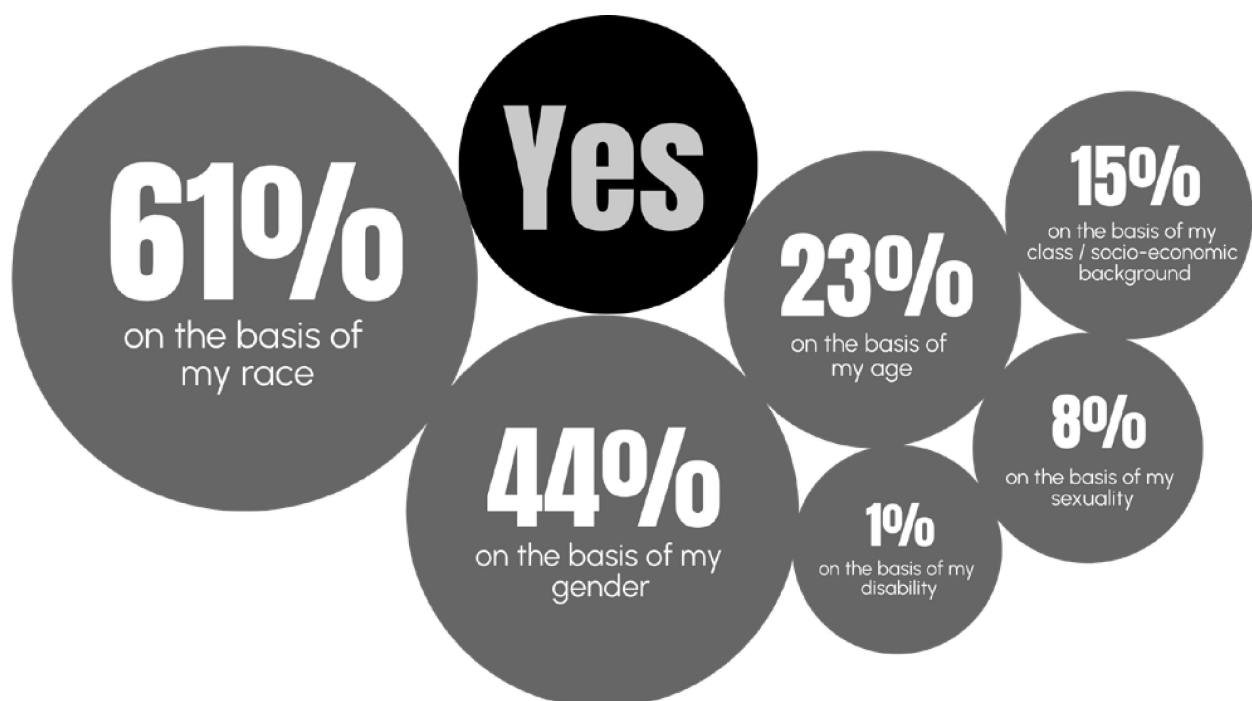
HAVE YOU FACED DISCRIMINATION IN THE INDUSTRY AND ON WHICH BASIS?
ALL BLACK CREATORS

Yes

58% on the basis of my race

6% on the basis of my sexuality

24% on the basis of my gender

20% on the basis of my class / socio-economic background

2% on the basis of my disability

19% on the basis of my age
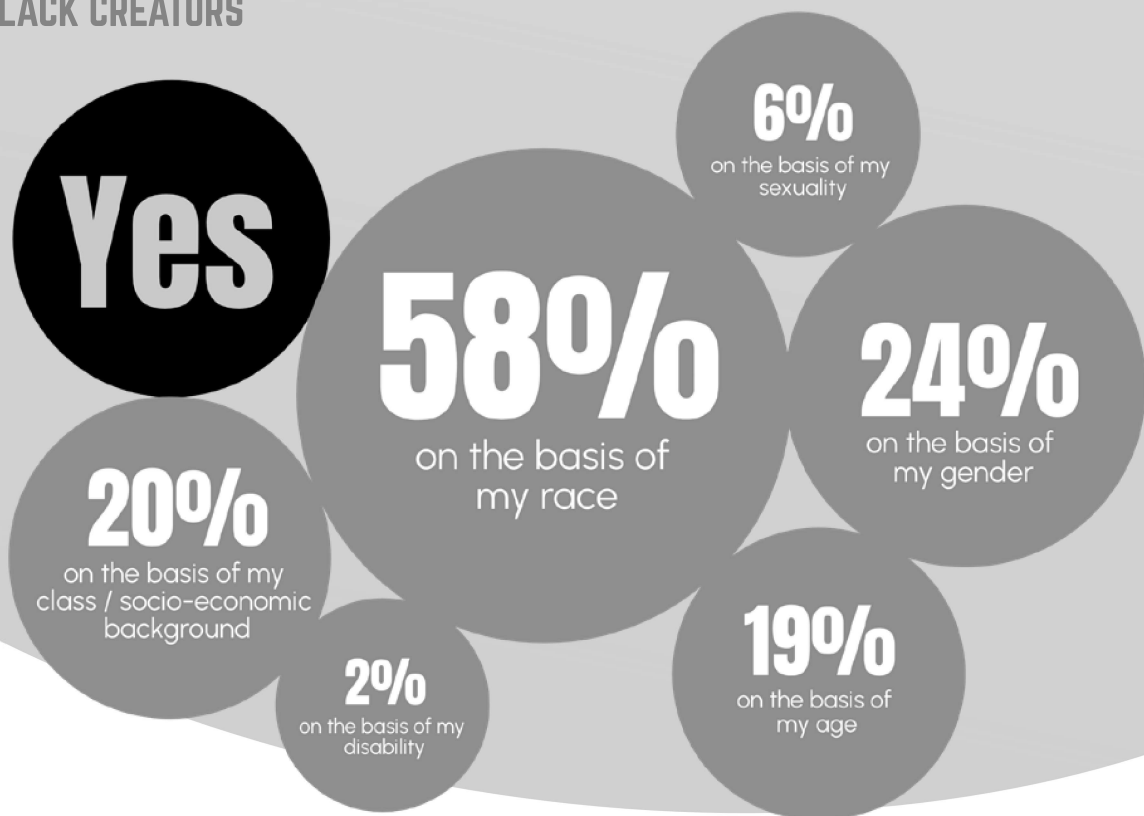
HAVE YOU FACED DISCRIMINATION IN THE INDUSTRY AND ON WHICH BASIS?
ALL BLACK DISABLED MUSIC CREATORS

Yes

9% on the basis of my sexuality

64% on the basis of my race

21% on the basis of my class / socio-economic background

23% on the basis of my age

34% on the basis of my gender

7% on the basis of my disability
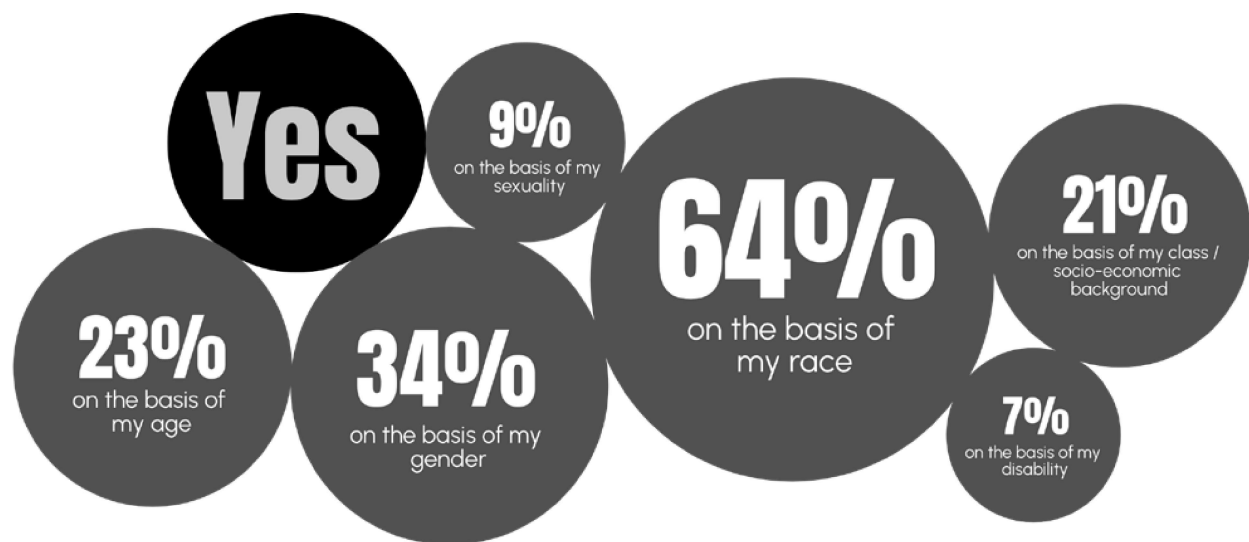
Looking at this data, three in five (65%) of all Black music creators who **identified as disabled** have experienced discrimination due to their **race**. Further to this, 35% of the same respondents experienced gender discrimination. Therefore, just 7% of Black music creators who identified as disabled were subject to discrimination due to their disability.

HAVE YOU FACED DISCRIMINATION IN THE INDUSTRY AND ON WHICH BASIS?
FEMALE BLACK DISABLED MUSIC CREATORS

Yes

61% on the basis of my race

15% on the basis of my class / socio-economic background

23% on the basis of my age

1% on the basis of my disability

44% on the basis of my gender

8% on the basis of my sexuality
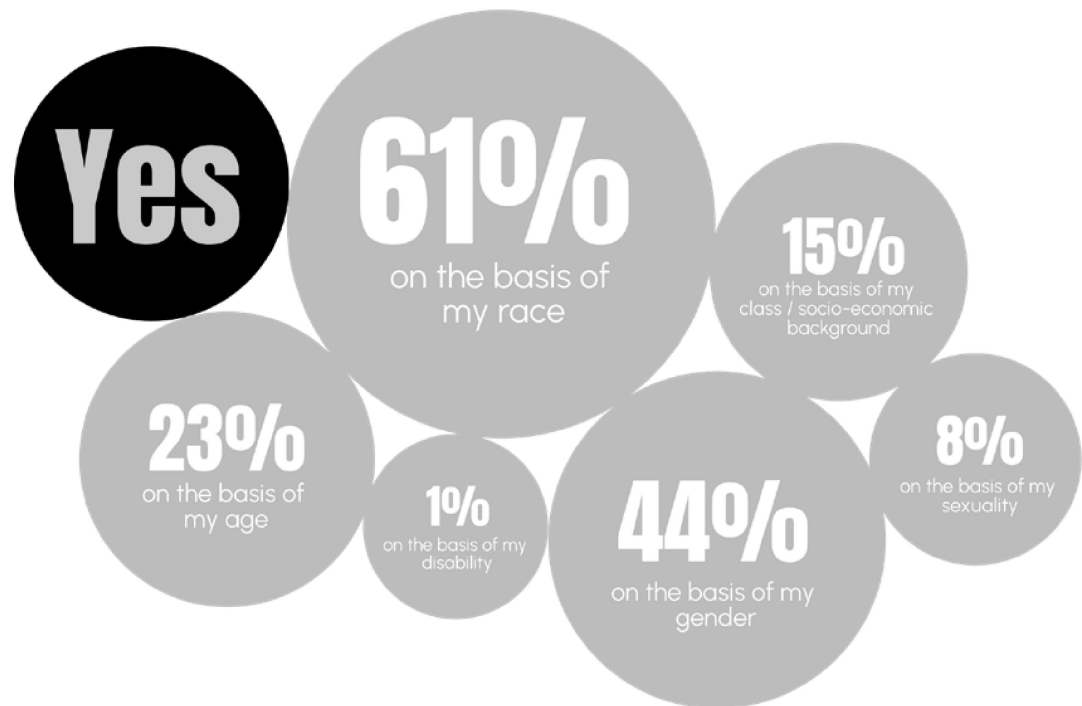
ON WHAT BASIS HAVE YOU FACED DISCRIMINATION IN THE INDUSTRY?
BLACK FEMALE MUSIC CREATORS AGED 35+

Yes

1% on the basis of my disability

27% on the basis of my age

67% on the basis of my race

9% on the basis of my sexuality

15% on the basis of my class / socio-economic background

45% on the basis of my gender
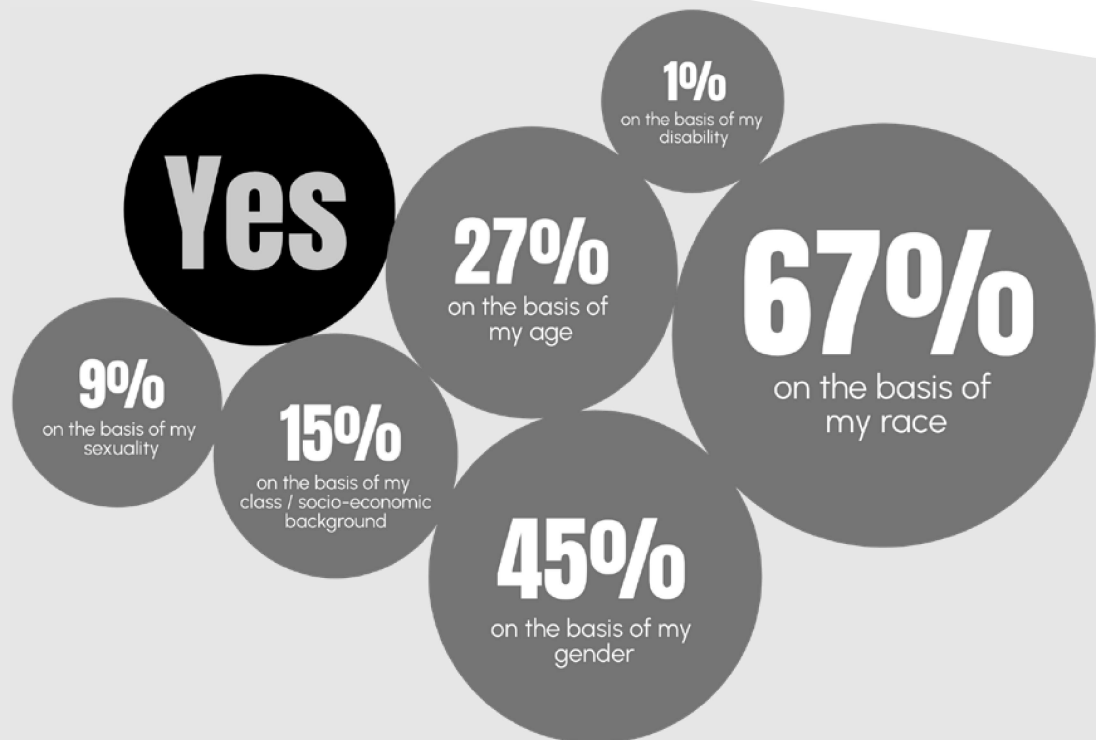
CASE STUDY
Lavender Rodriguez, composer & musician

When composer and musician Lavender Rodriguez began her career, navigating her way through the classical music industry as a queer Black woman quickly began to feel "isolating" in a world that shows a subconscious lenience towards "white male composers".

"There's a certain air about people who play classical music and obviously there's a lot of privilege that comes with that," Rodriguez explains. "There's a lot of trying to play catch up because in order to get some opportunities, you just have to have the money rather than pure talent."

After being diagnosed with ADHD during the pandemic, Rodriguez had to come to terms with the reality that the classical world, full of deadlines and strict rules around conduct, is not equipped for people who are neurodivergent. "There's a way that you sit in concert, you've got to be quiet, everything's very strict and if you don't do x, y, z you're not included," she explains, "The fact that there's all these traditions that we're still trying to grasp on to makes it so hard to make the music accessible to other people because it's been built on this traditionalist mindset of white male privileged people."

The problems in the industry according to Rodriguez start at the beginning with music education. "With this whole traditional atmosphere and attitude, it's very much like if you're going to play music you have to learn music theory and then Mozart, Beethoven, and all the classics, but music has changed so much. They are classics, but there are other people that are classics also and other people that mean a lot more to young children than people that died 400, 500 years ago."

Beyond the limitations of the school system, like many others Rodriguez says being on the receiving end of numerous microaggressions makes for a difficult environment for Black creators. "I found that, at least in my university and other similar organisations, when you're asking for more representation in programming and training on how to be inclusive, it always comes down to money. When that excuse keeps being used over and over you begin to lose hope and then you don't want to work in that environment."

The pressures of working in the industry can impact your mental health. It is a cycle which she sees as embedded in the industry. "We need to make [the industry] more stable, so that people have the time to focus on their health. Otherwise, everyone's health will just keep deteriorating," she explains, also acknowledging that mental health pressures can become more apparent if you're neurodivergent or have a disability, "trying to fit into this fast-paced ableist world, it just needs to be slower."

Ultimately, for Rodriguez, building a more equitable industry means diversity needs to be included at the start of any project and those with power need to educate themselves on the lives and culture of different communities. "As soon as you reach out to other audiences and learn their stories and music, and their traditions, then you can start to change".

EDUCATION

"Equal opportunities are needed across the board, and particularly in supporting diverse and inclusive early-years music education which feeds into high-level programmes ie: Junior conservatoire courses which then feed into conservatoire courses."
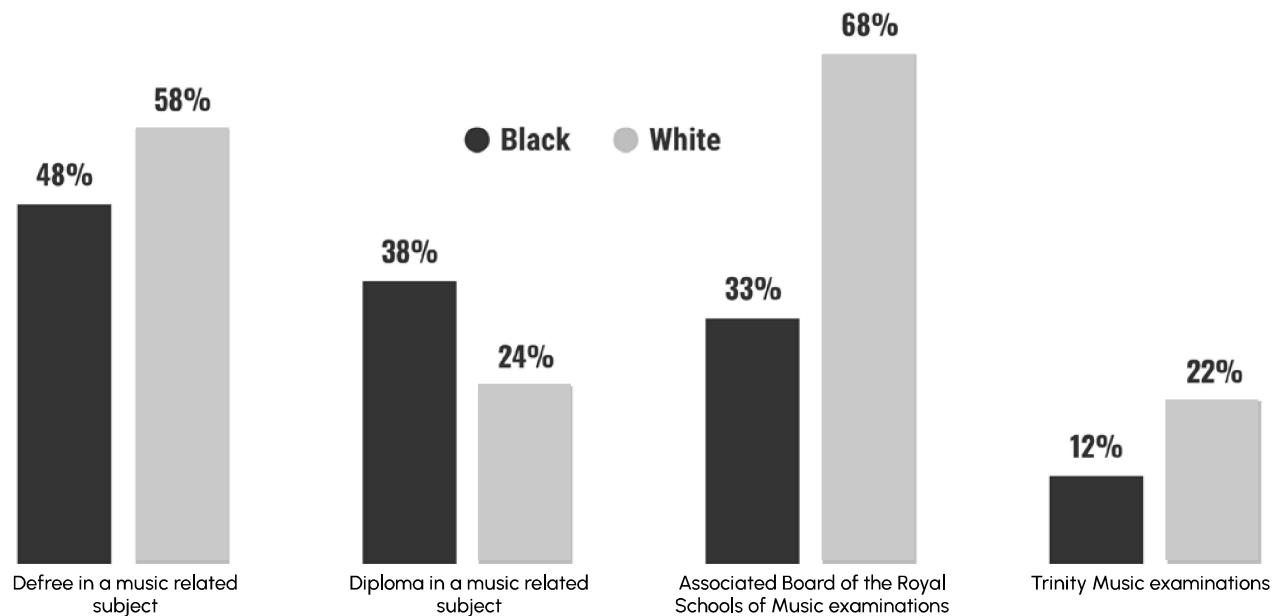
The Music Mark report highlighted the lack of data on music education, noting that within the Arts and Music specifically, there has, until the last decade, been very little research focusing on the music education workforce and governance. The report notes that it is widely acknowledged that music education is an area where systematic change is required to engender better diversity and inclusion. **The Music Mark report cites the revelation that white people wrote 98.8% of pieces on the latest ABRSM syllabus.** Other observations include Black artists in the music industry speaking out about their own experiences of discrimination and pledging support and white artists supporting to bring about this change. The report asserted the need to make music education more inclusive by challenging unconscious bias and systemic and structural racism in the music education sector, recognising that efforts must go beyond tokenism and work towards fundamental, embedded and lasting change.

Previous research on race, the music industry and music education in the UK have been sparse. However, a decade ago, the Music Blueprint, which collected data across the entire music sector in the UK (Creative Blueprint, 2011), suggested that 93% of the industry was white. Blamey et al. (2014) reported that Black and ethnic minority people are under-represented in classical music

education, accounting for only 10% of the studentship in the UK. Similarly, from data on 5 UK conservatoires in 2012/2013, only 8% of students who disclosed their ethnicity were from a Black and minority ethnic background. Scharff (2015) also produced data to suggest that the number of non-white musicians in the classical industry is low. Data collected on 629 musicians from 17 different orchestras revealed that only 11 less than 2% were Black and from an ethnic minority background. Last year the Royal College of Music disclosed that they were still below the benchmark for ethnicity targets to promote a more diverse student intake (RCM, 2020).

Effective representation of young people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and ethnic identities is a particular issue. An ABRSM report (2014) showed that 74% of children from the upper-middle class and middle-class backgrounds had had instrumental lessons compared with only 55% of children from other social backgrounds. Ensuring a solid youth voice element is present in discussions on practice and policy change to ensure that young people have a say in what their music education looks like is essential. Young Black people need to feel empowered to help them achieve and optically for a better reflection of their own identity to be viewed by other races in the music classroom.

DIFFERENCES IN FORMAL OR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY BLACK AND WHITE MUSIC CREATORS

● Black   ○ White

48% / 58% — Defree in a music related subject

38% / 24% — Diploma in a music related subject

33% / 68% — Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examinations

12% / 22% — Trinity Music examinations

The BLiM survey results, consistent with the above research, show little change, suggesting that white music creators are more likely to have formal or professional qualifications that are specific or relevant to their profession than Black music creators. Over half (53%) of Black music creators have formal or professional qualifications relevant to their work in the industry, compared with 78% of their White counterparts.

> *"Western Classical music is still so heavily a part of our education in music and is so inherently white, that it creates an accidental culture where we don't see enough racial diversity in our musical education through school and into University."*

> *"There is an individual who I have come across at the BBC who commissions music projects who questioned whether there are any Black people in the UK who come from a classical musicbackground even in the 21st Century."*

On examining the type of formal qualifications music creators in the survey have, whilst a high proportion (88%) of Black music creators have a music-related degree or other qualification, this is less than the 97% held by the white music creators. Similar proportions of Black men and Black women have a music-related degree or qualification (89% and 88%, respectively).

MUSIC CREATORS' AVERAGE EARNINGS PER MONTH

£1.963 — White creators with music qualifications

£1.463 — Black creators with music qualifications

£1.187 — Black female creators with music qualifications
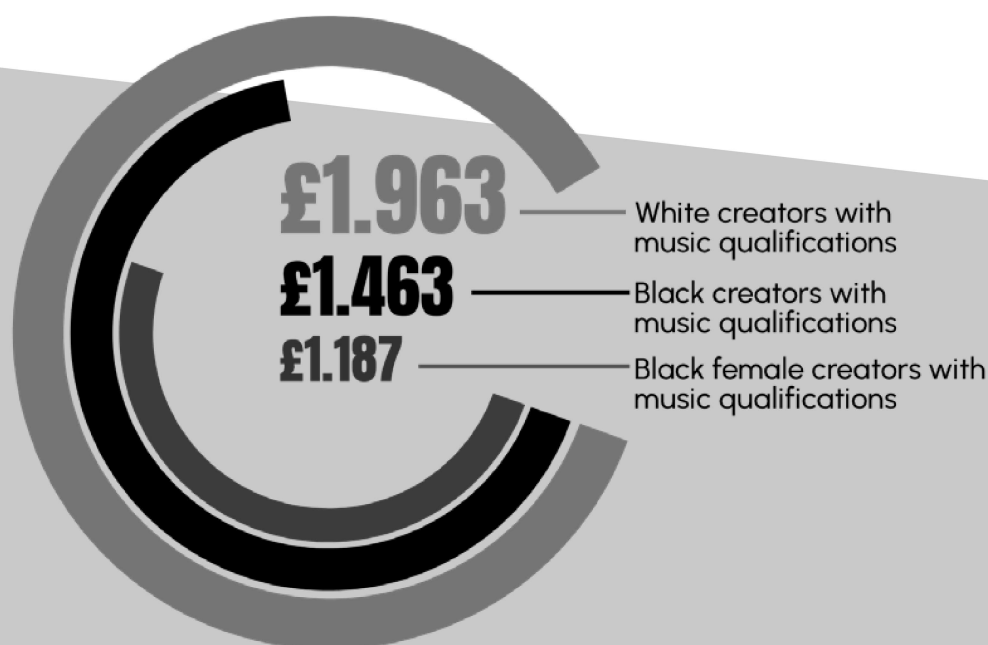
The most common music-related degree for Black music creators in the survey is a degree in a music-related subject (48%), followed by a diploma in a music-related subject (38%), and the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examinations (33%). However, the analysis shows that White creators are almost two times more likely to have a qualification from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examinations and the Trinity Music examinations (68% and 22% respectively).

Black creators with music qualifications earned less at £1,463 per month in comparison with white creators who made £1,936 per month. In addition, Black women with qualifications are paid significantly lower at £1,187 per month.

Whilst this survey did not explore in detail the experiences of music education beyond asking about the level of qualification, there was acknowledgement in the responses that there is a need to use appropriate music education resources, material and content to diversify the curriculum. These factors coupled with researching and refreshing the curriculum content to better reflect a diverse range from different cultures and cultural contexts. This information reinforces the view in the Music Mark report that, as is generally the case with arts and cultural organisations in the UK, music education (and specifically Music Education Hubs) has a significant way to go in terms of embedding fundamental changes concerning Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). Historically the reach of music education could be seen as too narrow and homogenous, with adequate representation of young people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and ethnic identities, a particular issue.

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CASE STUDY
Professor Nate Holder, music education consultant

Beginning his teaching career at the age of 17, music education consultant and professional musician Professor Nate Holder has seen it all. From his perspective there are opportunities for young Black people in the music industry if you're able to make them yourself, but many people are held back by the same glass ceiling that stunt so many Black creatives careers.

He cites an example that has happened to Black musicians he knows who perform with an artist for years and then get replaced once the act get to a bigger stage to increase "global appeal" sell a more marketable image. "When they're ready to take the next step up, it's like, yeah you have dreads. They might not say that explicitly, but you can see how the band changes and who gets replaced by who."

The reality of being in the industry as a sole Black face can be quite lonely. Paired with dealing with the insidious racism in the industry, it can deter many young Black people from getting involved in the music industry. "They see people on TV talking about their experiences and think, 'I don't I don't need that in my life at all," Holder explains, "We need more people at senior leadership and record labels who understand how the decks have been heavily stacked against us for years."

Holder feels that often Black creators are perceived by the industry in a limited way, unable to see the full range of their potential talent. "We're not perceived as being writers, we're not perceived as being people who can really delve into certain issues other than race. If you're a musician you're supposed to play. That's your job. You play saxophone, you're a DJ. You're not a thinker like that."

Creating a more equal industry starts with education for Holder but he notes that many in music education rarely acknowledge how talent forms in Black communities, often in church or in the home. "A lot of kids are incredible musicians, but they never understand what the possibilities

are in the music industry. Their skills at the ages of 15, 16, 17 are never recognised, because they can't read music, they're learning by ear or the music they're playing isn't necessarily understood by the teachers."

Holder's solution to this problem is to decolonise music education and bring music from different genres, such as hip hop, grime, and gospel, into the classroom to help "young black kids, from whatever part of the country, understand who they are and see their heritage reflected in what they learned in music".

He believes that educators should recognise that music education currently is "shaped by whiteness" and that real change will happen when we address "not only what's being taught, but how it's being taught." Beyond these calls for change, Holder wants to see more qualified Black people in positions of power, not just "black people for black people's sake", but people with good track records and innovative ideas."
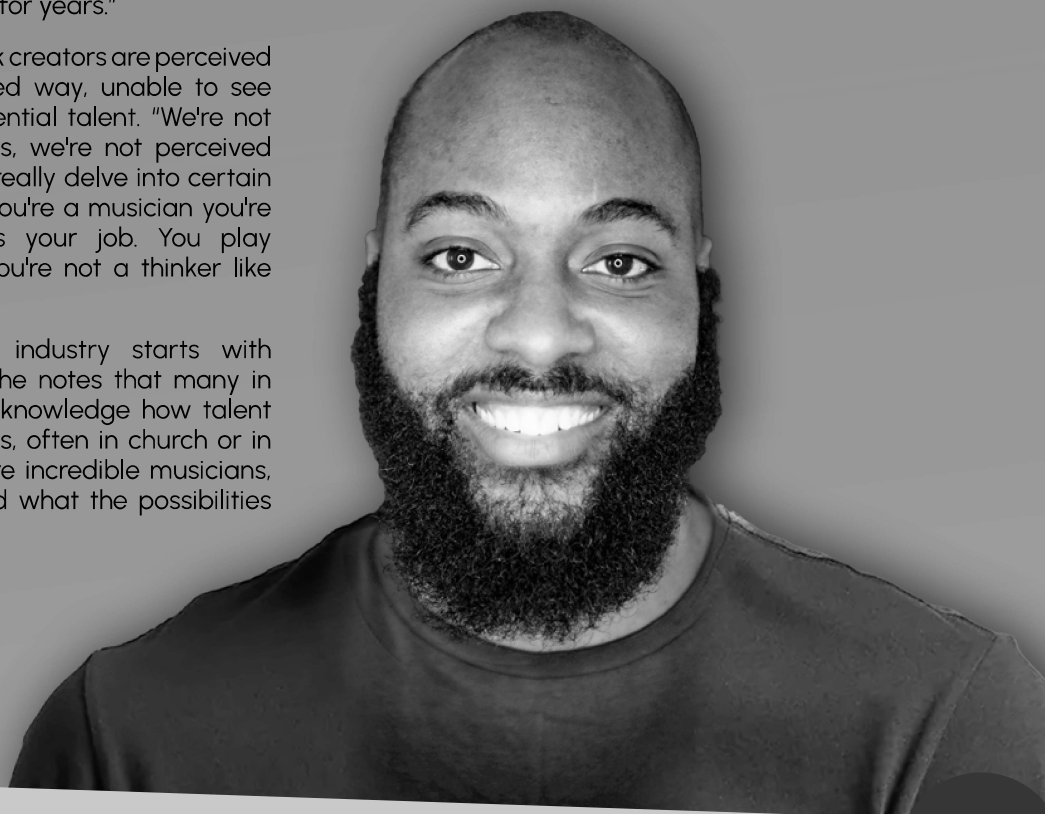
"We need some investment financially in initiatives in classical music for Black Creatives. We need more proactive routes to creating more Black Professors who can work at top levels in classical music in the music colleges and universities. We need more input into creating a proper knowledge of the legacies which Black creatives have brought to classical musical music, through education, broadcasting, artists in residence from abroad and also archives in mainstream organisations."

"As a white person, I have not experienced discrimination directly; however, I have witnessed how race and ethnicity have affected the journeys of friends and colleagues, particularly for Black artists who are also from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds. Access to existing networks and contacts becomes the driving force behind success. Individual success stories of a few Black artists were used to excuse the need for industry change. Reduction of adequate music education in comprehensive schools is further dividing the UK into those who grow up being able to make music and those who never have their music-making aspirations fully resourced."

"Reducing educational inequalities to lay a sustainable foundation for more diversity to emerge and succeed in the music industry. Narrowing the inequality gap comes with reducing costs to access quality music education; equalising standards and resources among music education systems; creating opportunities for socially and economically underprivileged communities; using the power of representation."

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

According to the Mental Health Foundation UK (MEF UK) challenges such as racism, stigma and inequalities can affect the mental health of people from Black and ethnically diverse communities. MEF UK research shows Black and ethnically diverse people can face barriers to getting help due to a lack of awareness regarding mental health. Black and ethnically diverse people were shown not to recognise they have a mental illness because mental health was stigmatised or never talked about in their community. Financial barriers, such as paying for private counselling and not feeling listened to or understood by healthcare professionals and White professionals with regards to their experiences of racism or discrimination, were also cited as barriers to getting help.

In the Help Musicians report *Can Music Make You Sick?* (2016) 71.1% of all respondents believed they had experienced panic attacks and/or high levels of anxiety. In addition, 68.5% reported they had experienced depression.

Depression and anxiety are overwhelmingly highlighted as the primary type of psychological distress experienced by musicians (Raeburn, Hipple, Delaney & Chesky, 2003; Russo, 2009; Gross & Musgrave, 2016; Pecen, Collins & MacNamara, 2018), with other psychological issues presenting such as identity issues (Pecen, Collins & MacNamara, 2018).

BLACK MUSIC CREATORS WHOSE MENTAL WELLBEING HAS DECLINED SINCE STARTING THEIR CAREER IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

31% — All Black music creatots

22% — Black male music creators

42% — Black female music creators
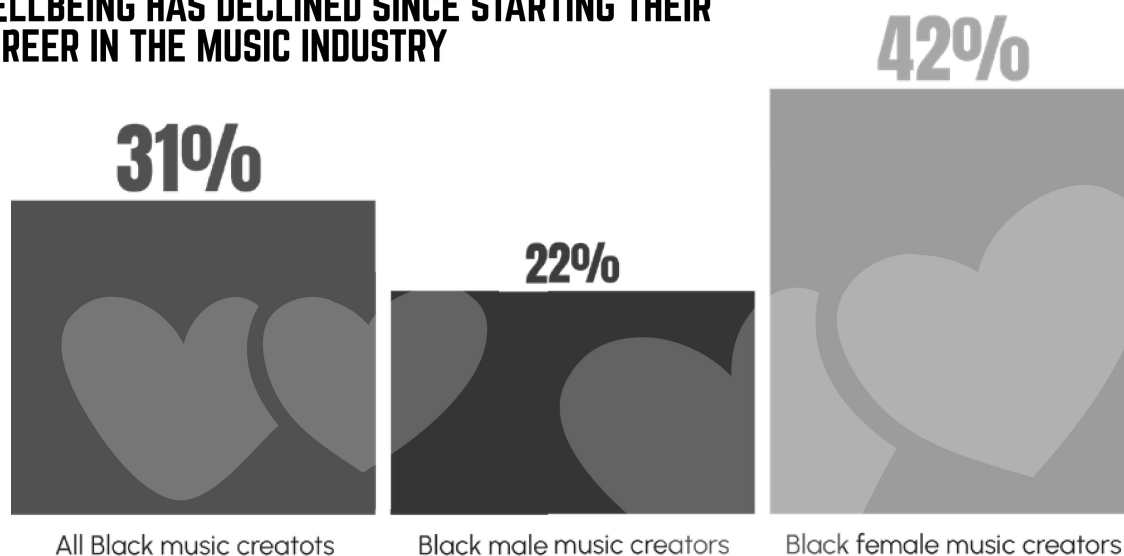
In the survey analysis, Black female creators are more likely than Black men to say their mental wellbeing has worsened since starting their career in the music industry. Nearly one-third (31%) of Black music creators believe their mental wellbeing has deteriorated since starting their music career. White creators also highlighted this issue, suggesting a requirement for a sector-wide programme to address mental health and well-being support. Further, people who had reported having mental health challenges previously now report deterioration in their mental wellbeing. This is especially prominent for Black female creators, where two in five (42%) say their mental wellbeing has declined since starting their music career, almost twice as many as Black men in comparison (22%). The survey results highlight that more effort and resources need to be invested in identifying the real needs of Black women in the sector and make available appropriate mental health support in an easily accessible way.

> *"When you talk about the current state of my mental health compared to when I started, it wasn't linear for me but rather a wave. There have been ups and downs from the beginning, and you learn to adjust, readjust, change direction and move away from negative colleagues."*

In exploring the lived experiences of people within the music sector, the Music Education Hubs report revealed that 'people of colour who identify as Black, Asian or Mixed, from the global majority, experience racial behaviours that can negatively impact their health and well-being.

Looking at the mental health support reported in the survey, Black music creators who received support to improve their mental health and wellbeing are more likely to report improvement in their mental wellbeing (41%) than those who had not received such support. This point demonstrates the urgent need for adequate investment in support and mentoring informed by the specific experiences, which provides choice for individuals to meet the particular needs of Black music creators, particularly women.

This quote highlights it:

> *"I had bad mental health when I started, and in the 2 months then I got much better also because of one of my mentors Spider."*

There is a cautionary note on those Black creators who try to self-manage the mental health challenges. The survey results suggest this is far less effective than having targeted professional support. They also highlight the critical issue of access to knowledge of the kinds of support available, access to such help, support within the workplace to manage the circumstances and affordability of the support when not provided for free.

It was free

Paid for by the NHS

46%

18%

HOW DID YOU FUND THE CHARITY OR RESOURCE THAT YOU USED TO SUPPORT YOUR MENTAL WELLBEING?

15%

I paid for it

11%

10%

It was subsidised

Other

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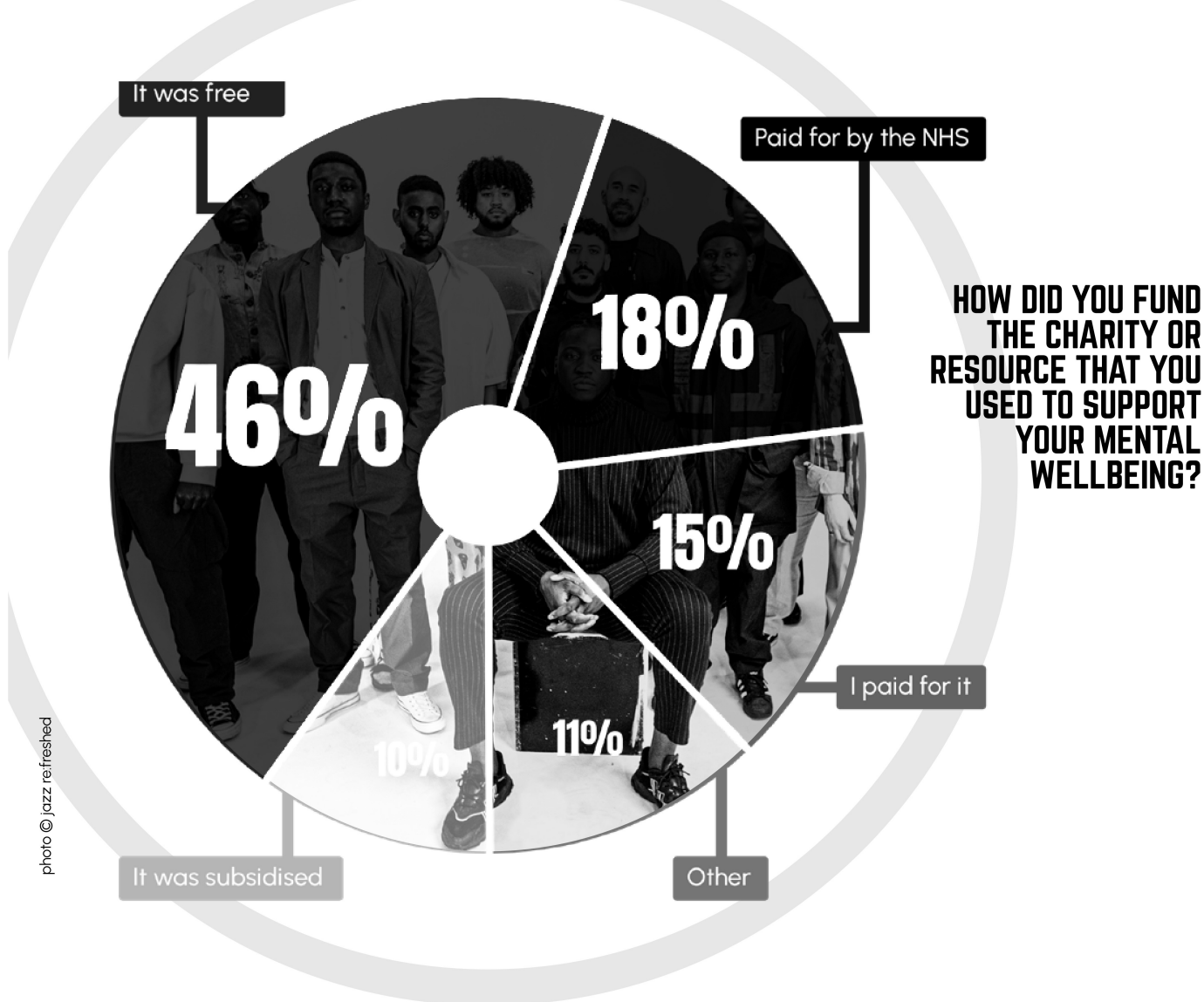
"I am a mixed-heritage, neurodiverse woman who has chronic health conditions as well as mental health issues and have found in the past that some if not all of these issues have held me back from breaking through with my music career. Due to the lack of understanding by fellow musicians, being in male-only/male-dominated communities, not knowing where to get support, or if any even existed, I felt so deflated that I have abandoned two separate attempts to have a music career and returned to a visual arts practice instead. The fact that surveys like this are being conducted gives me some hope of perhaps being able to try one last attempt to become established, and it is important that these issues are recorded, acknowledged and worked through by all of us together."

The experience of racism and the mental health challenges Black music creators face should not be considered isolated factors. The survey identified a clear relationship between the two, with **14% of Black music creators reporting that they have had to seek counselling or therapy directly resulting from the racism they experienced or witnessed in the industry**. A similar proportion indicated that they had not yet sought counselling but would be doing so in the future.

On exploring where participants in the survey sought mental health support, a quarter of Black music creators indicated that they engaged with the services and resources of charitable organisations when seeking help with their mental health and wellbeing. However, only 6% stated that they approached MIND. This point is an unexpectedly small proportion considering the national profile of this charity. Therefore, it is worth investigating whether the cost of support determines whether and where the Black music creators in the survey sought help. Of those who had sought support via charities, 46% said the service they received was free, and 18% said the NHS paid for their treatment. In addition, another 10% said it had been subsidised, 15% self-funded via the charity/resource they used and finally, 11% answered other.

The survey results on this topic highlight that more effort and resources need to be invested in identifying the real needs of Black women in the sector and making appropriate mental health support available in an easily accessible way.

CASE STUDY
by Natasha Hendry, Music Psychologist

Race Barriers, Music and Mental Health

Research in the US suggests that there is an over-whelming 'whiteness' in Western music education, a notion supported by research I carried out earlier this year in the UK. Researchers claim that a favouring of a Eurocentric perspective in the music classroom has gone unchallenged for so long that a culture of whiteness has become normalised. Music students, who like all UK students, are from increasingly diverse backgrounds, are not seeing themselves reflected in the musicians and composers, content or music educators they come across in British music education. Music creators similarly report a lack of representation in their work environments. A sense of 'feeling like you don't belong or fit in' was expressed by musicians and music students from all genres, but more strongly reflected within the Musical Theatre and Classical sectors. According to US research, BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) music students tend to either be forced to conform to norms that 'fit' the culture of whiteness or opt out of music altogether. The potential effect on the presence and quality of experience of BAME individuals in the Music Industry is concerning.

As little research exists on the experiences of the Black and Ethnic Minority population in the music industry in the UK, the BLiM report has gathered much needed data to offer some insight. Survey responses highlighted that many barriers are experienced by BAME music professionals in much the same way as in music education. More worrying is the revelation that the barriers experienced by the BAME population in music are contributing to considerable psychological distress and poor mental health. This was also a prominent finding in my research. Last year a report on BAME teachers in England drew attention to the hidden psychological workload carried by the BAME community in the workplace as they negotiate issues surrounding race as well as barriers to promotion and senior positions. Similarly, findings from the BLiM survey showed that BAME music professionals have an awareness of a lack of representation in senior and 'gate-keeper' roles and experience barriers to career progression. Increased despondency due to a glass-ceiling effect was experienced by participants of this study and mine.

Traditionalism is perhaps one reason behind a lack of change in the classroom, but music education can only reflect diversity if it exists within the music industry. The music sector needs to take responsibility for their part in bringing about change. Several areas of note appear to be of particular help to the BAME community in music, supported by findings from both studies. Support and mentorship seem key. This could involve offering opportunities such as bursaries, scholarships, grants and other funding or support programs and providing access to leading professionals who can provide guidance for training and career development. Additionally, greater visibility of BAME professionals and creators across all sectors, at all levels is desired. More pressing is the need to explore and provide meaningful support for the mental health challenges experienced by Black and Ethnic Minority music creators and professionals, with particular attention to the needs of women in the Industry. No doubt this survey has revealed some important areas of need which hopefully key players who value and wish to support ALL members of the music industry, will respond to.
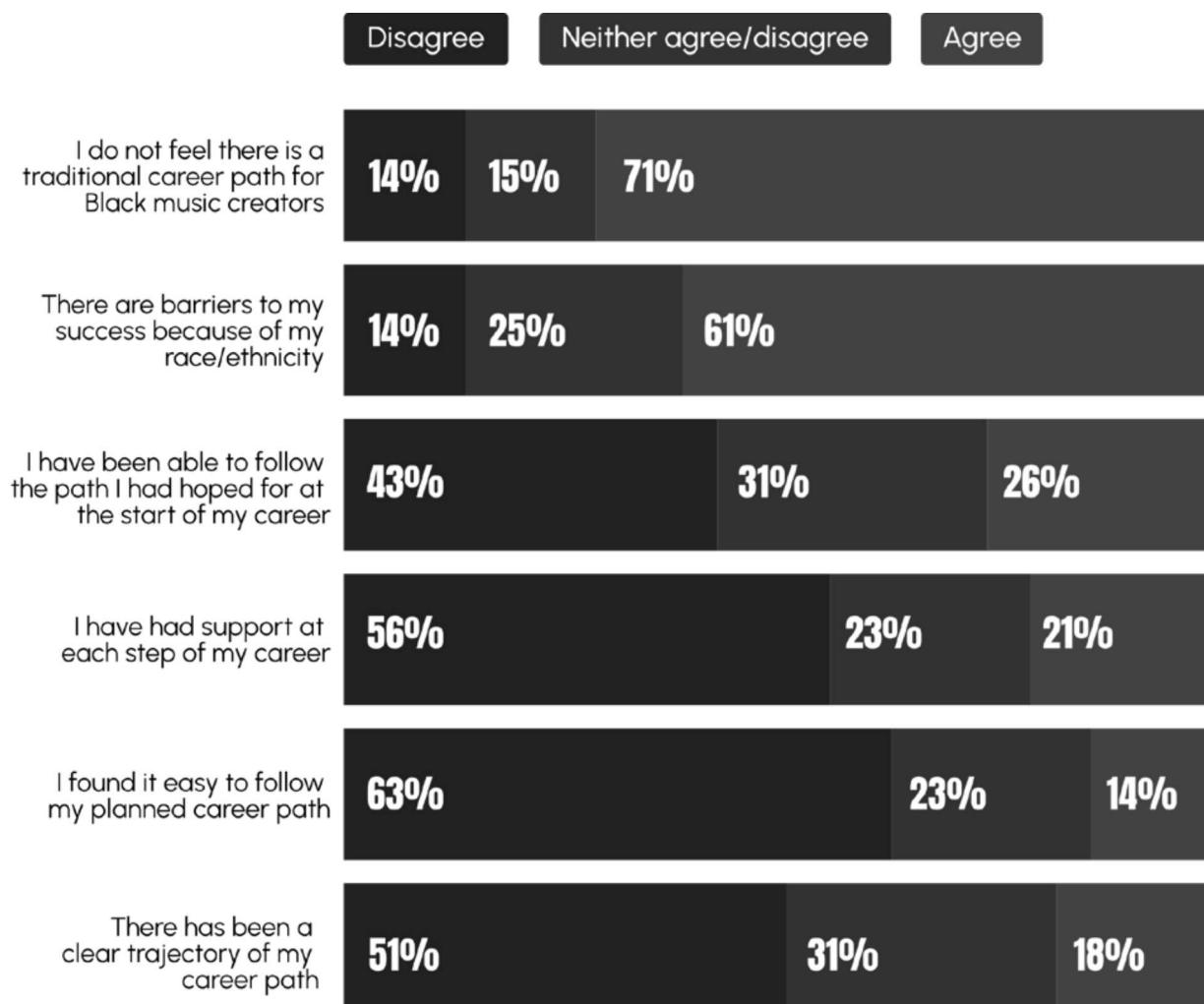
FUTURE THINKING

56% of Black music creators would describe their career within the industry as successful now, compared to 63% of white creators. When asked which factors are the most important signs of success, 'earning enough to make a living from the industry' and 'financial stability' were reported as most important for Black creators, with 71% on both measures. This data is different from the responses from white music creators who rated 'being a valued member of the community' (77%) and 'having a good reputation within the community' (73%) as signs of success in the industry. These findings may indicate areas where Black music creators struggle the most and highlight differences of perspective afforded to white music creators in comparison to Black music creators in terms of thriving or simply surviving.

The most important signs of success for Black creators are...

71%
Earning enough to make a living

71%
Financial stability

70%
Having a legacy/ longevity

68%
Being a valued member of the community

58%
A good reputation within your community

56%
Travelling to perform or as a result of your work in the industry

35%
Performing at most recognised institutions e.g. BBC symphony, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

The above statistics show that earnings, reputation and legacy, community recognition and appreciation and opportunities to perform at prestigious events were among the main signs of success for Black music creators. Those surveyed were generally optimistic about achieving success on these measures, despite the barriers communicated. Eight in ten (80%) of those who say earning enough to make a living is an essential measure of success feel they can achieve it within the industry. While slightly less (79%) believe financial stability is a measure of success, they believe it is achievable.

BLACK MUSIC PROFESSIONALS WHO AGREE/ DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree
I do not feel there is a traditional career path for Black music creators	14%	15%	71%
There are barriers to my success because of my race/ethnicity	14%	25%	61%
I have been able to follow the path I had hoped for at the start of my career	43%	31%	26%
I have had support at each step of my career	56%	23%	21%
I found it easy to follow my planned career path	63%	23%	14%
There has been a clear trajectory of my career path	51%	31%	18%

However, nearly three-quarters of Black music creators in the survey (71%) did not think there was a clear career path for Black music creators, and 61% felt there were specific barriers to their success because of their race or ethnicity. Just under half (43%) said they have not been able to follow the path they had planned to follow at the start of their career. This data is slightly above the 40% of white music creators who said they have been able to follow the career path they had hoped to follow at the start of their career. 32% of white music creators said they had received the support they needed at each step of their career.

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Collaboration remains key to bringing about transformative change in the industry and addressing the inequalities highlighted through this report and others. The UK Music Diversity Taskforce's 10 point plan is an example of this collaborative approach.

The recommendations outlined reflect the issues highlighted in this report. These recommendations were specifically developed to enhance the experiences of both music creators and music professionals at all stages of their careers. In addition, they are intended to support other diversity recommendations for the sector and to be pursued collaboratively by sector employers, organisations and stakeholders.

ADDRESSING THE GENDER AND ETHNIC PAY GAP

1 The Music Industry to implement better transparency around the Gender and Ethnic pay gap by publishing an annual pay gap report – looking at gender and ethnicity – with an accompanying set of commitments to address gaps.

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO PROGRESSION

2 Black Lives in Music partners and the wider music industry, including music education, to allocate budgets and implement a programme and training to increase diverse representation in middle and senior management working towards a quota of 30% diverse (race) and 50% (gender). Progress towards these goals will be reported to Black Lives in Music as part of the annual progress audit.

3 Education, diversity and inclusion/ anti-racism policies and action plans to be in place in every music organisation.

4 Organisations to offer financial Investment into grass root education, mentorship programmes and bursaries for Black Musicians - a list of programmes will be supplied by Black Lives in Music.

5 The wider music industry must commit to advancing equality and inclusion to address the race, gender and intersectional disadvantage and agree implementation of mechanisms to demonstrate the value-added activity supported through the stakeholder relationship. These recommendations could be implemented by working with organisations such as Black Lives in Music, The Black Music Coalition, ADD and Power Up to assist in changing their policies.

MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING AND SPECIALIST SUPPORT

6 Music organisations to conduct workshops, create safe spaces alongside signposting to organisations that work in the area of mental health support specifically for Black music creators and professionals. To work in conjunction with organisations such as Music MITC, Musica Therapy, Black Minds Matter, Music Support and Music Minds Matter.

7 The Music Industry to establish an anti-racism support service to tackle the issue of racism in the music industry. The anti-racism support service will provide a helpline available to Black creators and professionals who experience racism in the music industry. Also, providing referral and in-depth therapeutic support.

A JOINED UP APPROACH TO ERADICATING SYSTEMIC RACISM

8 The Music Industry (recording, trade bodies, education, orchestras and funders) to create an anti-racism manifesto and code of conduct across the music industry supported by the current UK Music 10-point plan. The music industry taking the lead on producing a code of conduct that individuals or organisations working in the music industries will agree to, will be a highly effective way of asserting a new vision to help eradicate racism across the music sector for the benefit of all those who live and work within it.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Ageism - discrimination against individuals because of their age, often based on stereotypes. (The National Multicultural Institute)

Ally - a person who takes action against oppression out of a belief that eliminating oppression will benefit members of targeted groups and advantage groups. Allies acknowledge the disadvantage and oppression of other groups than their own, take supportive action on their behalf, commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in the oppression of these groups, and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression. (Center for Assessment and Policy Development)

Anti-Racism - the work of actively opposing discrimination based on race by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualised approach, which is set up to counter an individual's racist behaviours and impact. (Time's Up)

Bias - a positive or negative inclination towards a person, group, or community; can lead to stereotyping. (Thiederman)

Bullying - intimidating, exclusionary, threatening or hostile behaviour against an individual. (Sierra Club Employee Handbook)

Collusion - when people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression. Example: able-bodied people who object to strategies for making buildings accessible because of the expense. (Adams, Bell and Griffin)

Colourblind is a term used to describe the personal, group, and institutional policies or practices that do not consider race or ethnicity a determining factor. The term "colourblind" de-emphasises or ignores race and ethnicity as a large part of one's identity. (The National Multicultural Institute)

Conscious Bias - in its extreme, is characterised by overt negative behaviour that can be expressed through physical and verbal harassment or through more subtle means such as exclusion.

Cultural Competence - refers to an individual's or an organisation's knowledge and understanding of different cultures and perspectives. It's a measure of an individual's or a workforce's ability to work with people of different nationalities, ethnicities, languages, and religions.

Cultural Sensitivity - being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value. (Southeastern University)

Culture is a social system of meaning and custom developed by a group of people to ensure adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviours and styles of communication. (Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change)

Discrimination - unfavourable or unfair treatment towards an individual or group based on their race, ethnicity, colour, national origin or ancestry, religion, socioeconomic status, education, sex, marital status, parental status, veteran's status, political affiliation, language, age, gender, physical or mental abilities, sexual orientation or gender identity. (Sierra Club Employment Policy, Employee Handbook)

Diversity - psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals; including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organisation is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist. (The National Multicultural Institute)

Equality - evenly distributed access to resources and opportunities necessary for a safe and healthy life; uniform distribution of access to ensure fairness. (Kranich)

Ethnicity - a social construct which divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as values, behavioural patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base. (Adams, Bell and Griffin)

Gender - the socially constructed ideas about behaviour, actions, and roles a particular sex performs. (The National Multicultural Institute)

Gender Identity - a personal conception of one's own gender, often in relation to a gender opposition between masculinity and femininity. Gender expression is how people externally communicate or perform their gender identity to others. (The National Multicultural Institute)

Neurodiversity - refers to the variation in the human brain regarding sociability, learning, attention, mood and other mental functions. (Thomas Amstrong, author of The Power of Neurodiversity: Unleashing the Advantages of Your Differently Wired Brain).

Racism - individual and institutional practices and policies based on the belief that a particular race is superior to others. This belief often results in depriving specific individuals and groups of civil liberties, rights, and other resources, hindering opportunities for social, educational, and political advancement. (The National Multicultural Institute)

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review captures recent efforts to understand the experiences of Black music creators and music industry workers, as well as looking at issues of representation in the UK and US music industries, to foreground Black Lives in Music's 2021 survey of Black music creators in the UK.

This review highlights that systematic racism remains a strong concern for the music industry at all levels, but in particular because of its continuing damaging effects on Black artists and Black music. Intersectionality is highlighted as a particular challenge within the music sector, with gender, and Black women, in particular, experiencing the greatest disadvantage in the industry. This report seeks to draw out the evidence from the survey. Particularly where they relate to the review findings and conclusions in addition to reporting the data in its own right.

Recent research in the US shows that the business side of the music industry is still "A White Man's World" by Horn (2021). The team of researchers from USC's Annenberg (2021) Inclusion Initiative analysed staff profiles at 119 music companies spanning publishing, radio, live music and record labels, capturing information on over 4000 music executives. They found a significant lack of representation of both women and Black people within these companies. This is in stark contrast with the visible gender and ethnic diversity amongst performing artists in the same ecosystem of popular mainstream music5.

There is improvement in the UK – albeit slow – with a more diverse generation of young workers entering the UK music industry. However, according to a series of biennial studies by UK Music (2020), the change is less significant at the top. This is mirrored by an analysis of UK music trade bodies that found just 5 out of 185 seats across 12 boards, and just 2 of a possible 118 employed positions in teams or executive teams at the same trade boards were currently held by Black women.

While there has been an increase of almost 7% for ethnically diverse apprentices and interns according to UK Music (2020) – from 35.2% in 2018 to 42.1% in 2020, making it the most diverse tier of the workforce – the senior workforce was just 2% more diverse at 19.9% in 2020. This is an important distinction, given the possible barriers to career progression and the precarity and low pay of apprenticeships and internships. The most significant increase in ethnic diversity is in entry-level positions (approximately 12%), suggesting that the pathway from apprenticeships and internships is working.

Zooming in on the experiences of Black music creators, a 2021 survey by PRS found that 78% of applicants to a targeted funding scheme for Black creators, Power Up, had experienced racism. Over half of all applicants felt that the industry discriminates against Black artists, and 76% thought that the industry does not invest enough in Black artists. This survey also found that Black women felt disproportionately disadvantaged compared to Black men.

These issues extend beyond the music industries – arts and media centre, Watershed (2021) workforce audit in 2020/21 showed an overall representation of just 2% in 2020/21, increasing from 1% the previous year.

The culmination of these experiences of discrimination, visible under-representation and lack of role models present significant issues for the music industries as negative experiences could deter ethnically diverse, specifically Black, musicians from entering the sector.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In order to address the issues surrounding racism within the British music industry, it is crucial to understand and document historical, institutional and systematic racist practices embedded within the music industry's culture and draw sociopolitical parallels from these findings within British wider society to understand the data collated within this report fully.

Music is the soundtrack to our lives, and this paper will begin by tracking the linage of Black music within the UK over the last century and the influence it has had on British popular culture. As part of this research, Stevens (2021) "Is the UK Music Industry Institutionally Racist? paper helped to contextualise some of the issues surrounding racism that have been prevalent within the UK and, by extension, the British music industry as a mirror of society. Finally, this section will chart the trajectory of Black music from the 1920s to the arrival into Britain of Windrush generation migrants from the Caribbean shortly after the Second World War and from Africa from the 1950s through to today. In tandem, this section will highlight the sociopolitical issues that have affected several generations of Black artists and executives in this country.

The history of Black music in the UK dates back hundreds of years, and acclaimed author, journalist and historian Bradley (2013) intricately charted the linage of Black music in the UK in the last century in his research. This research started from the First World War in 1919 with the birth of Jazz and Blues in the UK. Then through to the Ska, Calypso in the 60s and Soul and Reggae scenes in the 70s and 80s. The evolution of these genres to influencing homegrown fusions of Black Music in new artforms created from first and second-generation Black Brits such as Lovers Rock, Jazz-Funk, Drum n Bass, UK Garage, Dub-Step and Grime. Bradley highlighted the Windrush Generation's arrival in 1948 and Calypsonian Lord Kitchener's now-infamous performance of "London Is The Place For Me" as a seminal moment for Black music in this country that encapsulated the start of mass immigration from the Caribbean. In parallel, the Government reached out to several other Commonwealth nations, including across the African continent, to help with the nation's regeneration after the Second World War.

Unfortunately, the socio-political context that Black artists and executives were forced to navigate throughout the decades has mirrored that of Black people within society. At the Access All Areas webinar (2020) on the topic of racism & diversity in the UK music industry, Unstoppable Music's CEO Ben Wynter made the point that the music industry merely mirrored British society's issues surrounding racism and diversity. Stratton & Zuberi's (2016) cite the race riots in Notting Hill in 1959 that helped birth the world's second-biggest carnival and brought sound-system culture from Jamaica to the UK. In the next decade, Stratton & Zuberi note the Rock Against Racism movement was born in the '70s after issues including housing and unemployment for Black people and the Police's 'sus' tactics indiscriminately harassed young Black males. In addition, the explosion of pirate radio and the emergence of blues party culture throughout the UK throughout the next two decades due to racism, which restricted young Black people from being admitted to predominately white nightclubs. Lee John, the lead singer from the legendary chart-topping British RnB group Imagination, spoke publicly about the insidious racism within this country's music industry in the '80s.

As a consequence of the lack of promotion for Black music genres within the UK from mainstream media outlets, DJ Target (2018) discussed pirate radio's importance and popularity within his book "Grime Kids". Pirate radio stations helped nurture and propel new homegrown Black music genres with hybrid offshoots of House, Reggae & Hip-Hop such as Jungle, UK Garage, Dubstep and Grime in the '90s and '00s. Bradley (2013) highlighted the emergence of pirate radio stations throughout the country playing Black music starting in the 1970s due to the lack of mainstream radio support of genres such as Reggae, Soul and Hip-Hop.

The format of Urban radio in America in the '90s eventually found its way to the UK. With it came Urban music departments with Black music's rebranding to Urban to make it more palatable. Stroud (2018) said the decision to use the term 'Urban' rather than Black came from influential New York radio presenter Frankie Crocker, who was also program director at America's most powerful Black music radio station WBLS. McEboy (2020) says the programming decision was made during Hip-Hop's explosion to convert to the new format to 'Urban' radio stations. The rationale was that the 'Urban' format was less controversial and more acceptable to white corporate advertisers, distancing themselves from the newer, more contentious and political genre.

This new radio format led to Britain's first Black-owned commercial radio network. Known as Choice FM, they operated three FM frequencies in London and Birmingham, helmed by Patrick Berry and Neil Kenlock. However, its Kenlock (2013) view that the Government misled Choice management in the late

90's encouraging them to invest in Digital Radio (DAB) stations rather than pursuing lobbying for a London wide frequency. Due to the slow take up of this new technology and the significant finances behind this investment, the board sold the station to the nation's biggest radio group, Capital, in 2004 to ensure Choice's long-term future. Capital Radio Group was later purchased by Global, which in 2013 rebranded the station from Choice to Capital Xtra.

Consequently, Kenlock believes Global breached OFCOM regulations by watering down the format. These rules required the station to provide music, news and specialist programming for the Afro-Caribbean community of London. Still, Global cut all Reggae, Gospel, RnB and Soca specialist shows, and local news output targeting the Black community. Wolfson (2013) described the changes at Choice FM and the national Black music station BBC Radio 1Xtra, which removed the Black music branding from the station identity as "a purposeful attempt from radio to divorce music from its culture, politics and lineage".

In the 1980s, another new form of Black music was born with House music in Chicago, USA. This new genre exploded in the UK in the early '90s was rebranded as 'Dance' music to make it more palatable to mainstream audiences. Black female vocalists were at the forefront of this new genre exploding in Britain, as Stratton & Zuberi (2016) dissect. However, over the years, as Baggs (2020) uncovered in their report, many Black female vocalists such as Kelli-Leigh were used for their vocal talent. Still, they were replaced by the labels under the guise of not being commercially viable. This unethical practice of either not crediting the original Black female vocalists publically or replacing Black singers with a White female who would lip-sync the vocals, Baggs stated, is sadly commonplace in Dance music over the last two decades. Baggs (2020) quoted Kelli-Leigh, "You get to a point where some things just don't seem like a coincidence anymore. They can't be. You're not acknowledged."

The marginalising of Black female vocalists has been common practice over the years within the British music industry. However, in the last year alone, other high profile Black female vocalists motivated from last year's Black Lives Matter protests after the death of George Floyd felt motivated to tell their story and speak out. For example, Aubrey's (2020) report highlighted the racist experiences that Keisha Buchanan, lead singer of the Sugarbabes, sadly faced that left her tragically needing therapy. In another incident, Beaumont-Thomas (2020) highlighted former X-Factor contestant Alexandra Burke's awful story. Throughout her career, she was asked to conform to European standards of beauty by white music executives. Burke stated that she was advised to "bleach her skin, not wear braided hair and tailor her music to a White audience".

In the early 2000s, Black music artists from both the UK and internationally had their ability to perform live in London restricted by the Metropolitan Police. The Police then pressured venues to comply with this policy, and hundreds of high profile events from mainly Black independent promoters were cancelled at the last minute across the country for over twelve years with no explanation based on the race of the performers. According to Nerssessian (2017), the Met Police launched a risk assessment form known by its code of '696' in 2005, specifically targeted events that featured DJs or artists from various Black music genres such as Hip-Hop, Reggae and Grime. The format of this risk assessment was then further duplicated by Police forces in the nations major cities. Thankfully, after a decade of campaigning, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, called for a review of the racist policy. Consequently, the Met Police and other forces around the UK then abolished the controversial risk assessment just four years ago.

Artists complaining about unfair contracts have been prevalent throughout the history of recorded music. Back (2000) stated that "Soul singers often received shoddy treatment from label owners and were too often subjected to crass exploitation". In 2020 Leight (2020) reported that "there are myriad of techniques that the music industry, run predominantly by rich White executives uses to profit off Black art". With BMG's recorded music and publishing division, Savage (2020) states that "BMG uncovered evidence that some black artists were paid less than their white counterparts". Savage cites BMG CEO Hartwig Masuch commenting that "virtually all pop and rock music has its roots in Black music, yet music's history books are littered with tales of discriminatory treatment of Black musicians".

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS