



Network for Capacity Building of European
Independent Music Publishers

“The IMPF Network Project”

Creative Europe

Project Summary



Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Work Package 1 – Project Management & Coordination | 4 |
| Work Package 2 – Networking Events | 4 |
| Work Package 3 – Music Publisher International Development Grants | 5 |
| Work Package 4 – Training & Digital Transition..... | 6 |
| Work Package 5 – Data Collection & Digital Tools | 6 |
| Work Package 6 – Music Publishing Advocacy | 7 |
| Work Package 7 – Communication & Dissemination | 8 |

Introduction

In March 2022, the Independent Music Publishers International Forum (IMPF) launched a new 3-year project led by IMPF and funded by **Creative Europe**, known as the '**Network for Capacity Building of European Independent Music Publishers Project**' – or the '**IMPF Network Project**'. The project was funded through the Creative Europe Networks call, which aims to enhance the capacity of the European cultural and creative sectors by supporting the projects of multi-country, membership-based networks.

The objectives and activities of the project are wide-ranging and have been designed to meet the needs identified during three rounds of consultations with IMPF members. Almost all activities will promote and/or require the **active participation of all European members**, with some activities being member-run.

The key objectives of the project are: to **build the capacity** of independent music publishers and writers, so they can face common challenges, prosper and grow on an international level; to empower independent publishers to **innovate for a greener, fairer and more transparent music ecosystem**; to support IMPF's members **across Europe and globally**, enhancing the knowledge and ability of IMPF members to better deal with the **digital transition**; and to **nurture new talent** among writers, composers, and creative professionals.

These objectives will be implemented through seven thematic 'work packages', which represent the main sub-divisions of the project, and are described in detail in the following sections. These work packages cover the **management and coordination** of the project, as well as:

- **yearly networking events** to be hosted by IMPF members;
- **Music Publisher International Development Grants** to be given to IMPF members to promote international development and contribute to a swift post-Covid recovery;
- four **training webinars** each year on digitalisation and innovation, free for all IMPF members, as well as **software and services to assist with the digital transition**;
- **data collection**, e.g., on digital and radio usage of European works, and **research activities**, to build the capacity of IMPF members and strengthen the sector;
- **advocacy** on behalf of the sector, to create a fairer environment for the independent music publishing community.

By providing European music publishers with the necessary tools and means of innovation, this project will work towards a more level playing field between independent European publishers and the global multinationals. While the project is primarily European, the project's impact will also be felt further afield, both in European Neighbourhood countries and across the global IMPF membership, with a particular view to promoting the internationalisation of European works and encouraging the need for professional, digitally empowered music publishers further afield. IMPF will also strive to grow the network, to increase its representation and help to create the change that is needed in the industry – being independent does not mean being alone.

The project has been designed with specific values in mind, in order to ensure that its activities are carried out as **environmentally responsibly** as possible, and that **diversity** and a **gender balance** are achieved in the project.

Further details on the project's activities and how to get involved are outlined here, including the goals of each work package and provisional timelines.

Work Package 1 – Project Management & Coordination

This WP (work package) includes all **key aspects of the implementation of the project**, from planning, internal communications, materials, the organisation and dissemination of Open Calls, evaluation, reporting, and other management tasks.

Regarding the implementation of actions directly managed by IMPF, **continuous communications** between the Network Project staff and IMPF's members will be a priority, so as to ensure that the relevant actions, such as the data collection and advocacy work, will always reflect the members' ongoing needs throughout the project. For more information on the project's communications plan, see Work Package 7.

This WP will be carried out by a senior management team throughout the full **36 months** of the project, complementing all other WPs and their activities.

Work Package 2 – Networking Events

This WP focuses on one of the two member-run activities of the project. Each year, IMPF members will be invited to organise a **networking event in an EU Member State** so as to raise awareness of the full scope and importance on music publishing itself, while targeting a significant number of professionals from the music sector that can **meet, exchange and network**. The events will also aim to foster new talent by highlighting new emerging artists.

Holding these events in different European countries will ensure that all IMPF members as well as those in acceding countries and European Neighbourhoods, can come and meet the IMPF community while **sharing best practices and innovation news**.

IMPF members in countries that participate in Creative Europe will be invited to submit proposals through an **Open Call**.

- The events will be held **once a year** (three events over the course of the project) in different decentralised locations, aiming for 100 physical participants and online participants
- Each networking event can take on different dimensions, such as a **conference**, a **boutique show-case festival**, a **co-creation residency**, or other networking formats
- IMPF European members can **apply either individually or in regional consortiums**
- Each event will have a **co-financing rate of 80/20** – the maximum amount received from IMPF will be **€40000**, to which the applicants would invest **€10 000** for a maximum event budget of **€50 000**
- The events should foster new talent by **showcasing emerging artists where relevant**
- Applicants will need to adhere to all the basic IMPF Network objectives on issues such as diversity and environmentally responsible policies
- Each event should strive to **achieve a gender balance** with regard to participants and should have dedicated panels on topics such as ways to fight the gender gap in music

It is IMPF's intention that, with its assistance and by seeking other sources of funding, these events will be able to continue running in subsequent years, thus providing the music publishing community with **three new conferences** across the continent, which is a particularly relevant goal given the cancellation of MIDEM. Furthermore, this WP's environmental footprint is mitigated, not only because each event will be **hybrid with online activities**, but since each will be held in different areas of the continent, members can travel less while attending at least one event in the course of the three-year project.

The first Open Call will be launched in **April 2022**, with evaluation and selection by the following with the same calendar being followed in the subsequent two years of the project. It is foreseen that the **first event** will take place in the last quarter of 2022.

Work Package 3 – Music Publisher International Development Grants

This WP includes all tasks involved with the implementation of the **Music Publisher International Development grants**. Each year, IMPF will award **15 grants to IMPF members to assist with financing to engage in cross-border activities**, such as attending conferences, cross-border songwriting sessions and residencies, and organising capacity building workshops. Such a mechanism has never been available to European music publishers before and will be a valuable tool to **build capacity** in the sector.

The fundamental objectives of this activity are not only to **finance new creative projects and emerging artists**, but also to assist European independent music publishers as they face the financial losses arising from the pandemic. The WP will also address the **gap in cross-border promotion, representation**, and **A&R** for smaller publishing companies across Europe.

Invitations for grant proposals will be given in the form of an annual **Open Call**. Each year, 15 grants will be co-financed, with a **maximum grant of €6 000** and a co-financing rate of 80/20, meaning a maximum project budget of **€7 500**. During each year, to ensure that funding is spread out among a **diverse** number of companies and geographies, we will try to ensure that no country will receive two awards – the 15 grants will go to **15 different countries**.

The artists/creators involved in the projects must be **emerging artists**,¹ and from the 15 Music Publisher International Development projects each year, at least **10 must include emerging artists**, and some of the International Development projects may be exclusively aimed for music publishing staff. IMPF will work with ECSA in maximising the domino effect of this element of the Project.

The Open Call will be written in such a way as to encourage a strong focus on the **environment**, and IMPF will strive to achieve a **gender balance** of participants.

The first Open Call for the Music Publisher International Development Grants will be published in **April 2022**, with evaluation and selection taking place shortly thereafter.

¹ According to the following definition: any artist or songwriter with a career under five years from the date of first commercial release, with a promising career arch but no top 20 successes in their home market, not having yet earned over 20 000 € in yearly royalties from their songs and synchs, and no major international synch placements in advertising or film.

Work Package 4 – Training & Digital Transition

This WP focuses on members' training in digitalisation and innovation, with the key objective of allowing IMPF members to **acquire the skills and software** necessary for **streamlined, modern work processes and operations**. It is the central 'knowledge transfer' aspect of the project, and it aims to allow smaller companies, no matter what market they are based in, to compete globally with a complete set of all the administrative and creative tools required to reach the market on a par with bigger multinational companies. The WP involves two main elements:

- The organisation of **four webinars each year, free for all IMPF members**, on topics such as APIs, data analysis etc. to encourage innovation. These webinars will be recorded and made available to all IMPF members with permissions.
- The project will **fund software and services** to assist members with the digital transition in their operations. IMPF members will be able to gain access to innovative software, such as AI-powered tagging and playlisting software and royalty accounting services, at a **discounted rate**.

Experts will deliver each webinar within the training module. These training webinars will be undertaken online, thus avoiding the need for travel and **reducing the project's carbon footprint**. Furthermore, the project staff will strive to achieve **gender balance** in each webinar.

The first webinar of WP4, on the topic of online music streaming, was held on 3rd March with a gender-balanced group of experts offering their views on how to grow the music streaming revenue pie and make its distribution fairer and more transparent. The event drew 35 participants.

A **forthcoming survey** aimed at helping the IMPF project team to identify the best software and services to offer to members will be available by **Q3 2022**.

Work Package 5 – Data Collection & Digital Tools

This work package includes all activities carried out by the IMPF project team pertaining to **data collection and analysis**, as well as **research-related activities**. The Network will acquire the tools required to inform members on usage, ensuring that our sector has the data it needs to guide its actions most effectively.

The IMPF Network will identify on an annual basis what the best data sources are to monitor European works usage. The Network will contract **services** in digital usage, playlisting, radio monitoring and other usages of European repertoire, with the data being processed by the IMPF team and **made freely available in the most useful form for all IMPF Network members**.

The data collection team will also focus on new trends and the effective internationalisation of European works beyond Europe, leading to positive trends in European export.

By aiming to **streamline data analysis operations** at IMPF, rather than having multiple data transfer lines between the platforms and our members, both **financial and environmental costs will be reduced**.

Work on this WP **commenced in March 2022** and will continue for the duration of the project.

Work Package 6 – Music Publishing Advocacy

This work package is a cornerstone of the project, involving all the advocacy work of IMPF, as well as research and reporting on key topics. The independent music publishing industry faces several disadvantages, with dramatic changes in the music industry (particularly the advent of digitally delivered music) leading to a reduction in revenue for writers, artists, and publishers. This WP aims to ensure that independent publishers are heard by all lawmakers in order to produce lasting change.

Due to the European scope of the Network Project, the focus of the advocacy in WP6 will be on the issues and challenges currently facing the EU music publishing sphere. This includes supporting the interests of rightsholders and publishers as regards the EU Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act, along with other key issues, such as the payments to publishers and songwriters relative to label; buy-outs; credits due etc.. The advocacy, although primarily focused on European affairs, will have a positive effect on the music publishing industry across the world due to the global influence of the Brussels' legislative agenda.

Through WP6, the IMPF team will strive to create a fairer environment for the independent music publishing community. To achieve this, IMPF will pursue a realistic, macro-regional approach, threading a line between promoting opportunities and mitigating the worst aspects of those who seek to undervalue and underpay our writers, composers and publishers. This work will involve:

- Ongoing **identification of the status quo** on several topics, ranging from buy-outs and lyrics licensing to net neutrality, the implementation of the DSM Directive, and the economics of streaming.
- **Advocacy work**, including meetings and communication, whether physical or virtual, writing letters and general advocacy work with the EU, national governments, CMOs, CISAC, WIPO, etc.
- **Advocacy reporting** – IMPF will report on all Advocacy efforts

To ensure the most effective results, IMPF will continue to collaborate with its many supporting entities and fellow organisations. This partnership with like-minded organisations in the rightsholders sphere is critically important. IMPF is an associate member of **CISAC** (International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers) and **ICMP** (International Confederation of Music Publishers) and works closely with the CMO members of CISAC at a national level. IMPF also works with **IMPALA**, **ECSA** and **GESAC** on European affairs. IMPF has a memorandum of understanding with **AIMP** (Association of Independent Music Publishers), a charter of cooperation with **IMPEL**, the licensing hub for independent music publishers, and a strategic alliance with **The Ivors Academy** to strengthen ties between music creators and publishers. IMPF also liaises at an international level with **CIAM** (International Council of Music Creators) in this regard. IMPF is a member of **WIPO for Creators** and sits on the **WIPO Standing Committee for Copyright and Related Rights**. IMPF is a stakeholder to the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights of the **European Union Intellectual Property Office** and is also a member of the **Pro Music International Coalition** which promotes the myriad ways people can enjoy music safely and legitimately online.

This WP will be carried out **throughout the full three years** of the project.

Work Package 7 – Communication & Dissemination

This work package includes all the communication and dissemination activities of the IMPF Network project. It aims to spread the word about the project to the **entire music publishing community**. This is being handled jointly by **PR people** dedicated to this work package. IMPF will also ask its members, as well as supporting entities such as IMPALA, ECSA, CISAC, etc., to further disseminate communications concerning the project, in order to attain maximum reach.

Meetings with the project team and external PR consultants are being held on a bi-monthly basis, to ensure that all the activities of the project are effectively communicated to both the wider music publishing community, through press releases and social media, and to IMPF members. These regular meetings will continue to ensure that stakeholder engagement is fully achieved, and all members are aware of the opportunities provided by the Network Project and have every opportunity to actively participate.

A dedicated website for the project is due to launch in late March and, following the soft launch via press release on March 01, the full launch of the Project took place in Lisbon at the General Assembly on March 25th.

For further information contact secretariat@impforum.org

<http://www.impforum.org/>



INDEPENDENT MUSIC PUBLISHERS
INTERNATIONAL FORUM



Co-funded by
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IMPF serves as a global network and meeting place for independent music publishers to share experiences and best practices; exchange information on the legal framework and music publishing environment and to coordinate actions and support projects relevant to songwriters, composers, and music publishers. IMPF represents the interests of the independent music publishing community internationally and aims to ensure a favourable environment for artistic, cultural, linguistic, and commercial diversity. www.impforum.org