



the global trade body for independent music publishers

The Palma Summit 2026: Record crowds, big questions and a shared message of collaboration

The fifth edition of The Palma Summit brought more than 750 representatives of the independent music publishing and creator community from 6 to 8 October. That is a long way from the 150 people who came to the first Summit in 2022.

Opening the event, IMPF President Annette Barrett said the idea behind it hasn't changed: independent publishers deserve a place to meet and do business together. "Today, we're over 750 delegates from every corner of the world," she said. "Their words, their melodies, their composition and creativity are the reason we get to do this."

The business of music

BMI CEO Mike O'Neill opened the programme by interviewing Music Business Worldwide founder Tim Ingham. Ingham argued that big music companies are under pressure to deliver quick returns, and that this leaves room for independents to become the place where new copyrights are created. Later, a creators panel led by songwriter Jamie Hartman, with Cutfather, Sacha Skarbek, Pam Sheyne and publisher Sarah Liversedge Platz, showed why that long-term partnership matters. Cutfather said a connected publisher gave him access that "would have taken me 100 years" to find alone.

Japan in focus

Japan was this year's spotlight territory, with sessions on both publishing and sync. MPAA Chairman Hiroyuki Tachimoto told delegates that Japan is not the closed market people assume. His advice was to start with co-writing, because J-Pop song structure has developed on its own path. Tatsuro Hirano noted that Japan is the world's second largest music market, and Vincent Degiorgio of Cymba Music Publishing said patience pays off: a song written in Toronto eight years ago is now being cut by a Japanese girl group.

Money, rates and rights

Fred Davis of The Raine Group told a panel on accessing capital that "there has never been a better time to raise money in music". Doug Colton pointed out that co-publishing deals let smaller companies buy catalogues they couldn't afford alone. The NMPA's Danielle Aguirre updated delegates on the US mechanical rate proceedings. Rates set in the US only apply there, but they influence negotiations around the world. A Reed Smith, NMPA and AIMP panel with Robert Levine looked at what US termination rights could mean for worldwide copyright.

Collaboration and data

Collaboration was the theme of the day, and it came up in almost every session. Curve Royalty Systems CEO Richard Leach said "interdependence" describes the sector better than "independence". CISAC Chair Dean Ormston marked CISAC's 100th anniversary and spoke of a partnership approach to collective management. Panels with ECSA, JASRAC, BumaStemra, SACEM, SGAE, The MLC and others kept returning to the same point: better metadata means faster and fairer payment. Spotify's Magali Clavier said that with a clean copyright picture, "we would pay the next day". IMPEL launched its new Becon data system with BMAT, and IMPF and IMPEL launched an updated Digital Licensing Handbook.

AI

IMPF AI Working Group Co-Chair Jennifer Mitchell updated delegates on IMPF's work on attribution and compensation, including the joint sandbox project with IMPEL and Sureel AI. Tamay Aykut of Sureel said there is a "measurement gap" that leads to a value gap, and that licensors should demand to understand what AI models are actually doing. Linda Collin of Rights Intelligence urged the industry not to repeat the mistakes made with social media.

Sync day

The final day turned to sync. Dan Butler of The Walt Disney Studios spoke about the value of dealing directly with the decision-maker at an independent publisher. Emmy-nominated music supervisor Matt Biffa talked about the soundtrack to Hacks. The Music Supervisor Roundtable, organised by On Music, 22D Music and Reel Muzik Werks, challenged supervisors to pick the best song for a scene. Vickie Nauman of CrossBorderWorks closed the conference with a look at gaming, where 49% of players say they want to discover more music.

Closing the week

The Summit ended with a playback party for the Palma Songwriting Camp. This year's camp was run for the first time with ECSA and brought together 20 writers for four days of co-writing. ECSA President Helienne Lindvall said that when you put talented people together, "incredible things can happen".

About IMPF

IMPF is the global trade body exclusively representing independent music publishers, advocating for 300+ companies worldwide. Our members account for 26% of global market share and our mission is to help stimulate a more favourable business environment for music publishers and the songwriters and composers they represent. www.impforum.org



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IMPF is the global trade and advocacy body for independent music publishers. IMPF helps to stimulate a more favourable business environment in different territories and jurisdictions for artistic, cultural, and commercial diversity for its music publisher members and the songwriters and composers they represent. www.impforum.org