

Written evidence submitted by Oliver Julian

I am a composer whose income is made in part from streaming soundtracks to the TV shows I score. The income from royalties has always offset the low fees we get up front to do the work, whether these are performance royalties or publishing royalties. Since no one really buys physical media anymore, streaming is really the only source of income for the work we have done, aside from broadcast royalties, and this is where our soundtracks and albums now live once they have been aired. However, given the number of listeners this kind of niche creates, the money earned from streaming is negligible, as the system seems to be geared to only generate real amounts of income for bigger artists.

Therefore I feel the following steps must be taken:

1. The streaming model must be equitable, fair, transparent, efficient, and pro-creator.
2. It must value the songwriter and performer contribution to streaming more highly.
3. It must include checks on the dominance of major music corporations on streaming marketing, licensing and distribution of streaming royalties.
4. It must stop information being hidden that enables conflicts of interest and prevents creators and performers understanding what they're being paid and why.
5. It must include modernised royalty distribution systems to stop bad and missing metadata, and mis-allocated payments.
6. It must create the strongest environment for UK creators and ensuring UK songwriters, composers and performers do not fall behind on basic rights and protections.

This has also had an impact on consumer tastes; the small interface of a streaming platform can never reproduce the breadth and variety of music that could be experienced in a shop, so inevitably traffic is drawn to the big hitters, exacerbated by algorithm generated playlists based on music you already listen to. This will inevitably narrow the scope and focus the listener on what they "should" like rather than what they "could" like. Therefore there should be oversight so that algorithms are not biased, and provide equal access to the streaming market for all artists, songwriters and performers regardless of whether they are signed or not. Furthermore, there should be full auditing and disclosure of the relationships between rights owners (music publishers and record labels) and streaming platforms to expose agreements, marketing partnerships and non-licence revenues.