BEING BLACK
IN THE UK
MUSIC INDUSTRY

JUST THE DATA

MUSIC INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS - 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**
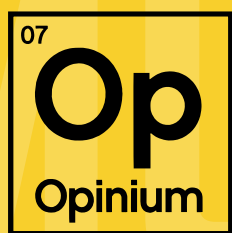
07 Op Opinium

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
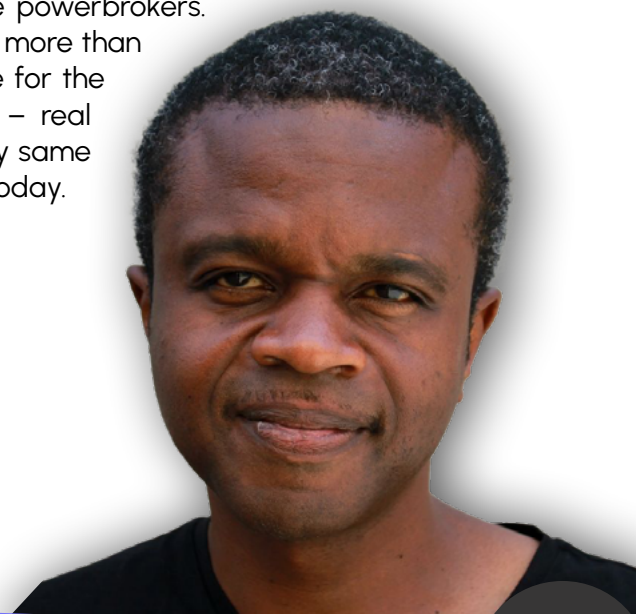
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

TABLE OF CONTENT

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 70% 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.
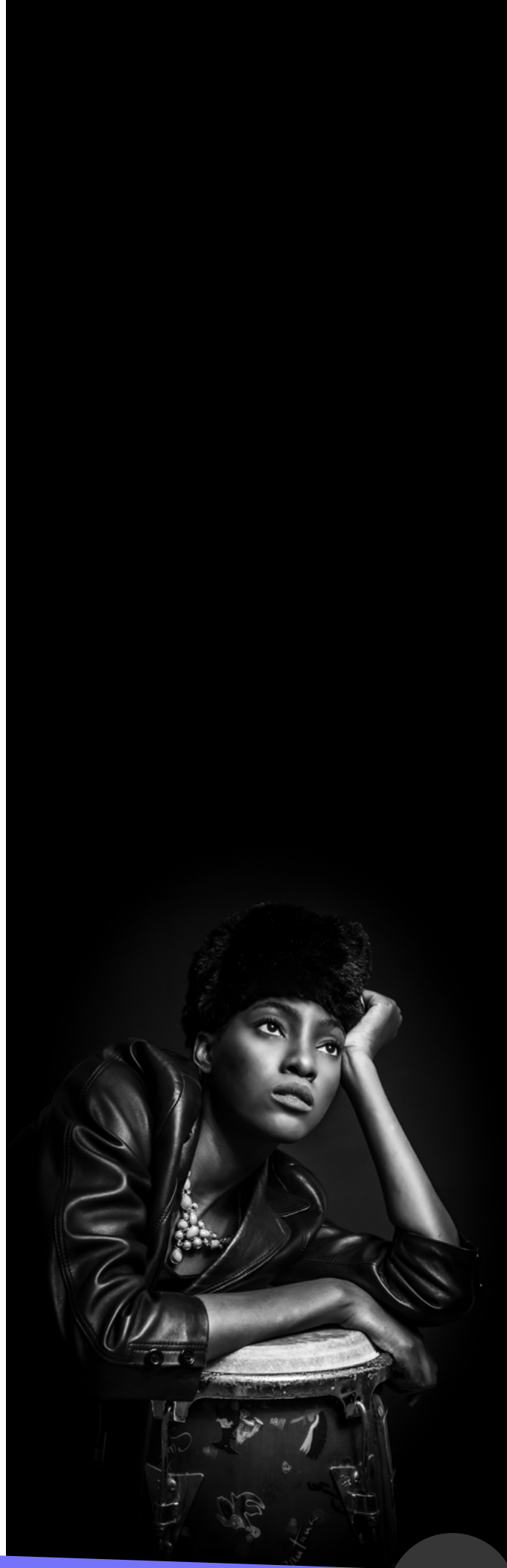
METHODOLOGY

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.

photo © jazz re:freshed

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 1,718 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 three% identified as Non-binary, Trans-female, Trans-male, Other and those who preferred not to provide a gender identity.
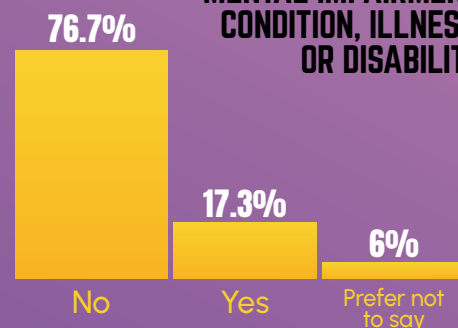
1,718 PARTICIPANTS

FEMALE 50.5%

MALE 46%

NON-BINARY 1.4%

TRANS-MALE 0.1%

TRANS-FEMALE 0.1%

PREFER NOT TO SAY 2%

AGE

6%	under 20
13%	20-24
15%	25-29
27%	30-39
18%	40-49
15%	50-59
5%	60-69
1%	70+

MUSIC CREATORS 61.1%

MUSIC PROFESSIONALS 39.9%
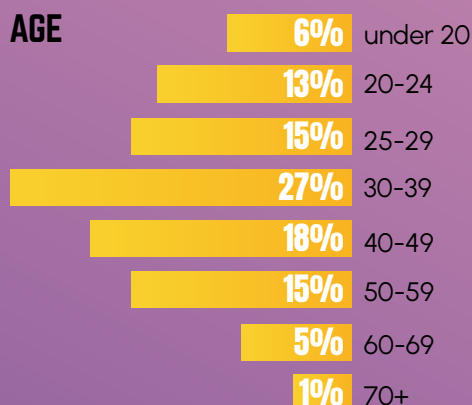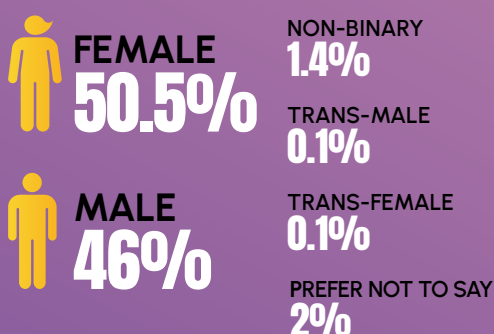
60% of the survey participants identified as music creators. The remaining 40% are music professionals.

ETHNICITY

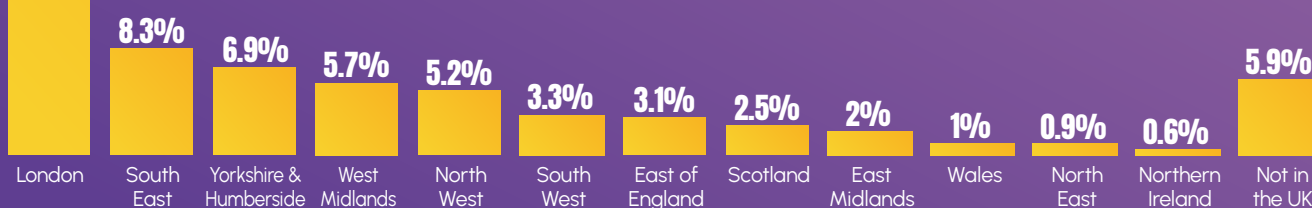|	
African or Carribbean	49%
East Asian, South Asian, or South East Asian	3%
Mixed Heritage	16%
White British, Irish or Northern Irish	23%
Other White background	6%
Other Ethnic background background	1%
Prefer not to say	2%

LONG-STANDING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENT, CONDITION, ILLNESS, OR DISABILITY

No	Yes	Prefer not to say
76.7%	17.3%	6%

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%

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 re:freshed

BLACK MUSIC PROFESSIONALS - THE DATA

KEY FINDINGS

- **88% of all Black music professionals agree that there are barriers to progression**

- **73%** of Black music professionals have **experienced direct/indirect racism** in the music industry, and more (**80%**) have e**xperienced racial microaggressions**

- **Two in five (40%)** Black professionals have felt the need to **change their appearance** because of their race/ethnicity, rising to **44% of Black women**

- **White** music industry professionals **earned more** than Black professionals for their work within the industry pre-covid **(£2,459 vs £1,964 per month)**

- **Black female industry professionals** earned **£1811** per month compared to white women industry professionals who made **£2270 (£459 more per month)** pre-covid

- Half (**49%**) Black music industry professionals have **earned less** than usual from the music industry due to Covid-19

- **White** music professionals are more likely to have **a music-related qualification** (69%) compared to Black professionals (**49%**)

- Three quarters (75%) are dissatisfied with how the music industry supports Black music professionals, compared to just 9% who are satisfied

- **38%** of Black music professionals earn **100%** of their income from music compared to 69% of white music professionals.

- A deep dive into the data showed that just 40% of Black female professionals earn 100% of their income from music compared to 73% of white women.

- **22% Black music industry professionals earned less than 25% of their income from the music industry compared to only 5% of white music professionals.**

- **Financial stability and having a legacy** are the top **signs of success** within the music industry amongst Black professionals

- **36%** of Black music professionals believe their mental wellbeing has **declined**, rising to **39%** of Black women.

EXPERIENCING RACISM IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

The analysis of the experiences of Black music professionals surveyed reveals that nearly three quarters (73%) have experienced direct or indirect racism in the industry, and 80% have experienced racial microaggressions. Nearly half (45%) as Black professionals feel their abilities and contributions are not recognised. As a result, three quarters (75%) are dissatisfied with how the music industry supports Black music professionals

The survey shows eight in ten (83%) Black music professionals surveyed reported experiencing discrimination in the music industry in its culture and behaviours. Two-thirds (69%) of the Black music professionals surveyed have experienced discrimination based on their race in the music industry.

"I have experienced direct/indirect racism"	**73%**
"I have witnessed direct/indirect racism"	**76%**
"I have experienced racial microaggression"	**80%**
"I have witnessed racial microaggression"	**83%**

Nearly three quarters (73%) said they had experienced direct or indirect racism in the music industry, and a slightly higher proportion (76%) said they had witnessed these. Similar results emerged regarding microaggressions, with 80% having experienced this first hand and slightly more (83%) having witnessed it.

An example of the microaggression experienced by a Black music professional is presented in the following quote:

> *"In one creative meeting for a white female artist, the creative partner showcased a mood board full of Black women and afro-textured hairstyles. The artist and creative then proceeded to refer to hairstyles as "rasta hair" and was not challenged or corrected. In another scenario, during a meeting of a white male artist, a song containing samples of Jamaican patois (re-sung by said artist) was being played out loud. Everyone in that space had already heard the song except for myself. The lead colleague on the project asked for my opinion, and I shared that it should be sung by an artist of that heritage or be removed as it's not appropriate. I was met with the following response "I did wonder if that is what you thought - that is why I was afraid to ask you".*

Discrimination based on their race or ethnicity is the most commonly cited form of discrimination, followed by discrimination based on their gender (33%) which rises to 56% of Black women. The combination of discrimination on gender and ethnicity is a particular concern in how it affects Black women.

MUSIC INDUSTRY CULTURE AND BEHAVIOURS

With the evidence of direct and indirect racism and microaggression experienced or witnessed by Black music professionals as reported in the survey, the findings that three quarters (75%) are dissatisfied with how the music industry supports Black professionals should not be unexpected. Furthermore, these measures are higher for Black women (79%) than Black men (70%) and reinforce the evidence of the combination of race and gender discrimination experienced by Black women in particular.

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

	satisfied			dissatisfied	
total	Black women	Black men	total	Black women	Black men
9%	8%	10%	75%	79%	70%
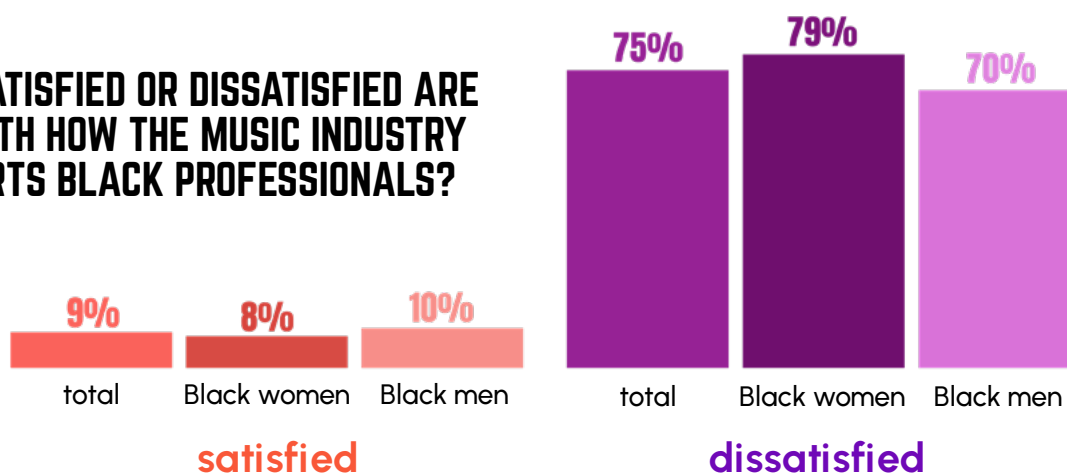
Furthermore, almost half (45%) of Black music professionals feel that their contributions to the music industry as a Black professional are not recognised. Of these, two-thirds (66%) feel their contributions aren't explicitly recognised because of their race or ethnic background, with 28% saying it's definitely because of their race or ethnic background. Featuring strongly amongst the reasons for their being dissatisfied with the support of the music industry is lack of diversity within senior management positions and lack of support from industry leaders.

© Robert Michell

> *"Not enough cultivation. Hardly any Black professionals at senior/head of department levels. No mentorship."*

Diverging from the above negative experiences, it is also encouraging that some Black music professionals can identify what makes them satisfied with the support they receive. However, only 9% say they are satisfied with how the music industry supports them. Looking into the reasons why they are satisfied, receiving personal mentorship and guidance within the sector were highlighted as crucial elements of the support they received and valued.

> *"At this moment in time, I see that there are some very deliberate attempts to specifically support Black music creators and professionals ... have been in the industry a long time, and I can see that there is now something, whereas before there was very little. Saying that, I don't think '[it] means it's all fine and we can sit back and be content with the status quo."*

The above examples highlight the need for mentoring and awareness-raising about the different available forms of support, in addition to diversity and inclusion training in general. It is crucial that any help needs to be part of a package that provides choice and variety to enable individuals to be supported in ways that best suit them, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Targeted mentorship has the potential to focus specifically on supporting the effects of race-based discrimination confidentially and progressively. However, the survey results generally highlight a need for personal mentorship and support for all levels across the industry, helping those within the sector navigate any race-related issues they may experience and have productive careers.

These improving workplaces and workplace culture and behaviours can provide a platform for progressive diversity inclusion initiatives that would make Black professionals feel more welcomed and appreciated. However, any such initiatives must address the intersectional nature of discrimination that had emerged within this research.
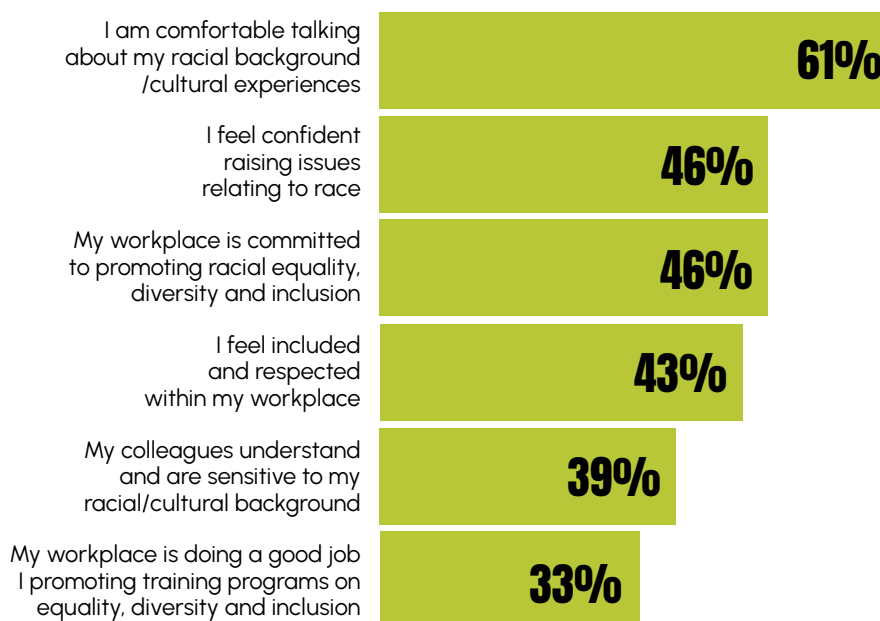
BARRIERS TO PROGRESSION

Further to the above survey evidence of workplace discrimination on the grounds of race, the majority (88%) of Black music professionals in the survey agree that there are barriers to progression for Black people in the music industry. Slightly less (84%) support this view and believe promotions happen less frequently for Black people in the music industry than those who are not Black. This view increases to 86% of Black women.

Black professionals in the BLiM survey who felt that they could not achieve success with over half (56%) believe it is precisely because of barriers related to their race or ethnicity compared to 19% who feel that their race or ethnicity is not a factor. Not being afforded the same opportunities to be successful as white counterparts were cited as a significant barrier to success for Black music professionals. In contrast, others found an obstacle in a lack of appropriate opportunities to develop and support the industry.

> *"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:

% OF BLACK MUSIC PROFESSIONALS WHO AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

| Statement	%
I am comfortable talking about my racial background /cultural experiences	61%
I feel confident raising issues relating to race	46%
My workplace is committed to promoting racial equality, diversity and inclusion	46%
I feel included and respected within my workplace	43%
My colleagues understand and are sensitive to my racial/cultural background	39%
My workplace is doing a good job I promoting training programs on equality, diversity and inclusion	33%

In the survey, workplace culture and behaviour emerge as barriers to Black professionals' progression in the industry. Two-thirds (67%) of Black professionals said they have watched their non-Black contemporaries promoted ahead of them despite being less qualified. In addition, 45% said they had been offered contracts that compare unfavourably with their non-Black counterparts. Whilst discrimination

was cited as a barrier to progression, 71% of Black professionals feel they have had to ignore micro-aggressive comments to progress. They also highlighted executive-level behaviours that they felt affected their chances of advancement.

> *"I have been passed over for promotion inside a record company because of my skin colour."*

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	**54%**
Agree	**30%**
Neither agree nor disagree	**11%**
Disagree	**3%**
Strongly disagree	**2%**
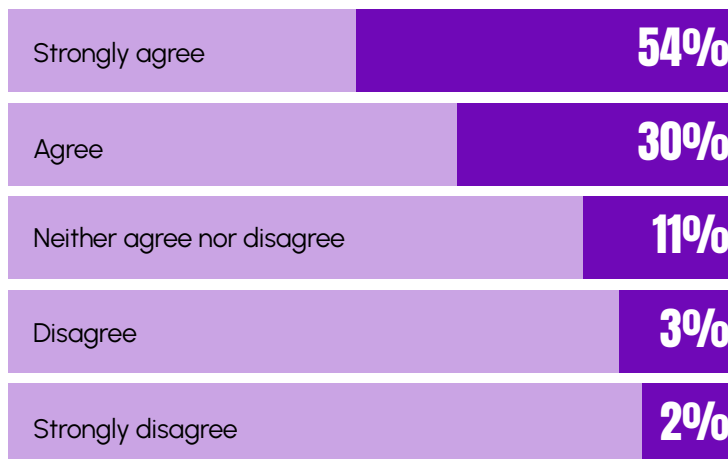
Also of concern are the mental health implications for those Black music professionals who reported feeling that they have to ignore comments they perceive to be racist or micro-aggressive (80%) to progress in the industry. Three-quarters of Black professionals have felt the need to change their behaviour because of their ethnicity. For Black music professionals within the industry, it is common to amend certain behaviours and comments to get ahead. Three quarters (75%) have felt the need to change something about themselves to get ahead in the industry, most common being the way they speak (51%).

Just under half (44%) admit to changing their behaviour because of their race, while 40% have changed their appearance. The lengths to which some Black music professionals feel they need to go to be accepted within their profession are highlighted by the 12% who felt the need to change their name because of their race or ethnicity.

> *"We see Black artists dominating the charts and making money, but [race and racism] still affects those artists careers, and the careers of Black execs working in positions behind the scenes"*

> *"That is unfortunately the nasty business of racism. That is the nasty business of not seeing a person in front of you as an equal, not seeing the person in front of you as equally worthy as any other person."*

Sheryl Nwosu, *lawyer and chair of Black Music Coalition*
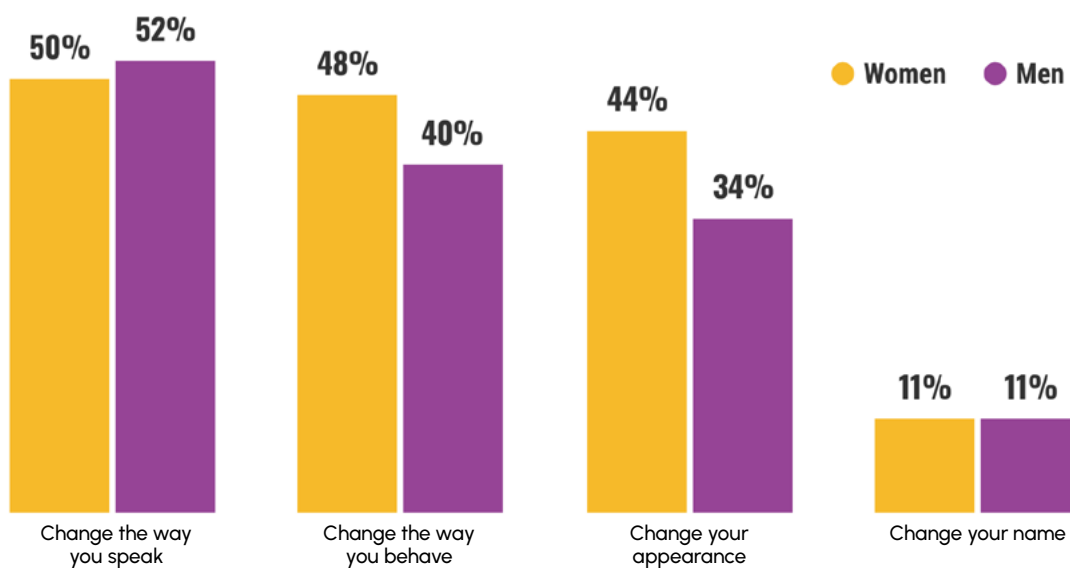
BLACK WOMEN IN MUSIC

Black women are more likely to feel the need to change the way they behave (48%) and their appearance (44%), whereas Black men are more likely to change the way they speak (52%). The chart below demonstrates some of these differences between Black women and men professionals in the music industry.

WHAT BLACK MALE AND FEMALE PROFESSIONALS FELT THEY HAD TO CHANGE TO BE ACCEPTED IN THE PROFESSION

Legend: ● Women ● Men

	Women	Men
Change the way you speak	50%	52%
Change the way you behave	48%	40%
Change your appearance	44%	34%
Change your name	11%	11%

Being conscious of how others perceive their behaviours also emerges as a factor in determining how Black people in the survey behaved in the workplace as opposed to their usual behaviour and interaction with Black colleagues:

"As a Black woman in music, it's hard as you always have to prove yourself and be conscious of how you behave and interact with others. Being very male-dominated many men still struggle with being led or told what to do or what's required by a woman, let alone a Black woman. 99.8% of the time, I'm the only Black woman in the room, so I feel a lot of tightropes have to be tread to be respected or considered great at what I do, which I am."

Strategies for navigating and reacting to negative workplace culture and behaviours as reported in the survey include the following:

> "Code-switching is a massive thing for Black people. I have felt the need to make myself more palatable for my non-Black counterparts in order to be taken seriously or offered the same opportunities as my white peers'

> "I considered changing my hairstyle to a more European one when I was promoted to senior executive level because I thought it would be more acceptable. I wasn't asked to do so, this was my own perception, and I didn't do so. There were no other Black executives in this organisation.

> "I wanted to change my name, lighten my skin to be more appealing to be accepted and fit to have more opportunities."

> "There is a disparity between the commitment and energy put into the Black music industry by the Black community of artists and practitioners generates a great level of dissatisfaction with the industry I love. I am very lucky to be an exception as an executive, but there appear to be only two routes to the top: learning how to code-switch to navigate your way through private school educated gatekeepers or be so successful on your own with no support that they cannot ignore you and eventually choose to back you. I am the former... it's been exhausting."

> "I was young, and 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."

> "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."

Carla Marie Williams, *songwriter, producer, founder of GirlsIRate*
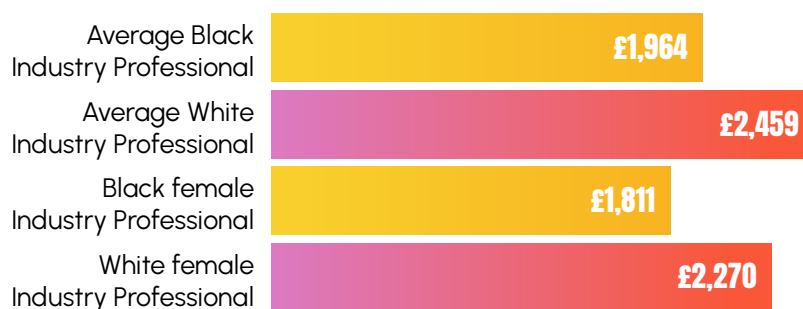
GENDER AND ETHNIC PAY DISPARITY

Black music professionals in the survey reported that they started earning an income from the music industry on average seven years before 2021. They further said that before Covid-19, they were making on average £1,964 per month from relevant work in the music industry. This data compares with the £2459 on average per month for White music professionals. Almost half of the Black music professionals surveyed said they, unfortunately, have to supplement their income with work outside the music industry.

> *"I feel like we aren't paid proportionately to the value we add to the culture and business of music. I feel like we're used and aren't given permanent positions as experts on the culture we not only created but continue to champion."*

In the gender analysis, Black women in the music industry report earning £1,811 on average. This amount is less than the £2,270 made by White women industry professionals.

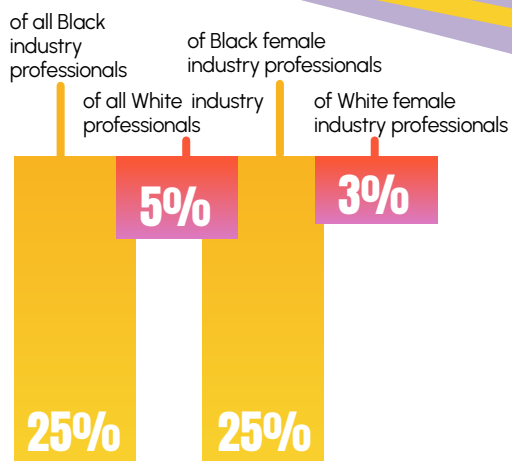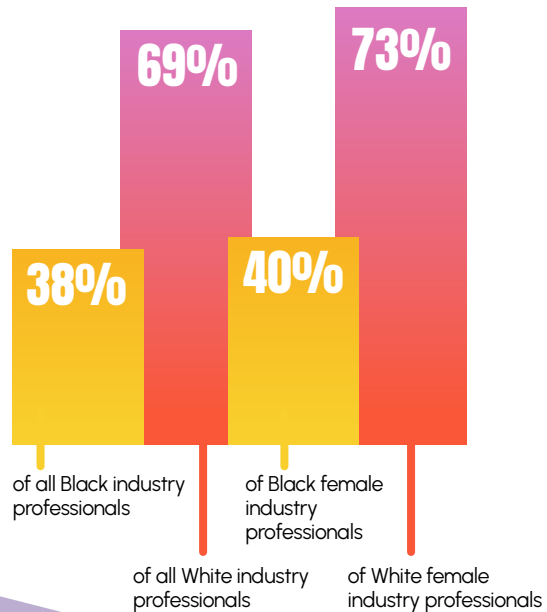|	
Average Black Industry Professional	£1,964
Average White Industry Professional	£2,459
Black female Industry Professional	£1,811
White female Industry Professional	£2,270

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 professionals 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 professionals, less than half of their income comes from work within the music industry. Around two-thirds, (64%) of Black music professionals say over half of their income comes from the work they do within the music industry, and around one third (31%) say less than half of their income comes from this. This data is lower for white professionals (12%) who reported that less than half of their revenue comes from the music industry).

The research shows that 38% of Black music professionals earn 100% of their income from music compared to 69% of white music professionals. A deep dive into the data showed just 40% of Black female professionals earn 100% of their income from music compared to 73% of music professionals who are white women.

MUSIC INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS WHO EARN

100% OF THEIR INCOME FROM WORK IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

69%

73%

38% of all Black industry professionals

40% of Black female industry professionals

of all White industry professionals

of White female industry professionals

of all Black industry professionals

of Black female industry professionals

of all White industry professionals

of White female industry professionals

5%

3%

MUSIC INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS WHO EARN

LESS THAN 25% OF THEIR INCOME FROM WORK IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

25%

25%

Further to this, 25% of Black music industry professionals earned less than 25% of their income from the music industry. It is the same point for Black female professionals (25%), compared to only 5% of white music professionals and 3% for white music professionals who identify as women.

The most common way for Black professionals to supplement the rest of their income includes regular employment outside the music industry (56%), running their own business (26%) and zero-hours contracts outside the music industry (15%). 56% of Black women have regular employment, and 33% of Black female professionals run their own business and zero-hours contract outside the music industry (12%)

Regular employment outside the music industry

56%

Running my own business

26%

15% **Zero hour contract(s)** outside of the music industry
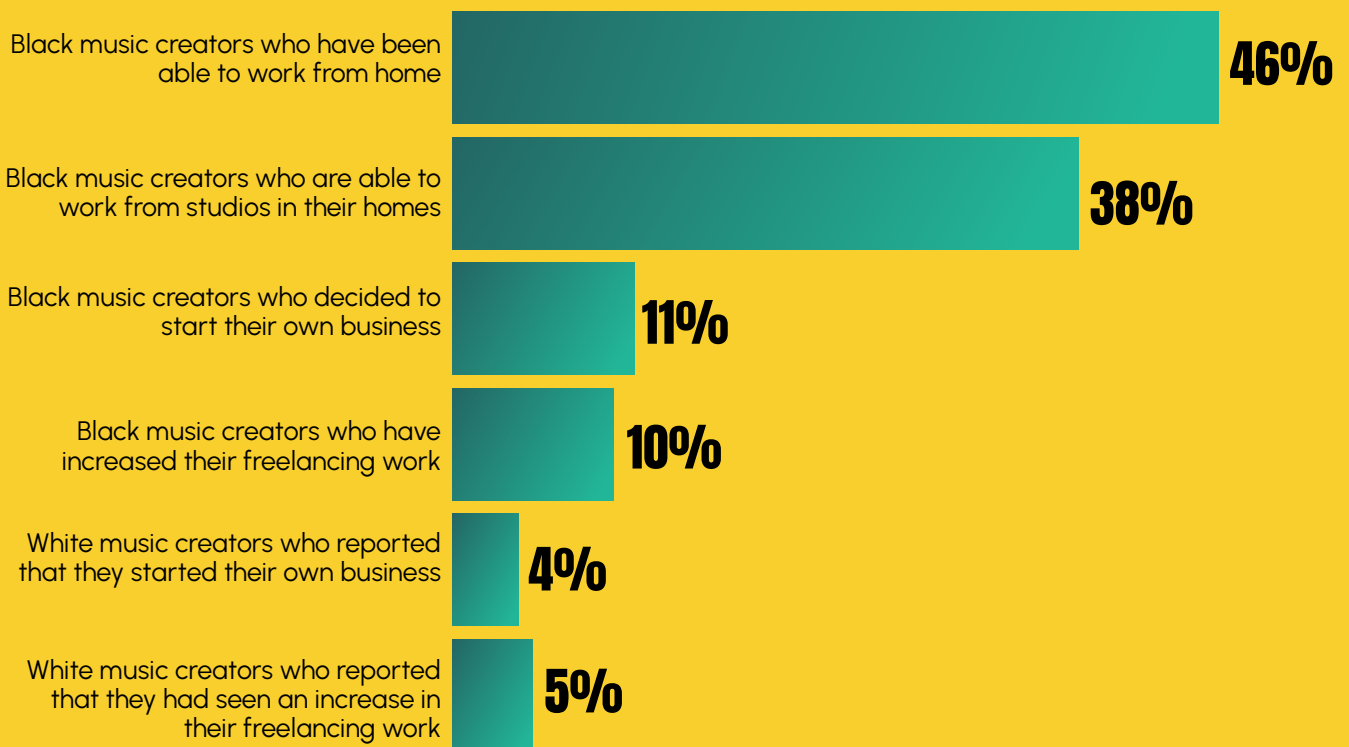
3%

Other
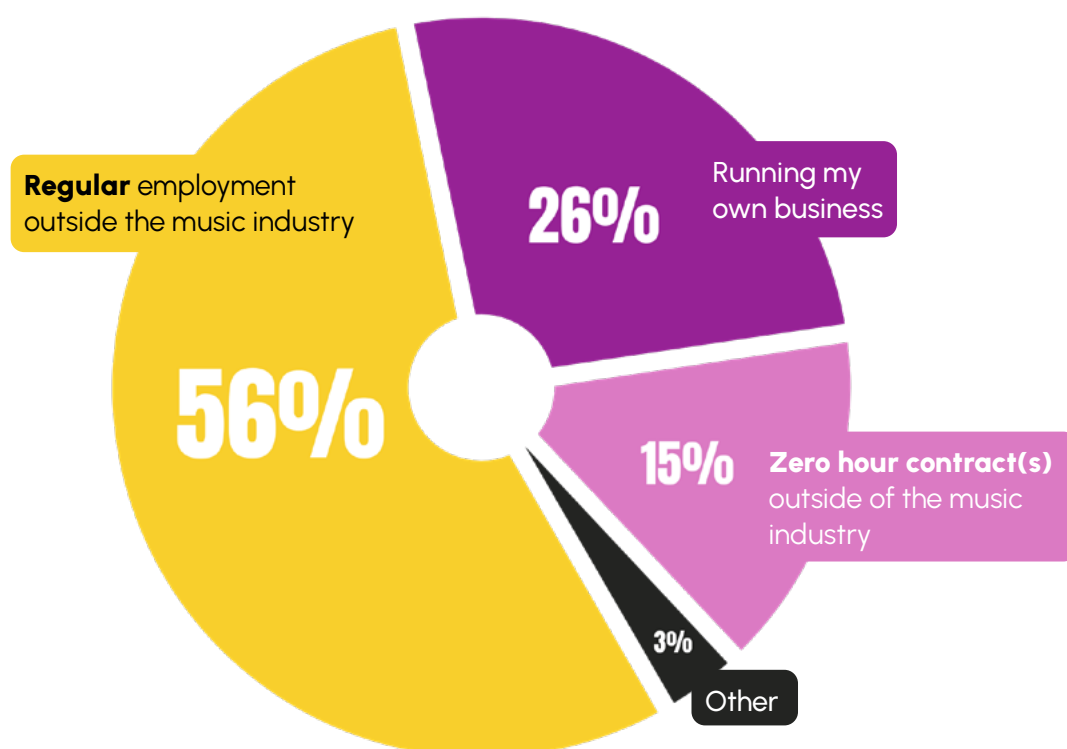
The pandemic has had a significant impact on the work and earnings of the professionals in the survey. Reporting on the effects of the pandemic on their work, over half of the Black music professionals in the survey (61%) have had to work from home because of the pandemic. This is in comparison to the 6% that said they were unable to do so. Just over a quarter (27%) have been kept on as a permanent employee while 8% were put on furlough and 6% were made redundant.
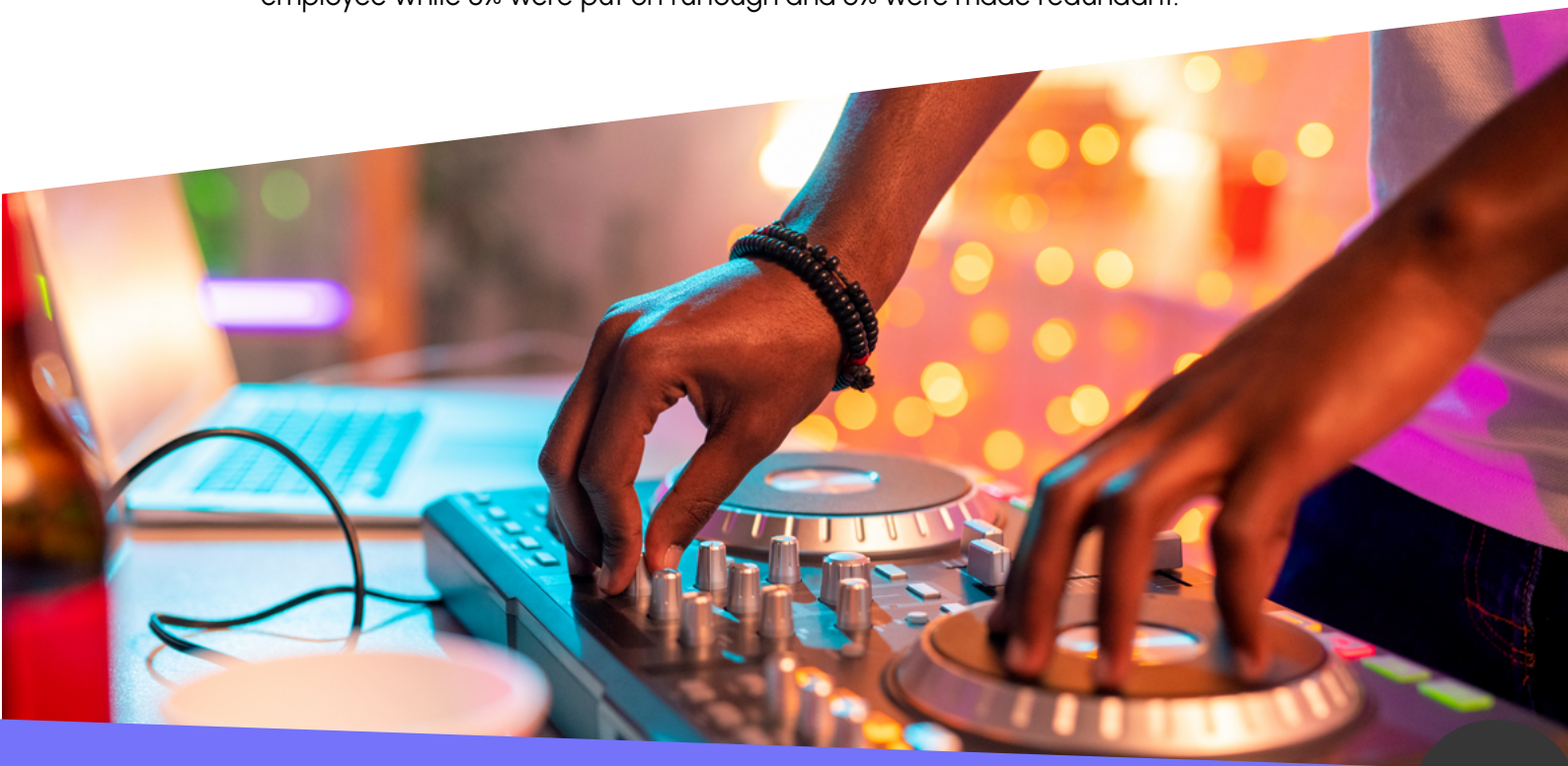
In terms of earnings during the pandemic, half (50%) of Black professionals report earning less than usual from the music industry compared with 18% who said they made more during this time. Others have had to make changes to their career to maintain their earnings. Black professionals were four times more likely to choose to start their own business (12%), and a similar proportion has seen an increase in their freelancing work. 4% decided to move away from the music industry entirely. The comparison with white music professionals revealed that smaller proportions made such adjustments, with 3% of white professionals choosing to start their own business and 4% reporting an increase in their freelancing work.

CAREER CHANGES THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Category	%
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%

Covid-19 has also had impacts on professionals' earnings within the industry. Half (49%) of Black music professionals reported that they earned less than usual from the music industry, compared to 47% of White music professionals. 18% have earned more during this time.

FUNDING

While funding may be considered an essential source of resources to support career development and progression, 40% of Black music professionals applied for the financing to help their career in the music industry, including a quarter who have accessed the funding on more than one occasion. Black professionals (40%) are more likely to apply for financial assistance than their White counterparts (26%). Additionally, 74% of white professionals are more likely to have at least one successful application than 43% of Black professionals. 39% of Black female professionals had one successful application compared to 73% white women professionals who were successful.

MUSIC INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS' FUNDING APPLICATION SUCCESS RATE

43%
Black professionals with at least one successful application

74%
White professionals with at least one successful application

43%
Black professionals who were unsuccessful

39%
Black female professionals with at least one successful application

73%
White female professionals with at least one successful application

Considering the application process specifically, 58% of those who applied for funding agree that the application process tends to be confusing. However, just over half (51%) feel that they have been made aware of funding opportunities relatively close to the deadline, and 29% feel confident their application will be successful when they submit. It is interesting to note that 31% of respondents say they tend to apply to grants aimed explicitly at Black music professionals instead of the mainstream funding sources.

The most common reasons the Black music professionals give for not applying for funding are because they did not know where to apply (26%) and a quarter not knowing that funding was available. Finally, 11% said they need support to navigate the application process.

REASONS WHY BLACK MUSIC PROFESSIONALS DID NOT APPLY FOR FUNDING TO SUPPORT THEIR MUSIC CAREER

26%
I wouldn't know where to apply

25%
I didn't know funding was available to me

21%
I didn't need extra support

20%
I'm not eligible for funding

16%
I wasn't sure how the application process worked

The following quotes highlight some of the barriers of progression for Black music professionals in the industry in the UK.

"If you do not fit their expectations of what Black music is, you are often overlooked for funding."

Similar to the situation with Black music creators, a successful funding application is a valuable source of finances to support music professionals' earnings and development throughout their careers. However, the Black music professionals indicate that they would benefit from knowledge about funding. That is because they are not usually aware of the sources of financing available, the conditions of the funding, the application process and how their applications are assessed.

0%
Arts Council Wales

6%
The Prince's Trust

0%
Dean's Incentive Grants

3%
Arts Council Northern Ireland

24%
PRS Foundation

3%
Making Music

6%
British Council Music

0%
PRS Members' Fund

21%
Other

3%
Peabody

6%
Creative Scotland

53%
Arts Council England

18%
Help Musicians UK

9%
Youth Music

3%
Musicians Union

3%
ISM Members Fund

0%
Creative England
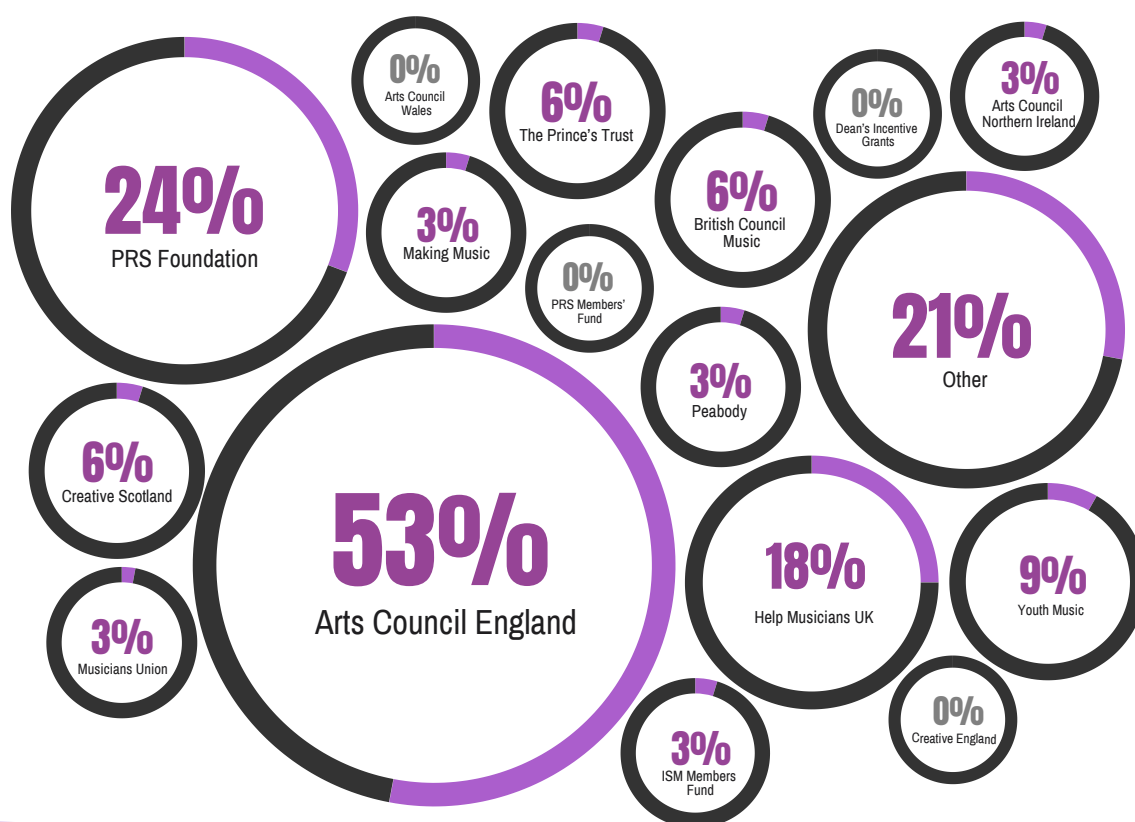
"Various organisations in the music industry don't necessarily possess the knowledge about what the marketability of these artists is,"

"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."

"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."

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

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.
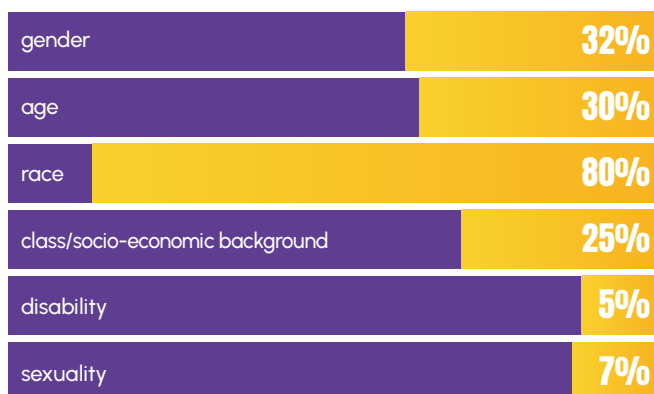
INTERSECTIONALITY AND DISCRIMINATION

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.

> *"Being a Black female and a working mum literally puts me at the bottom of the hierarchy. The industry consists of mainly white cliques at the top. There are subgroups that have a greater ratio of ethnic professionals, but if you've been caught in a white corporate bubble, you're not with the in-crowd in either scenario. Visibility for Black professionals is a priority, not only for progression and recognition but so we can connect and grow together. We need to champion each other."*

The survey analysis explored intersectionality to understand and illuminate the interconnected and interdependent elements 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:

> *"Working with sound techs on tour often would experience racism and sexism where they didn't expect I'd have the knowledge I did to support my artist and would not listen to me or my directives though I was the manager calling the shots."*

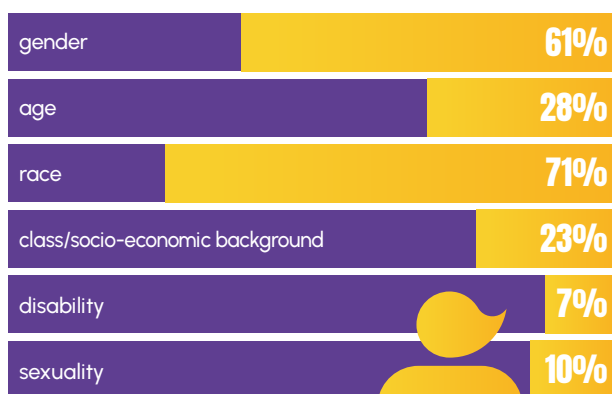# HAVE YOU FACED DISCRIMINATION IN THE INDUSTRY?
YES, ON THE BASIS OF MY...

All Black music industry professionals

Category	%
gender	32%
age	30%
race	80%
class/socio-economic background	25%
disability	5%
sexuality	7%

Black female music industry professionals

Category	%
gender	34%
age	23%
race	80%
class/socio-economic background	21%
disability	7%
sexuality	9%
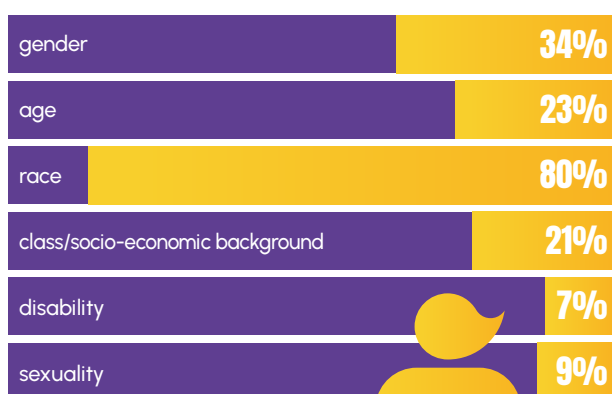
Black female disabled music industry professionals

Category	%
gender	56%
age	31%
race	66%
class/socio-economic background	20%
disability	1%
sexuality	8%

Black female music industry professionals aged 35+

Category	%
gender	61%
age	28%
race	71%
class/socio-economic background	23%
disability	7%
sexuality	10%

Black Disabled music industry professionals

Category	%
gender	32%
age	30%
race	80%
class/socio-economic background	25%
disability	5%
sexuality	7%

Black music industry professionals that identified as disabled are more likely to have experienced discrimination due to their race/ethnicity (80%) than any other issue. Furthermore, 32% of the same respondents experienced gender discrimination and just 5% of Black music professionals who identified as disabled were subject to discrimination due to their disability.

EDUCATION

BLiM survey results also reported the adverse effects on self-belief and confidence for Black professionals related to racial discrimination and a lack of support in music education. As is generally the case with arts and cultural organisations in the UK, music education (and specifically Music Education Hubs) need to find a strategy to embed fundamental changes concerning Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within this area. Historically the reach of music education could be seen as too narrow and homogenous.

BLiM survey responses, consistent with other research mentioned above, highlighted a lack of diversity in music education in terms of both race and social class.

> *"Relating my experiences in the Music Industry and Education is difficult as it is tied in with whatever is happening in society. I have had to work harder and longer to achieve any success and then for those successes to be taken away. Funding and cuts are always given as reasons but rarely do I see cuts to non-grassroots organisations"*

The Black music professionals in this research have been in their industry for 14 years on average. Just under half (49%) have formal or professional qualifications relevant to their work in the music industry. This figure is 20% higher for white music professionals (69%). There is a significant difference in the types of qualifications that Black and white professionals hold, as shown in the table below.
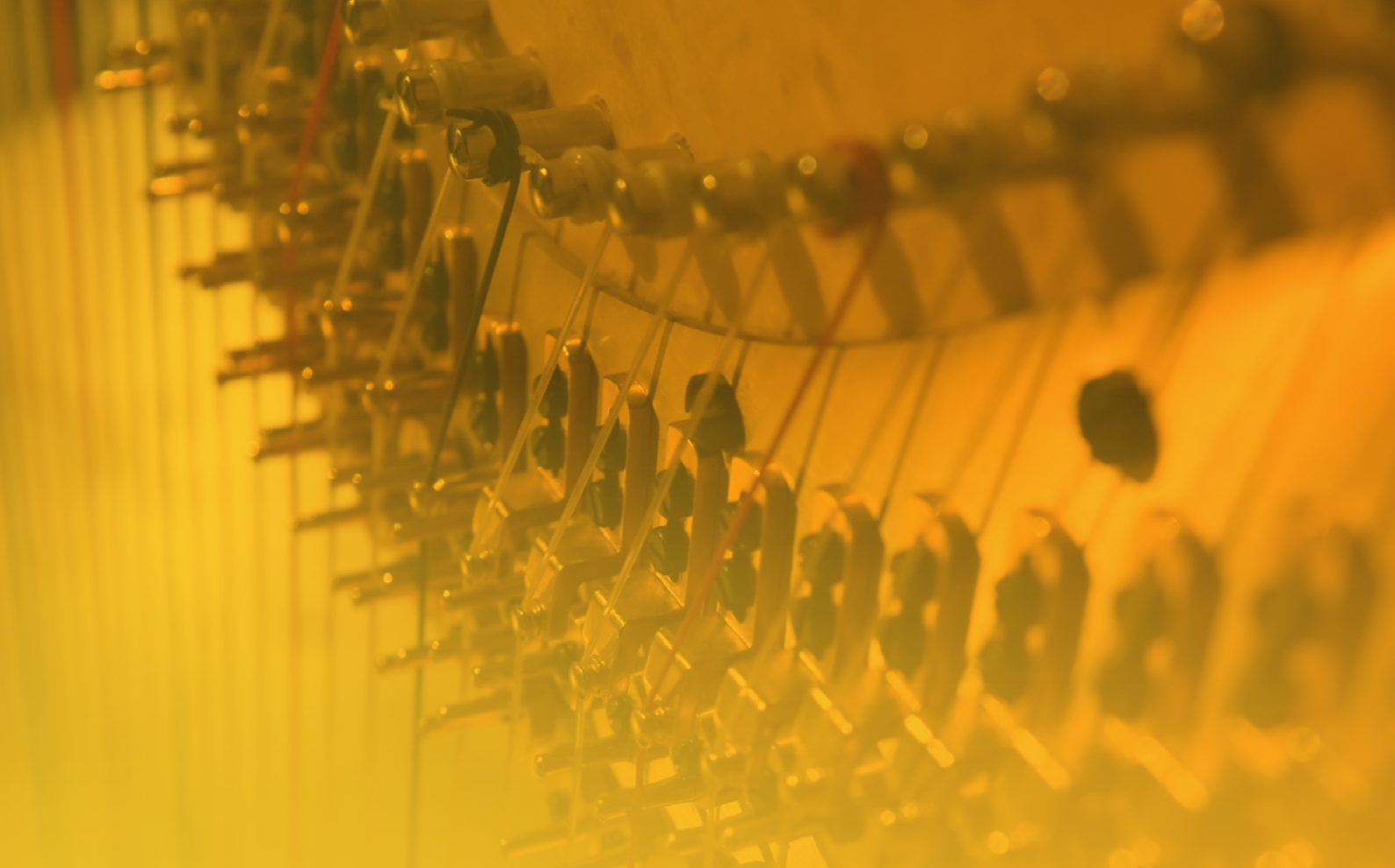
COMPARISON OF BLACK AND WHITE MUSIC PROFESSIONALS WITH FORMAL/PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Black

White

	Black	White
Degree in a music-related subject	43%	70%
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examinations	23%	48%
Diploma in a music related subject	23%	24%
Trinity Music examinations	7%	12%
Business / Business related degree	15%	17%
LL.B	5%	2%
LL.M	1%	0%
ACCA	3%	0%
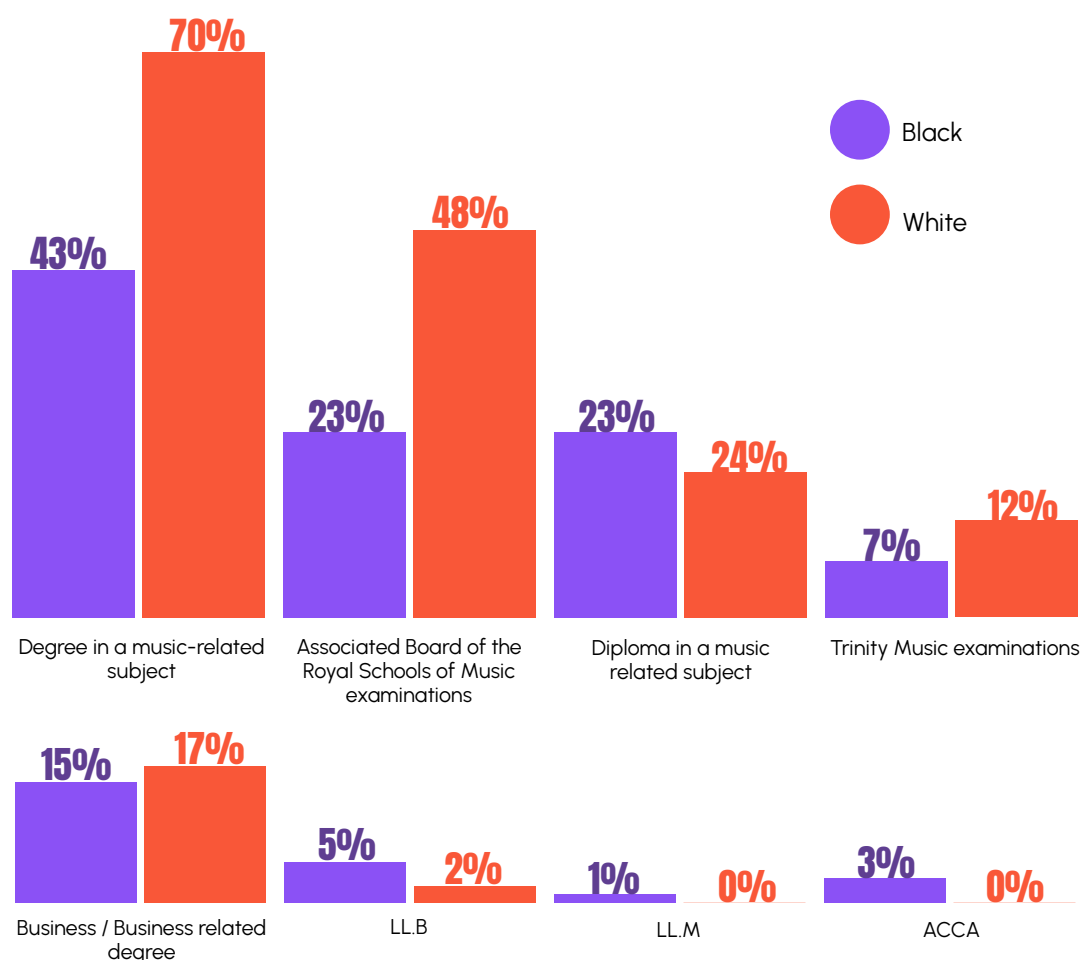
Black professionals with music qualifications earned £2,090 per month compared with white professionals at £2,364 monthly. Black female professionals with qualifications earned £2,097 every month.

Some survey respondents made suggestions for addressing cultural bias in music education:

> *"Music hubs should employ a more diverse range of staff so that there are positive role models at the 'grass roots' level of music education. This will have a long term effect and eventually impact on the ethnic breakdown of orchestras and other professional ensembles where people of colour are currently underrepresented."*

"We need more people at senior leadership and record labels who understand how the decks have been heavily stacked against us for years."

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".

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."

Professor Nate Holder
music education consultant

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

In the survey analysis, Black female professionals are more likely than Black men to say their mental wellbeing has worsened since starting their career in the music industry.

Over one-third (36%) of Black music professionals believe their mental wellbeing has declined since starting their music career. White professionals also highlighted this, suggesting a requirement for a sector-wide mental health and well-being support programme.

Further, people who had reported having mental health challenges previously now report deterioration in their mental wellbeing. This is especially prominent for Black female professionals, where two in five (39%) say their mental wellbeing has worsened since starting their music career, ten points more in comparison to Black men (29%).

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

36% — Black Music Industry Professionals

29% — Black Male Music Industry Professionals

39% — Black Female Music Industry Professionals
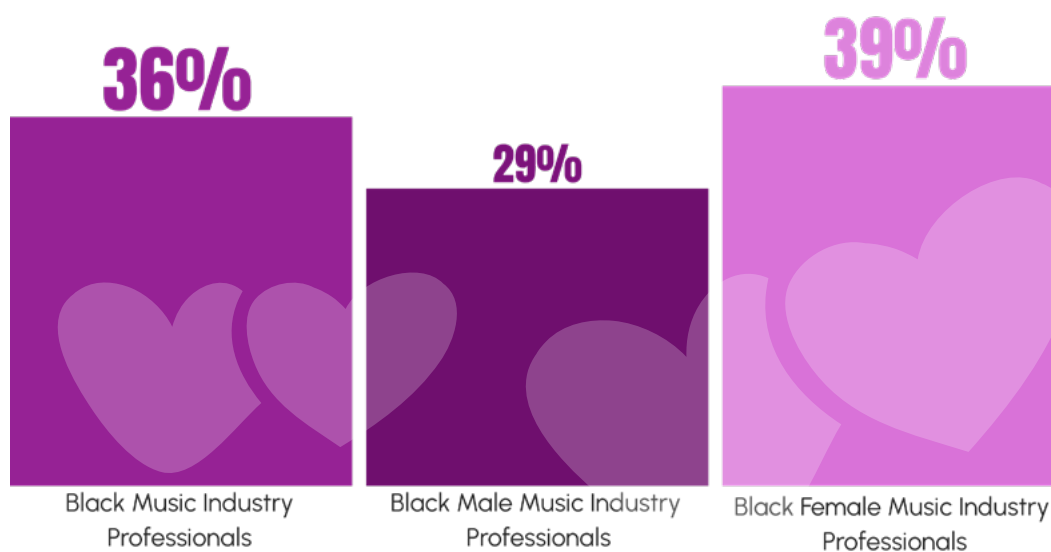
The quotes below expand on some of the effects the music industry has had on the mental health of participants in this research:

"Support groups for Communities of colour need to be implemented in all areas of the music industry so that people of colour have a safe space to talk open and honestly of their experiences of racism in the workplace"

When the topic of mental health support services was explored within the survey, a fifth (19%) of Black music professionals indicated that they engaged with the services and resources of charitable organisations when seeking support with their mental health and wellbeing. In addition, a further 15% of respondents say that they will seek counselling in the future. However, only 9% indicated that they approached MIND. This small proportion is unexpected given the national profile of this charity. It is worth investigating whether the cost of support determines whether and where Black music professionals in the survey sought help. Of those who had sought support via charities, 40% said it was free, 16% said the NHS paid for it, and another 8% said their support had been subsidised, 28 per cent self-funded the charity/ resource they accessed. Finally, 8 per cent responded other.

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

It was free

I paid for it

40%

28%

16%

8%

8%

Other

It was subsidised

Paid for by the NHS

photo © jazz re:freshed
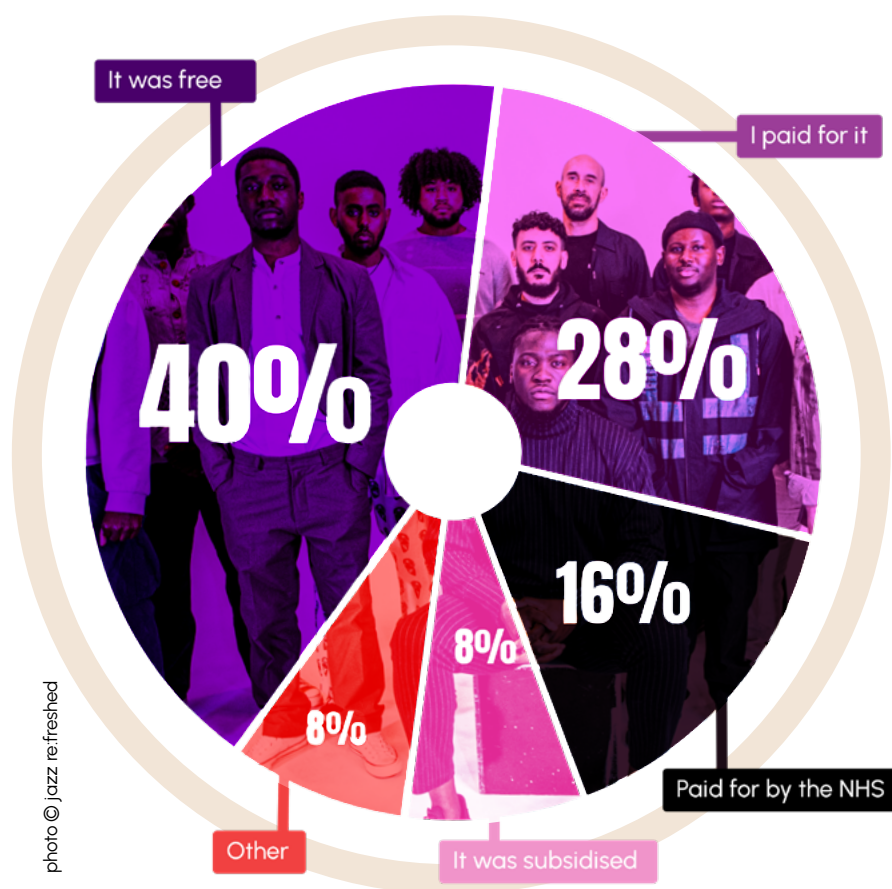
The survey results on this topic highlight that more effort and resources need to be invested in identifying the real needs of Black people in the music sector, particularly with regards to Black women. Appropriate and easily accessible mental health support needs to be made available.

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.

Natasha Hendry, *Music Psychologist*

FUTURE THINKING

Reflecting on their career paths specifically, more than three-quarters (76%) of Black music professionals in the survey do not think there is a clear or traditional path for them in the industry. In addition, more than two-thirds (69%) feel there are specific barriers to their success based on their race or ethnicity. Finally, 47% report that they have not been able to follow the path they had hoped for at the start of their career.
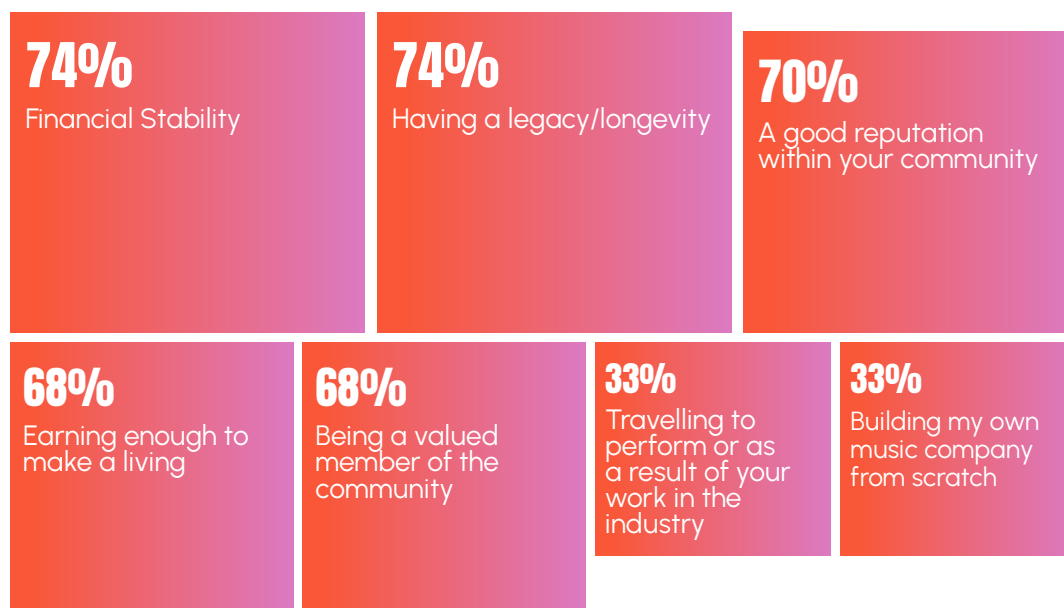
BLACK MUSIC PROFESSIONALS WHO AGREE/ DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree
I do not feel there is a traditional career path for Black music professionals	9%	15%	76%
There are barriers to my success because of my race/ethnicity	9%	22%	69%
I have been able to follow the path I had hoped for at the start of my career	32%	30%	38%
I have had support at each step of my career	57%	24%	19%
I found it easy to follow my planned career path	56%	25%	19%
There has been a clear trajectory of my career path	49%	32%	19%

Looking at the support available to them, 19% of Black professionals said they had received help at every step of their career to lead them to the next stage. However, three times that figure (58%) said they did not. Similarly, three quarters (76%) said

they had to forge their own career path because of the lack of support in the industry. On the other hand, for white professionals, their trajectory in the sector seemed easier. 40% reported having been able to follow the career path they had hoped for at the start of their career, and 26% have had support at each step of their career.

THE BLACK INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS IN THE SURVEY REPORTED THEIR TOP INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

74%
Financial Stability

74%
Having a legacy/longevity

70%
A good reputation within your community

68%
Earning enough to make a living

68%
Being a valued member of the community

33%
Travelling to perform or as a result of your work in the industry

33%
Building my own music company from scratch

Based on these criteria, 77% of those participants who said financial stability is an important sign of success felt that they could achieve it within the music industry. In comparison, 94% believed they could have a legacy/longevity in the industry.

> *"It's very rare to see another Black woman in the same position as my self. I often feel like an anomaly, so the idea that I can achieve success sometimes feels impossible (which is crazy because I HAVE achieved success but haven't been able to internalise it)."*

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS