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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



attitude
is everything



A SNAPSHOT OF 96 ARTISTS WITH ACCESS REQUIREMENTS



Attitude is Everything is an Arts Council England **Sector Support Organisation** that has supported the UK's live music industry to improve accessibility for Deaf and disabled people since 2000.

Over 3 million Deaf and disabled people go to gigs and festivals every year in the UK. We work with partners across the industry including **180+ venues and festivals** now signed up to our Charter of Best Practice to ensure they have an equal experience.



Since the beginning, Attitude is Everything has championed Deaf and disabled artists, but we have never had a dedicated project to tackle the barriers artists face on the talent development pipeline.

Our [Next Stage Initiative](#), funded by Arts Council England, fills that gap.

Our goal is to find talented artists, connect them with the industry, and share their voices. This snapshot of 96 artists is the first step.

Next Stage Survey partners:



PRS Foundation



Musicians' Union



“
**ACCESSIBILITY
HINDERS NO ONE,
IT ONLY ENRICHES
OUR INDUSTRY
AND COMMUNITY**
”



96 ARTISTS

7
DJS
PRODUCERS

19
BANDS

51
SOLO
ARTISTS



Over **1500** shows played
25+ genres

$\frac{1}{4}$ playing shows at 200+ capacity venues
63 are streaming music online
 $\frac{3}{4}$ based outside London

66% identify as a Deaf or disabled person
21% only identify sometimes
13% don't identify

Represent **15+** impairment / health condition groups

2 in 3 have more than one impairment or health condition



76% of the artists completed demographic questions

Male (46%), Female (41%), Other genders inc non-binary (7%)

21% identify as LGBT+

Under 35 (45%), 35-54 (44%) and 55+ (11%)

11% identify as not White-British

REHEARSING

1 IN 2 HAVE ENCOUNTERED ACCESS-RELATED BARRIERS WHEN SEEKING TO REHEARSE.

38% CANNOT ACCESS THEIR NEAREST REHEARSAL SPACE.

RECORDING

56 HAVE USED STUDIOS TO RECORD.

45% HAVE ENCOUNTERED BARRIERS WHEN DOING SO.

“The ones that are affordable are usually not accessible, in terms of step free and toilet facilities.”

“Having to explain all my access needs to people who don't understand is very tiring and people don't always make the accommodations I need.”

“Signage around rehearsal venues is often small and it's hard to navigate with low vision. That is stressful and not conducive to creativity.”

“Stairs, lack of heating, and transporting/lifting equipment are all issues for me.”

“Cancellation policies mean that I can lose a lot of money if I have to cancel because I'm not well enough.”

PLAYING LIVE

79
HAVE PLAYED LIVE SHOWS

1 IN 2 are disabled by physical barriers at most gigs.

1 IN 5 have had to cancel a show due to physical access issues.

“I would never perform if I did not force myself up and down more flights of stairs in one night than I would comfortably navigate in a month”

“Having to be carried around and lifted, dealing with uneven surfaces so that my stool is dangerous and uncomfortable.”

The issues artists face are not always physical:

“Often times we've been paid in alcoholic drinks. As someone with severe mental health issues this is a problem.”

“Lack of information about sound checks and set times have made me very anxious.”



70%



**HAVE WITHHELD
DETAILS OF
A HEALTH CONDITION
OR IMPAIRMENT DUE TO
BEING WORRIED THAT
DOING SO WILL CAUSE
PROBLEMS AND IMPACT
A RELATIONSHIP WITH A
PROMOTER, VENUE
OR FESTIVAL**

DISCLOSURE

54

**HAVE DISCLOSED TO
A PROMOTER,
FESTIVAL BOOKED OR
EVENT ORGANISER**

59% have then been ignored or not taken seriously.

“Sometimes promoters agree to things in advance but don't realise how important they are and ignore the request.”

“I asked the sound engineer if he could set up a monitor close to me so I could hear better. He refused.”

“I've been told “I'll just carry you if needs be” - totally inappropriate.”

“It just gets so tiring constantly being disappointed when you know there is nothing more you could have done.”

“One of my band-mates has epilepsy and gets often ignored when asking organisers to not use strobe or flashing lights.”

“Fobbed off is the easiest way to put it, so you end up not mentioning it in the end.”

FUNDING

38
HAVE APPLIED FOR FUNDING TO SUPPORT THEIR MUSIC MAKING

42% have encountered access issues.

“Asking for support and guidance is challenging, especially as a lot of feedback is dependent on in process applications whereas the issue facing me often is starting the process.”

“In the past, I have been unable to use a computer, so online-only applications can be problematic. Even reading or accessing guidance notes can be prohibitive.”

“Open ended and non-direct questions are not equally accessible to me. I'm autistic and find more direct questioning more accessible.”

“Small print and low contrast forms and web pages with no way to adapt.”

“Even if funding is provided to have a support worker to complete and submit applications - it is very difficult for me to find an individual to do this.”

INDUSTRY EVENTS

58
HAVE BEEN TO INDUSTRY EVENTS FOR ARTISTS

40% have encountered access issues before or during an event.

23% have been unable to attend an event due to access issues.

“Industry professionals were on platforms with stairs so disabled artists were at a disadvantage.”

“No BSL interpreter/text to speech translator, or no subtitles in the case of films.”

“It can be hard to mingle if everyone is mingling around tables that you can't reach.”

“Small signage, poor lighting for low vision, printed materials with small print.”

“There was no microphone stand which meant I couldn't hold the microphone and drink water easily.”

“Networking sessions and workshops are a big challenge for me - too noisy. I always go home feeling angry and frustrated.”

“No accessible toilets.”



96%

**THINK THE INDUSTRY
CAN BECOME MORE INCLUSIVE
IF ARTISTS WITH ACCESS REQUIREMENTS
BECOME MORE VISIBLE AND ARE GIVEN
THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK OUT
ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES**



“You are missing out on a huge pool of untapped talent. Make sure that the door is open.”

“We need to see Deaf and disabled artists becoming successful - because it shows others that they have hope of achieving it too.”

“Deaf and disabled music creators need to feel valid, accepted and celebrated and it’s attitudes towards us that need changing in order for that to be the case.”

“Consider the difficulties any musician or artist has in promoting themselves and their work. Now add access requirements and think of the determination it takes to deal with the same obstacles.”

“Take the burden off individuals to share their requirements and simply ask everyone if they have access requirements.”

“Start making the changes you know you need to make.”



This snapshot is a call to action.

These artists face **unique barriers** that their peers don't.

These artists are **not represented** on line-ups and at industry events.

These artists need the music industry to
commit to true diversity and access.



Find out more or get involved in the Next Stage Initiative:

www.attitudeiseverything.org.uk/nextstage

Contact:

Rich Legate

rich@attitudeiseverything.org.uk

020 7383 7979

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Website: www.attitudeiseverything.org.uk

Twitter: [@attitudetweets](https://twitter.com/attitudetweets)

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