First findings from conversations with Asian New Zealand musicians

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This report presents key findings from preliminary research aimed at understanding the challenges to work and wellbeing experienced by Asian New Zealand musicians. It was commissioned by SquareSums&Co., funded by the New Zealand Music Commission, and supported by the Center for Culture-Centred Approach to Research and Evaluation (CARE), Massey University.

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Overview

O.1 Rationale

The impetus for this study begins with the question: 'Who is not present here?' Anecdotal evidence suggests a lack of equitable representation of Asian New Zealand musicians in the music sector, and little formal research has been undertaken on how these musicians could best be supported. This report addresses that gap by presenting key findings from preliminary research aimed at understanding the challenges to work and wellbeing experienced by Asian New Zealand musicians.

This report is guided by the idea that Asian New Zealand musicians' lived experiences of negotiating multiple layers of precarity and marginalisation offers entry points for co-creating community-led solutions, and envisioning how disempowering infrastructures might be transformed. As such, it regards the experiences of Asian New Zealand musicians as a catalyst for change within the music sector at large. It suggests pathways forward drawing on the opportunities and potential solutions that musicians foresee amidst ongoing transformations in neoliberal economies.

This report is primarily intended to assist community and artist-led responses to the problems conceptualised by musicians. However, it is also hoped that the findings will prove useful to a wider audience including policy makers, funding agencies and industry professionals. Given the complexity of this study's aim—to develop shared understandings of precarity, marginalisation and other factors that form fundamental threats to work and wellbeing—the impacts from this study are likely to be best evidenced in the long term.

This report may be considered as part of a growing body of literature on precarious working arrangements in Aotearoa New Zealand across a number of related fields, where a skilled workforce is defined by insecurity, relative deprivation and a sense of disposability. At present, little is known about the conditions of precarity even as it is a salient feature of the work of musicians. Read in the context of wider literature on precarity, this report might help to broaden the category of the precariat or precarious worker to encompass those involved in creative work.

This preliminary research was commissioned by SquareSums&Co., a production company and talent management agency based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. It was funded by the New Zealand Music Commission in alignment with its strategic aims to lower barriers to participation, promote diversity and inclusivity, and provide accessibility and connectivity for underserved communities. It was supported by the Center for Culture-Centred Approach to Research and Evaluation (CARE), Massey University.

O.2 Scope

This report is primarily a reflection of in-depth conversations (20 interviews) supplemented by a larger survey (55 responses). The study should not be interpreted as exhaustive, but rather as a starting point for mapping the difficulties faced by Asian New Zealand musicians. As a preliminary study, it intends to provide key perspectives from musicians who are negotiating challenges to work and wellbeing 'on the ground', and articulates pressing challenges needing to be addressed.

This study retains the voices of musicians front and centre, and the concern for their ability to access fulfilling and sustainable music-related work. To bring the scope of this report more sharply into focus, the following points provide clarification of what the research does *not* intend: Firstly, this study does not intend to function as market research. It does not conceptualise music as a commodity within market systems. It does not take sector growth as an assumed positive, nor the profitability of music industry businesses as a focal point for marshalling the distribution of resources. Insofar as it takes an interest in the cumulative health of the music industry, it does so with a view to know how the infrastructures serve musicians' everyday needs for work and wellbeing. Secondly, this study does not intend to audit the music industry to evaluate the extent of representation and/or inclusion of Asian New Zealanders. Thirdly, this study is not policy analysis; it does not evaluate the impact of current legal frameworks. Finally, this research remains neutral in regard to judgements of artistic merit and aesthetic value. However, it should be noted that study participants demonstrate a broad range of expertise with 20 of 55 (36%) having worked in music for more than 10 years, and 31 of 55 (56%) having sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards their music-related work.

Among the limitations of this preliminary study was its geographic scope. Except one respondent from the small town of Ōpōtiki, all other participants were based in major cities. The major centres in the South Island were also severely underrepresented. Another significant shortcoming was that the preliminary research did not include in its scope any information on disability. It is recommended that future research aims to address these areas.

0.3 First findings

1. This report recommends that campaigns for equitable representation of Asian New Zealanders be grounded in the context of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a project of overcoming white privilege in the kāwanatanga (Crown) sphere. (1.1)

2. Racism forms an everyday experience for many Asian New Zealanders. It also flows into the market logics of the music sector limiting musicians' work opportunities. At the same time, the perspectives of 31% of survey respondents who did *not* identify as part of any marginalised group offer important ways to make sense of other pressures on musicians—specifically, experiences of precarity amidst ongoing transformations in neoliberal economies. (1.2)

3. Challenges to work and wellbeing are significantly greater for LGBTQIA+ musicians, all of whom cited precarity as the greatest challenge in pursuing a fulfilling and sustainable career in music. Financial and infrastructural support for artist-led initiatives is recommended to address a dearth of LGBTQIA+ community-run sites and safe spaces that attend to race-based asymmetries. (1.3)

4. In the context of rapidly changing demographics among settler communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, infrastructural groundwork for supporting musicians ought to consider an Asian population that is projected to surpass 1 million in 2024–2027. (1.4)

5. When participants were asked to narrate their identities, only 1 musician chose the descriptor 'Asian'. Despite its use in demography, Asian is an umbrella term that overwrites important differences and disparities across diverse communities. Any initiative focused on Asian New Zealanders should understand communities as heterogeneous spaces where asymmetries of power and inequalities are continually negotiated. (1.5)

6. Even as social identity forms the backdrop of this study, cultural productions based on homogenising identitarian frameworks are unlikely to be as compelling for musicians as those centred on craft. (1.6)

7. Participants who work in music of Asian cultural origins reported difficulties in their efforts to vernacularise their craft in Aotearoa New Zealand. Their responses also invite further research on the way governmental infrastructures support music of Asian cultural origins, including the possible reasons study participants find the site of Diwali particularly problematic. (1.7)

8. Seeking inclusion of Asian New Zealanders in a music sector that struggles to provide a living wage for the vast majority of musicians would be a misdirected aim if it does not come combined with transformations of the sector itself. For entry points to envisioning structural changes at large, this study recommends listening to the voices of musicians who negotiate multiple layers of precarity and marginalisation in their everyday lives. (1.8)

9. Participants described an asymmetry of power between musicians and 'management'. They identified 'artist management, booking agencies, presenters, promoters' as among 'the biggest problems and therefore the greatest potential for change that would improve the status quo of the music sector as a whole'. (2.1)

10. While industry bodies, sector organisations, governmental initiatives, community groups and the like exist to help musicians navigate work in the sector, this study identifies failures of communication such that musicians either do not know about such networks or feel reluctant in seeking their support. (2.2)

11. Musicians overwhelmingly emphasised peer networks as most helpful for navigating music-related work. It is critical that artist-led collectives and community-led initiatives—especially those attending to race, gender and class-based inequalities—be strengthened with funding and infrastructural support. (2.3)

12. Participants identified a need for mentorship opportunities. It is recommended that artist-led collectives be supported with funding to develop and deliver such programmes. (2.4)

13. Participants reported that sector infrastructure for supporting music-related work—from equipment hire to platforms for music distribution and more—is currently insufficient to meet community-level demand. (2.5)

14. Given that many Asian New Zealand musicians said they receive greater recognition overseas, sector infrastructure should consider supporting musicians seeking international opportunities. This may also help with talent retention. (2.6)

15. When asked to define the most important thing to achieve from music-related work, study participants overwhelmingly chose responses centred on craft, affirming a values system contradictory to expected markers of commercial success. (2.7)

16. Many musicians articulated the need for activist resistance to neoliberal market logics and entrepreneurial imperatives, which threaten to restructure how they understand their own work. (2.8)

17. With 41 of 55 (75%) of the survey respondents earning less than $10,000 annually from music-related work, relying solely on income generated from music-related work would drive the vast majority below the 'poverty line'. (3.1)

18. While formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards music-related work situates musicians within supportive informal networks of practice, it remains unconvincing as a pathway progressing to financially sustainable music-related work in the long term. (3.2)

19. Despite a pessimistic outlook on the financial sustainability of music-related work, a majority of musicians reported that they were 'likely' or 'very likely' to pursue music-related work in the long term. (3.3)

20. Live performances offer the greatest community-building, place-making as well as income-generating opportunities for musicians. (3.4)

21. Remuneration of musicians from streaming is poor. This report recommends bringing together a body of musicians, policy analysts, activists and others to deliberate on and campaign to fix streaming. (3.5)

22. This report recommends bringing together a body of musicians, policy analysts, activists and others to campaign for Basic Income. (3.6)

23. The COVID-19 relief packages provided by the government offer a way forward on a campaign for Basic Income to remedy the experiences of precarity and poverty for musicians. (3.7)

24. The preliminary research indicates the need for the formation of community advisory groups to serve as a space for the participation of musicians at the 'margins of the margins' to develop community-led solutions to the problems conceptualised by them, engage with sector stakeholders and advocate for changes in policy to address local needs of musicians. (3.8)

O.4 Method

O.4.1 Design

The guiding methodology for this preliminary research borrows from the culture-centred approach as practised by the Center for Culture-Centred Approach to Research and Evaluation (CARE), Massey University. The approach employs dialogue to facilitate the participation of local communities in both the definition of problems and the determination of solutions. Drawing on observer-as-participant ethnographic approaches, the research was conducted using a mixed-method approach and a qualitative-quantitative-qualitative design. The methodology has been reviewed by research partners in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad.

0.4.2 Interviews

The first part of the research process involved in-depth interviews with participants. Snowball sampling was used in order to seek broad representation from musicians working in different genre-based communities. The researcher asked a series of questions that formed the basis for the conversation—questions about work-related issues they faced, including how they negotiated fundamental threats to their work and wellbeing under precarious conditions, and the experience of marginalisation on the basis of their ethnicity and racial identity. Questions on their experiences of work also covered areas such as COVID-19, narratives of identity and belonging, and health and wellbeing. Interviewees were further asked what solutions they foresaw in addressing ongoing challenges.

Participants spent 60–90 minutes with the researcher in the interview sessions, which were conducted digitally on Zoom. They were provided with an information sheet which detailed their participant rights. They were informed that their participation would remain anonymous, their responses would be kept confidential, that they were not obliged to answer every question, and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without providing a reason. Participant rights also included being able to ask any questions about the study at any time during participation, being able to ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview, and being given access to a summary of the project findings when the study is concluded. Each interviewee was offered a $40 koha for their participation.

0.4.3 Survey

The second part of the research process involved the design and distribution of a survey based on the discussion points raised by interviewees. The survey was designed with the help of Umar Zakaria, a doctoral candidate in music at Victoria University of Wellington.

The primary reason for surveying musicians identifying as Asian New Zealanders was to corroborate the narratives with survey data. For example, it was important to understand the nature of marginalisation voiced by the interviewees and the extent of the struggles for remuneration. One drawback of the survey was the total number of completed responses, which numbered 55. Another was that no participant above the age of 55 completed the survey. Partial completions were not included in the study. As one comment curtly stated: ‘The survey is too long.’

The survey should be considered supplementary to the narrative, as a companion to the in-depth interviews that forms the basis of this preliminary research.

0.4.4 Confidentiality

The researcher named in this document was responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. In order for the study to be guided by a community of independent practitioners, the researcher maintains independence from SquareSums&Co., the New Zealand Music Commission, funders, talent agencies, and possible employers of musicians. To ensure the confidentiality of participation, identifiable information has not been stored. As such, the study cannot provide specific respondent demographic information beyond what is mentioned in this report. No names of participants will be disclosed.

0.5 Participation

20 musicians who identified as Asian New Zealanders participated in in-depth interviews

55 responses to the survey from those who identified their primary work as 'artistic' provided data for this preliminary research

A broad range of interview participants and survey respondents who identified as Asian New Zealanders and musicians—or who otherwise identified their primary work as 'artistic'—contributed to this preliminary research. Artistic work given as examples by respondents included accompanist, arranger, composer (including digital music production), conductor, critic, DJ, educator, lyricist, musician, musicologist, reviewer, and writer. On top of the artistic work, 11 of 55 survey respondents also included technical work as part of their music-related work, including music producer, audio engineer, instrument repair and restoration, lighting technician, photographer, and stagehand.

Not incorporated in the survey results were responses from industry professionals and salaried employees of music-related organisations who identified 'management' as their primary form of work, such as advertising, artist manager, tour manager, booking agent, employee at a funding agency, marketing and publicity, venue manager, shop owner, and social media manager.

Even as the division between 'artistic' and 'management' is not neat, it was maintained so that the research offers perspectives of musicians working in the gig economy or negotiating precarious working arrangements. Consider that all 5 survey respondents who identified with 'management' had annual incomes from music-related work between $50,000–$75,000, whereas only 3 of the total 55 of survey respondents identifying their primary work as artistic were at that same scale of income, and only 1 respondent was above the threshold of $75,000. As such, perspectives and priorities differ between musicians and managers. Further research will be required for the perspectives of industry professionals.

SURVEY SNIPPET

A broad range of experience was reflected by survey respondents

20 of 55 (36%) worked in music for more than 10 years
22 of 55 (40%) less than 10 years, but more than 3 years
13 of 55 (24%) less than 3 years

24 of 55 (44%) did not train formally
31 of 55 (56%) sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards their music-related work

- 4 certificate or diploma (level 4–6)
- 15 graduate certificate, graduate diploma or bachelor's degree (level 7)
- 3 postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma or bachelor honours degree (level 8)
- 2 master's degree (level 9)
- 1 doctoral degree (level 10)
- 6 other

While one interview participant identified themselves as ‘disabled and/or differently-abled’, the survey did not collect such data. This is a significant shortcoming. Further research is recommended to understand how disabilities disproportionately impact upon access to work and wellbeing in the music sector.

Except one respondent from the small town of Ōpōtiki, all other participants were based in major cities. The overrepresentation of Auckland (62%) is congruent with the geographic location of New Zealanders who identify as Asian as reflected by 2018 Census data where it is reported that 63% live in the Auckland region. However, the major centres in the South Island are severely underrepresented in this study:

SURVEY SNIPPET

Geographic location of survey respondents

34 Auckland	62%	2 Hamilton	4%
14 Wellington	25%	2 Prefer not to say	4%
2 Christchurch	4%	1 Ōpōtiki	2%

This research remains neutral in regards to judgements of artistic merit and aesthetic value. However, it is worth noting that a focus on Asian New Zealand musicians need not imply a focus on music of Asian origin. This risks a reductive perspective on the multifarious practices of Asian New Zealanders. As the table below shows, interview participants and survey respondents evidenced background in a broad range of musical practices:

SURVEY SNIPPET

What are the genres of music you work within?

Acoustic	Funk	Neo soul
Alt-pop	Fusion	Noise
Alternative	Ghazal	Pop
Ambient	Hindustani	Punk
Bass	Hip hop	Rap
Bollywood	House	R&B
Brazilian pop	Indian classical	Rock
Carnatic	Indian regional	Shoegaze
Celtic	Indie	Soul
Contemporary	Industrial	Sound art
Country	Japanese folk	Western classical
Drum and bass	Japanese pop	World
Dub	Jazz	Techno
Electronic	Jungle	Traditional
Experimental	Metal	Trip hop
Folk	Musical theatre	

1. Context and Communities

1.1 Te Tiriti o Waitangi

This report locates old and new Asian peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. That is to say, Asian New Zealanders' belonging is framed by Te Tiriti since it is an agreement between Māori and the Crown, with the Crown representative of all settlers here.

That Asian New Zealanders are still unfairly cast as more foreign to Aotearoa than white Pākehā, that a mistaken belief persists of Te Tiriti as not being the business of Asian settlers, and that biculturalism continues to be misinterpreted as a framework unsuitable to describe Asian New Zealanders' belonging all speak to the ongoing power of whiteness. Asian New Zealanders have long been invisibilized in these ways. And as such, there is an urgent and ongoing need for Te Tiriti education.

Although further narrating the place of Asians in Aotearoa New Zealand is beyond the scope of this report, situating Asian New Zealanders in relation to Te Tiriti and the bicultural framework of Indigenous–settler relations is important for contextualising arguments for representation. Specifically, the campaign for equitable representation of Asian New Zealanders in the music sector should not be seen as occupying the same standpoint as Māori and Pacific groups who continually negotiate disenfranchisement in distinctly different ways in the backdrop of coloniality. The case for equitable representation of Asian New Zealand musicians is not in a like manner: It is neither underpinned by restorative justice projects comparable to Māori and Pacific peoples', nor does it seek status beyond what is already given by Te Tiriti. Rather, it is to overcome white privilege in the kāwanatanga (Crown) sphere. Understanding the place of Asian New Zealanders in the kāwanatanga sphere goes hand in hand with understanding the roles and responsibilities of Asian New Zealanders as Treaty partners.

In this way, egalitarian justice can motivate a campaign for representation without the risk of taking resources away from other marginalised groups who are already advocating for affirmative action. Only through the lens of whiteness are ethnic groups construed as self-interested players in a social Darwinist scenario competing over scarce resources. On the contrary, Asian New Zealanders' desire for inclusion can help to shape possibilities of equitable race relations.

1.2 Everyday experiences of racism

Racism forms an everyday experience for many Asian New Zealanders. Instances of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, heritage or skin colour were frequently reported by interview participants and survey respondents. The excerpt below from an interview with an Indian New Zealand musician evidences a form of racism that flows against people of colour and tangata whenua:

> I've experienced quite a lot of racism, and especially in Wellington for some reason. … There was one instance, and this is quite, it was traumatic, but it happened earlier this year. I was assaulted because a couple of young uni lads thought that I was Māori. I ended up with a concussion and quite beaten up. Yeah, it was quite bad. That was unfortunately due to what they perceived me to be. They sort of, they spotted me out on my way home. And they'd been drinking on like a Thursday night or Wednesday. They started doing pūkana, dancing

> around, running around me doing laps. And I just said, 'You know, that's racist.' Called him out. I wasn't happy. And then my reaction to him, and trying to stick up for myself, another person came along. She pulled me to the ground. And yeah, next minute I was, I was being assaulted by her and her partner. Calling me all sorts of things. … Yeah, that was, that's an experience amongst quite a few, kind of, aggressive incidents. I think the first party I came, I went to in Wellington, I was pushed over and the guy called me a *** Indian.

Racism flows into the market logics of the music sector limiting musicians' work opportunities. A hip hop artist recounted his meeting in 2019 with a music agent at a prominent record label working across Australia and New Zealand. The artist had already performed at a number of prominent festivals by now and was seeking support to record an album at this meeting:

> [The music agent] was just like 'Look, there's no market for you in New Zealand pretty much because of your race.' Like that's how brutal he was. He was explaining it like 'I'm not racist, but the industry is racist.' He told me about the experience of some Pacific Island artists that they were trying to break into the UK and how it just didn't work because people couldn't connect with their race. So he was basically like 'You're a Southeast Asian rapper. If you're a black artist in New Zealand or if you're a white artist in New Zealand, you will be much more marketable.' And I guess the worst thing was that at that time, we were so naive. We were on the back foot. Everything he said to us, regardless of whether he were right or wrong, we lapped it up. And we were like '*** you're so right.' That was the worst feeling.

Even as racism forms an everyday experience for many research participants, 31% of the survey respondents were Asian New Zealand musicians who did *not* identify as part of any marginalised group. Incorporated in this study, their perspectives offer important ways to make sense of other pressures on musicians—specifically, experiences of precarity amidst ongoing transformations in neoliberal economies.

SURVEY SNIPPET

Do you identify as a member of a marginalised group?

38 (69%) Yes
17 (31%) No

If you've answered 'yes', please specify:

- 33 race, ethnicity, nationality, heritage or skin colour
- 14 gender identity, sexuality or sexual orientation
- 3 working class background or poverty
- 2 geographic location or where I live
- 2 personal, spiritual or religious beliefs

1.3 Disproportionate challenges for LGBTQIA+ musicians

This study showed noticeable disparities between respondents who identified as non-binary/third gender and/or LGBTQIA+, with those who did not. The data from survey respondents suggests that gender diverse and rainbow musicians are hardest hit by experiences of precarity.

Such a finding is consistent with the disproportionate disadvantages and even violence LGBTQIA+ individuals experience in a range of contexts, from intimate spaces of home to public spheres such as workplaces. For these communities, challenges to work and wellbeing exist in the context of heteronormative and cisgender ideologies which are ingrained attitudes flowing across the structural frameworks of society.

SURVEY SNIPPET

15 of 55 (27%) identified as LGBTQIA+

All of whom (100%) cited financial precarity as their greatest challenge in pursuing a fulfilling and sustainable career in music

14 of whom (93%) identified as marginalised because of their gender identity, sexuality or sexual orientation

14 of whom (93%) did not live in a home they own
Of the 40 who did *not* identify as LGBTQIA+
35 of 40 (88%) did not live in a home they own

13 of whom (87%) earned under $10,000 annually from music-related work (1 between $10,000–$25,000 and 1 between $25,000–$50,000)
Of the 40 who did *not* identify as LGBTQIA+
28 of 40 (70%) earned under $10,000 annually from music-related work

5 of whom (33%) were confident that they will have sufficient ongoing music-related work in the next 12 months
Of the 40 who did *not* identify as LGBTQIA+
27 of 40 (68%) were confident

Musicians identifying as non-binary/third gender and/or LGBTQIA+ reported a dearth of spaces in local contexts for non-white gender diverse and rainbow communities to come together. Specifically, participants identified a lack of LGBTQIA+ community-run sites for music-related work. Consider the following excerpt from an interview with a Sri Lankan New Zealand musician, which foregrounds the urgent need for safe spaces to enable community-led prevention of discrimination and violence:

> When I say community, I mean that in so many different ways. My arts community, my Sri Lankan community, my queer community, all of those different whānau that I exist in. …

> My queer friends are drag queens. And so, when the lockdown happened, their livelihood was gone because they couldn't perform anymore. For a lot of the queer community, these gay spaces are spaces where they can feel safe. Being in lockdown, it's like being in Christmas, which is traumatic for a lot of people to go back to their families and their aggression and bigoted kind-a ideas. …
>
> And also, prior to lockdown, we were talking about queer spaces kind-a dwindling away because people are meeting online, so they don't have the same significance as they did for, say, my seniors or some of my mentors or adults or even for me as well. I mean, I remember going to a gay bar, and a lot of my cousins and their young ones are like, 'It's not the same for us.'

In the context of music-related work, the notion of safe spaces ought to be defined and created by communities of LGBTQIA+ musicians. Here, many younger musicians from Wellington identified No Mercy collective as one among a few examples of artist-led initiatives attending to race-based asymmetries within LGBTQIA+ communities. Financial and infrastructural support for more artist-led initiatives in a range of geographic locations is recommended. While the initiatives may be complemented by digital networks, priority should be given to in-person, place-based contexts and local communities of practice.

1.4 Planning for rapidly changing demographics

Existing research notes rapidly changing demographics among settler communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. With Statistics NZ's recent data predicting that the New Zealand Asian population will grow from 16% in 2018 to 26% by 2043, it is vital that infrastructural groundwork be laid down to support the livelihoods of Asian New Zealanders.

2018 Census data suggests that most Asian New Zealanders are migrants, with 77% being born overseas, and most of those born in New Zealand being under the age of 15 (65%). This suggests that the building of infrastructure ought to consider supporting younger, emergent career musicians to sustain their livelihood in the long term.

The median age for the Asian population was 31 years during the last Census (2018), and the participants of this study roughly reflected that:

SURVEY SNIPPET

How old are you?

40 of 55 (73%) under the age of 35
10 of 55 (18%) 35–44 years of age
5 of 55 (9%) 45–54 years of age

There were no respondents to the survey 55 years of age and above

1.5 ‘Asian New Zealanders’ and the risk of homogeneity

Despite its use in demography, ‘Asian’ is an unsatisfactory descriptor for many of the people it assumes to describe. ‘Asian New Zealanders’ are not homogenous, nor do they necessarily identify as a community under that terminology. A cursory glance at the table below shows us that, when asked to narrate their identity, only 1 of 55 chose the descriptor of Asian. Other participants preferred a range specific to cultures, ethnicities, regions and nations:

SURVEY SNIPPET

- Afghani 1
- Asian 1
- Bangladeshi, Pākehā 1
- Bengali 2
- Burmese, NZ European 1
- Chinese 9
- Chinese, NZ European 3
- Eurasian 2
- Eurasian, Malaysian, British 1
- Fijian Indian 2
- Filipina/Filipino 6
- Gujarati 1
- Hakka Chinese 1
- Han Chinese 1
- Indian 5
- Indonesian 1
- Japanese 1
- Japanese, Indonesian, Pākehā 1
- Japanese, NZ European, Albanian, Danish, English 1
- Japanese, Pākehā 1
- Korean 2
- Malay 2
- Māori, Chinese, Scottish, Swedish 1
- Māori, Indian 1
- NZ, Malaysian, Indian, Chinese 1
- NZ Chinese (Cantonese, Hakka, Han Chinese, Northern Chinese) 1
- NZ European, South Asian 1
- Punjabi 1
- Sinhalese 1
- Sri Lankan 1
- Sri Lankan Tamil 1

These responses invite reflection on the term ‘Asian’, and the possible reasons it was not the participants’ chosen way of narrating group belonging. One reason is that the term does not translate to cultural expressions—i.e. there is no ‘Asian culture’ from which ‘Asian music’ arises. As such, to speak of an Asian grouping risks creating a monolith that overwrites meaningful differences. Another reason is its prevalent use as a top-down category—e.g. for the enactment of governmental policies. In such contexts, the term may be experienced as bureaucratic and otherising.

The category of ‘Asian New Zealanders’ obfuscates inequalities within diverse communities. Participants’ ethnic and cultural communities are heterogeneous spaces with multiple, competing tensions. They are fragmented and dynamic, marked by inequalities across class, gender, sexuality, ability, migration status and a range of other categories. Indian New Zealanders, for instance, are subject to caste hierarchies in Aotearoa New Zealand that reflect those of the subcontinent. Many Asian New Zealanders have multiple inheritances and intersecting identities. In this study, it is notable that LGBTQIA+ musicians reported higher levels of marginalisation than their cisgender and straight Asian New Zealand counterparts.

On top of the more visible racialisation within the context of whiteness, the challenges Asian New Zealanders face are also related to experiences of inequality within their own communities. Taking the category of Asian New Zealanders at face value obfuscates these asymmetries. Writing over the differences and disparities risks imposing an essentialist, top-down perspective embedded in whiteness.

While campaigns for equitable representation can provide validation, recognition, and support, such efforts cannot be easily categorised as an achievement unless they simultaneously address the many types of asymmetries existing within communities. Without this latter consideration, levers of representation can create further tiers of marginalisation for those who do not fit the dominant ethnic, religious or gender groups. Therefore, any initiative focused on Asian New Zealanders should understand communities as heterogeneous spaces where asymmetries of power are continually negotiated. This understanding should seek out the voices of people who are historically and ongoingly marginalised within such groupings.

1.6 Centring the craft

Even as social identity forms the backdrop of this study, cultural production based on homogenising identitarian frameworks—e.g. a festival based on a category like 'Asian New Zealanders'—are unlikely to be as compelling for musicians as those productions centred on the specificities of their craft and their experiences. The recommendation to centre musicians' craft is based on the following observations:

- Respondents did not choose consistent categories around which to narrate their social identity. (1.5)
- 31% said they did not identify as marginalised. (1.2)
- When musicians were asked what they identified as the most important overall thing to achieve from music-related work, study participants overwhelmingly chose responses related to their craft as musicians: 43 of 55 (78%) 'feel personally satisfied by what I'm creating', 32 of 55 (58%) 'continually improve my craft'. (2.7)

1.7 Cultural imperialism and cultural essentialism

Cultural imperialism broadly describes the coercive influence and even domination in cultural relationships where values, practices and meanings of a more powerful culture are imposed upon other cultures. This tends to structurally inhibit peoples' abilities, capacities and potentialities. Respondents suggested that when the topic of New Zealand music comes up, what it presumes to define and delimit is important to interrogate.

In the backdrop of cultural imperialism, participants who worked in music of Asian cultural origins reported difficulties in their efforts to vernacularise their craft in Aotearoa New Zealand. The following interview excerpts show that music of Asian cultural origins is frequently invisibilized, stereotyped as other, or altogether discredited:

> The main problem of the music industry in New Zealand, which I see should be recognised and solutions should be found for, is an openness to other cultures' music.

> The ongoing, annoying challenge is the kind of exoticism of someone who isn't Pacific or European in this country making music. You know, like, that's just continuing. Like, that's just

> never stopped, like, you know? But interestingly, from my perspective, like, it's exploded, you know? The number of people involved in the music of my culture, my heritage, or even the extended Asian culture, is huge. Like, in the last 20 years, we were all hiding. But we're there, you know?

> Recently, I started teaching at *** and this new faculty is quite interested in, sort of, exploring *** for Western classical music students. But in the last 11 years, I have seen that the people are quite stubborn about keeping it very white and Eurocentric. So this is how the music industry has been as well. I have faced many challenges. I even faced some incidents where I faced some racism, hidden racism as well, being *** musician.

Participants also tied cultural imperialism to disparate access to funds. Consider the following interview excerpt that foregrounds the status and funding accorded to music of European cultural origins:

> I may have raved about this before but it is the amount of funding that, say, the NZSO gets. They get 14 million, you know, and then the next one down is the Royal Ballet. And so, there's massively funded completely culturally irrelevant things. … It's status music, you know? … How they measure what is commercially viable kind of gets looked over when it's this sort of status music. … What they do … could be done in any city in the world.

When the same interviewee was asked what kinds of solutions they would propose to address these challenges, their response centred on more funding of non-Western music, especially Māori and Pacific. The excerpt below shows respect for Māori and Pacific arts, which the interviewee takes as a solution to address the inequalities in the music sector. Worth noting is that for Asian New Zealanders struggling against the backdrop of racism intertwined with cultural imperialism, Māori and Pacific arts and culture offer ways forward:

> Yeah well I mean *** put that money into a taonga pūoro school. Throw a couple of million into that and allow the taonga pūoro practitioners there to be properly paid to pass on their work. … That still gets passed on in little tiny wānanga, in community halls and churches and maraes and things like that on a koha basis. And that's really lovely. That's a really sort of healthy community way of doing it. But there's nothing wrong with throwing a whole lot of money at that and going, 'Look, actually, you guys could be, could have your own school with, with your own buildings, and, and we could pay carvers to make more instruments.' … There's all sorts of ethnomusicology that could be going on in this country that doesn't, because it's not valued at all. … I looked at Cook Island music in *** when I was studying ethnomusicology. Talking to the elders in *** and talking about the fact that the music is dying in New Zealand. … Of course, no one even knows it's disappearing outside of that community. It's music like that. Because again, that's specific to our area. That's the Cook Islands and New Zealand, and that's the only places—and well Australia probably—but the

> only places you're gonna hear that. Yeah, and like I say, you compare that to 15 million to the NZSO to play music you can hear anywhere in the world. Well, you know. It seems a really easy choice to me.

Given the young median age of 31 years of the Asian population (Census 2018), it is reasonable to assume that part of the participants' identities are informed by what it means to be a migrant or a child of migrant parents, and the need to make a cultural connection with Aotearoa New Zealand while maintaining connections with a country of origin. Music is at the heart of these connections, yet hierarchical systems of advantage and disadvantage created by current infrastructures within the music sector limit the ability of Asian New Zealand musicians to sustain involvement with identity, culture and belonging on their own terms. The framing of Asian-origin music in the context of cultural imperialism erases the agentic capacities of diverse communities, and their ability to offer transformative solutions to sector inequities.

Participants further reported that the opportunities for music-related work created by governmental infrastructures for music of Asian cultural origins are problematic. The following account is from a musician who no longer performs at the annual Diwali festivals, which they see as a site that invisibilizes the expertise of musicians, the identities of minorities within minorities (e.g. non-Hindu, South Indian, queer etc.), and artistic expressions that are experimental, syncretic and plural. In the name of cultural representation, the festival risks exacerbating inequalities within Asian communities:

> I was just thinking about community. … From about 2001 to 2011, I played within the South Asian communities in *** a lot, like we did all these like Diwali gigs. … Those communities didn't quite appreciate the artists that were within, in their midst. … I wonder what that does for our sense of identity because it changes the way we see ourselves and the support that we don't have from our communities.

Another participant identified the Diwali festival as among a few sites where they were not paid as professional musicians, which embeds precarity for full-time workers in the name of cultural representation:

> From last five years, four years I've been performing there never got paid a single penny. I always ask them, why do they not? … The whole band performed last time. I did, like, three performances on mainstage. I do it because I think it's good, because it's our festival. It's a Diwali. It's a representation of Indian community, as being ethnic musicians. … But no one get paid a single penny.

Yet another participant identified the Diwali festivals organised by governmental bodies as a site where 'that rigidity [is] being pushed on to you'—i.e. rigid definitions of culture based in static and stereotypical ideals. In this interview, Diwali was identified as a site where the Indian identity is narrowly circumscribed such that it results in resentment and a sense of estrangement for many. To the question, 'What are you looking for, here?' Their response was:

> Something more, like, youthful and contemporary, and playful. … Something that's always transforming, like a young, confident group of South Asians that are playful and constantly playing. … There is a new sound, and there's new, new things going on between me and some of my peers that I am aware of, that I really would like to see out there. … Something that's not set, fixed by such rigidity. I think it'd be really freeing to have a space to be South Asian and, and to have play and be whatever that you are as a South Asian.

These responses invite further research and reflection on the way governmental infrastructures support music of Asian cultural origins, and the possible reasons that participants found the site of Diwali to be fixed by 'rigid' appeals to cultural essentialism.

1.8 Beyond the goal of inclusion

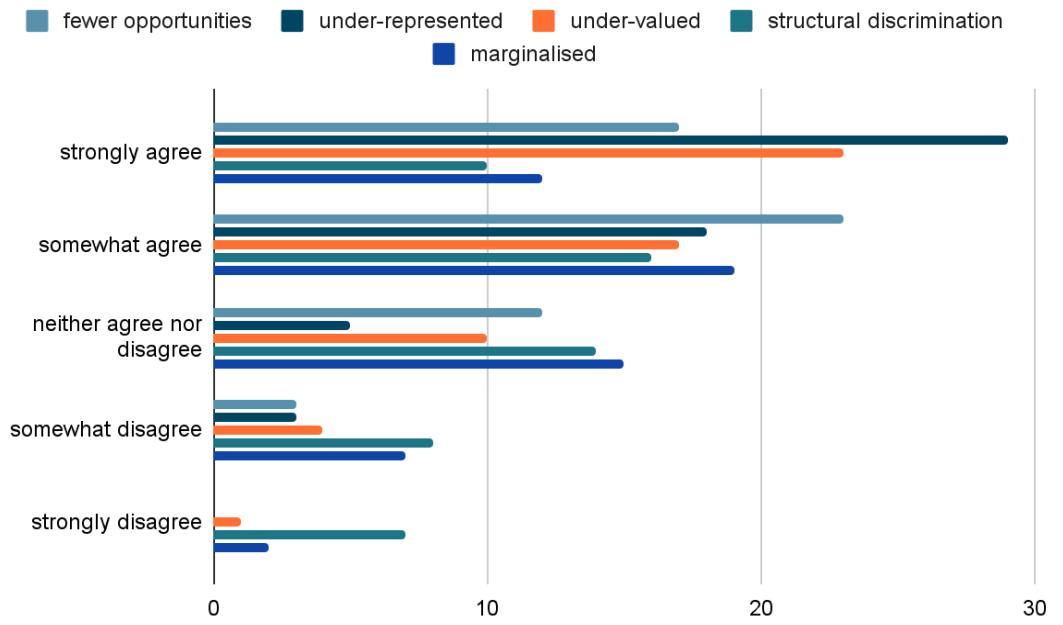
Anecdotal evidence collected in 2021 by SquareSums&Co. suggested that while there may be numerous Asian New Zealand musicians practising in Aotearoa, there was not a sense of connected communities. The establishment of a Facebook group by SquareSums&Co. in September 2021 called Where The Asians At?! attracted over 160 members in the first month (525 members as of 10 October 2022). Group discussions centred on questions such as, 'If 15% of Aotearoa New Zealand is Asian, does the music sector reflect that?'

Survey respondents to this study agreed that Asian New Zealanders are underrepresented across the music sector, and that fewer opportunities exist for them. There was also broad agreement that Asian New Zealanders are undervalued for their artistic and cultural contributions:

[see following page for survey snippet]

SURVEY SNIPPET

- There are fewer opportunities for Asian New Zealanders in the music sector
- Asian New Zealanders are underrepresented across the music sector
- Asian New Zealanders are undervalued for their artistic and cultural contributions
- Structural discrimination (e.g. racism, sexism etc.) has been a barrier in my ability to grow my career in music
- I feel marginalised in the music sector in Aotearoa New Zealand



However, a key finding of this study is that the wider economic context of music-related work—specifically, of increasingly precarious work arrangements amidst ongoing transformations in neoliberal economies—requires a more nuanced understanding of inclusion. Considering the bleak levels of income reported by musicians (3.1), seeking inclusion of Asian New Zealanders in a music sector that struggles to provide a living wage for the vast majority of musicians would be a misdirected aim. Structural transformations of the sector itself must be sought if music-related work is to be regarded as a viable and sustainable career path. The current effects of poor remuneration impacts the entire ecosystem and has effects as wide as limiting the participation of emerging musicians, curbing the development of talent, challenging the long term sustainability of musicians' careers, and reducing the number of paid specialist support roles.

Therefore, inclusion and equitable representation of Asian New Zealanders must come combined with structural transformations. Guided by the voices of musicians working in the precarious conditions of the gig economy, this study finds that future efforts should be directed towards systemic changes that can make music-related work an economically sustainable career path. Here, Asian New Zealand musicians' lived experiences of negotiating multiple layers of precarity and marginalisation can offer perspectives on the way forward.

2. Anchored in Community and Artist-led Collectives

2.1 Calling attention to asymmetries of power

Despite widespread changes in music consumption and distribution over recent decades, access to opportunities within the music sector is still largely determined by a managerial class—i.e. sector and industry professionals who are frequently referred to and perceived as gatekeepers. While such a dichotomy between 'management' and musicians is not always a neat binary, participants described an asymmetry of power that can leave musicians feeling a loss of agency. Promoters, booking agencies, record labels, artist managers and other professionals have a significant role in shaping musicians' access to relevant work. During the interviews, participants identified the power imbalance in the following ways:

> I realised the only way I could make a chance for myself and get a foot in the door is by getting an internship somewhere or getting to know artist managers or people in the industry that would be able to pick my name out of the box and be like, 'I know this person. At least I've met them once. I might as well give them an opportunity.'

> The people at the top of the industry, like the record labels, the festival organisers, like, at the end of the day, they hold the power.

One interviewee described industry professionals as 'parasitic', suggesting that the asymmetrical relationship is sometimes viscerally experienced by musicians:

> Like, a lot of the successful business people in music, a lot of them are really grimy, you know? … I think the industry itself is kind of *** because it's, like, okay, you have an artist. And then the way the manager and the booking agent, everyone, makes money is off of the artist. … It's this weird, symbiotic, parasitic thing.

Another interviewee suggested that funding bodies, artist managers and other industry professionals often work with a particular view of music as a commodity value. In such a worldview, the treatment of musicians and the opportunities afforded to them is comparable to other schemes of human capital development. Musical performance is considered as an asset: a personal attribute useful within a greater production process that musicians themselves have little control over. Study participants spoke about these conceptual frameworks as inegalitarian and alienating:

> I find that they're [industry professionals] not willing to speak in terms that artists are comfortable with, always couched their language, in, like, business speak. And it's sort of like we have to learn that business speak to communicate with them. … That is how you make it work in the system, through this filter. I totally understand that. But the reason why we have the value that we have, and that we are able to deliver that value, is because we hold fast to resisting those filters in the first place. So, in order to create what we create, we sort of need to resist that. … When I'm interacting with managers or city councils or funding bodies, I find that they always want us to interact in a way that's for them.

While the asymmetry of power described by study participants highlights a need for transparency in decision-making on the part of industry professionals, and new models of behaviour that avoid nepotism and backroom deals, campaigning for change of perceived gatekeeping practices is not the only remedy. Another area identified for improvement, and one that may yield a more substantial remedy for musicians, is the strengthening of artist-led collectives. (2.3)

Consider the survey snippet below. The topmost responses show that participants identified perceived gatekeeping by industry professionals as among the biggest problems. If these responses could be described as 'industry-led' initiatives, then the remaining responses could be described, roughly, as 'community-led':

SURVEY SNIPPET

Where do you perceive to be the biggest problems and therefore the greatest potential for change that would improve the status quo of the music sector as a whole? (choose up to 3)

- 34 (62%) 'artist management, booking agencies, presenters, promoters'
- 28 (51%) 'streaming services, digital platforms'
- 14 (25%) 'publishing, sync, licensing companies'
- 14 (25%) 'music venues, festivals'
- 13 (24%) 'record labels'
- 11 (20%) 'funding bodies'

- 10 (18%) 'artist collectives, community networks, advocacy groups'
- 10 (18%) 'music press, publications'
- 7 (13%) 'collaborators, other musicians, peers'
- 1 (2%) 'higher education, schooling'

That 'community-led' areas hold critical potential for supporting musicians was confirmed by the below inverse survey question. Here, community-led initiatives outperformed industry-led initiatives in offering support:

SURVEY SNIPPET

What sector of the music industry has most helped you to sustain and/or grow your career in music?

- 39 (71%) ‘collaborators, other musicians, peers’
- 32 (58%) ‘artist collectives, community networks, advocacy groups’
- 13 (24%) ‘higher education, schooling’
- 12 (22%) ‘music venues, festivals’
- 9 (16%) ‘streaming services, digital platforms’
- 6 (11%) ‘artist management, booking agencies, presenters, promoters’
- 6 (11%) ‘funding bodies’
- 6 (11%) ‘music press, publications’
- 3 (5%) ‘record labels’
- 2 (4%) ‘publishing, sync, licensing companies’

The responses to these questions suggest that to remedy the asymmetry of power between management and musicians, it would be useful for artist-led collectives and community-led initiatives to have increased power in providing work opportunities to musicians. (2.3)

2.2 Significant gaps in communication

Participants identified significant gaps in the communication of information, resources and support available for musicians, which make it difficult for them to navigate precarious working arrangements. Many were unaware of the efforts of industry bodies, sector organisations, governmental initiatives, community groups and the like. This lack of awareness among participants was a consistent theme.

It is possible that the bureaucracy and disempowerment involved in seeking help forms a disincentive. While organisations exist to help musicians navigate work in the sector, the question remains: What failures of communication might be occurring that musicians should either not know about such organisations or feel reluctant to seek their support?

Survey results show that digital platforms offer musicians a way to connect with new audiences and communities. However, respondents also said that having digital connections did not mean that they could find relevant and timely information. It is reasonable to suggest that current use of digital platforms by organisations is ineffective as a tool for information and resource sharing, and for providing broader social support:

SURVEY SNIPPET

- 65% (36 of 55) musicians found their personal use of social media to be helpful in connecting them with new audiences and communities
- 49% (27 of 55) musicians said that they did *not* know how to find relevant and timely information that would be helpful for their music-related work

  Among the 27 respondents were 9 musicians with more than 10 years’ experience working in the music sector

Participants also reported that information-sharing is poor between groups and organisations located in different regions. As one survey respondent noted: 'The music sector in Aotearoa feels very disconnected. Anything and everything we can do to improve the flow of communication between creative individuals, communities and organisations is a step that needs to be taken.' Also consider the following interview excerpt from a musician who identified difficulties in obtaining relevant and timely information for performing in other cities:

> I do have another thing, a suggestion of what would be really great as an artist. It's just support for performing in places outside your local. So if I was to go perform in Auckland or Christchurch, if there was a way to have, like, 'Oh, here's a venue and here's a connection to a local artist and we'll help get the word out to help you bring in some people and I know some people in the industry and a reviewer to tell about your gig so that they can come along and take note of it.' That kind of support would be great. Also, even more so internationally.

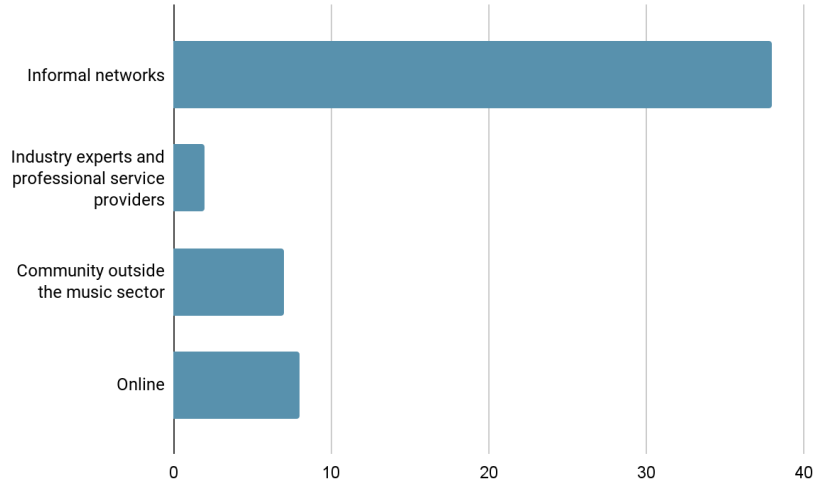
2.3 Strengthening artist-led collectives

Musicians reported that they received the greatest support from other musicians. Informal networks, peer groups and social circles are the core ways that musicians navigate music-related work, and can impact everything from mental wellbeing to the development of one's craft:

SURVEY SNIPPET

When you have felt stuck or confused in navigating the music sector, where have you primarily had the most success in finding help and guidance?

- Informal networks (e.g. mentors, other musicians, collaborators etc.)
- Industry experts and professional service providers (e.g. artist managers, industry organisations etc.)
- Community outside the music sector (e.g. family, friends etc.)
- Online (e.g. internet searches, social media, Google etc.)



SURVEY SNIPPET

Overall, what has been most helpful to you in your career in music? (choose up to 3)

- 25 of 55 (45%) ‘learning from another musician, band’
- 23 of 55 (42%) ’friends, social circle, local scene’
- 21 of 55 (38%) ‘playing gigs, touring’
- 20 of 55 (36%) ‘artist-led collectives, grassroots communities’
- 16 of 55 (29%) ‘concentrated practice, becoming more confident’
- 15 of 55 (27%) ‘family support’
- 15 of 55 (27%) ‘specific teacher, mentor’
- 8 of 55 (15%) ‘financial security and/or support’
- 8 of 55 (15%) ‘sharing work online and growing a following’
- 7 of 55 (13%) ‘industry professionals, artist managers, producers’
- 6 of 55 (11%) ‘higher education, schooling’
- 3 of 55 (5%) ‘grant, residency, scholarship’
- 3 of 55 (5%) ‘releasing a hit song or album’

For some whose daily work does not bring them into collaborative contact with other musicians, such as those whose primary work is music teaching, there is a vital need to connect with peers.

SURVEY SNIPPET

47% (26 of 55) musicians **did *not*** find it easy to **find appropriate collaborators**
62% (34 of 55) musicians reported that they **did *not*** find it is easy **to find new audiences and communities**

Many participants also acknowledged that existing peer networks created closed groups, which limited opportunities for people who faced marginalisation on the basis of their social identity. In the current music ecology of Aotearoa New Zealand, it is critical to strengthen artist-led collectives that attend to race, gender and class-based asymmetries in the music sector. One salient example of an artist-led approach to community-building identified by participants is the Wellington-based Eastern Sound Collective.

Funding and support for existing artist-led collectives is recommended. Given the disincentives and failures in communication identified in 2.2, funding agencies ought to proactively seek out artist-led collectives to co-create solutions to the problems in the music sector conceptualised by the collectives as opposed to implementing top-down interventions. Further recommended are initiatives to support the formation of new artist-led collectives in diverse place-based contexts, especially those attending to the aforementioned asymmetries in the music sector.

The following interview excerpt highlights the centrality of an artist-led collective for a musician who relies solely on music-related earnings:

> The collective started as a representation outfit really. Just a collective that would allow more Asian arts and voices to be present in the scene. And that was really just the main driver for everyone being together. We could put on shows together, we could get on radio and create a platform in some way to get people to get, you know, Asian artists seen and heard. And so when people were, you know, looking for what's going on within the Asian communities in New Zealand, then *** would be like a place that they could, one of many, hopefully, organisations they could approach for information. But also opportunities could come through us, but it isn't meant to in any way be an entity that takes over as some kind of umbrella organisation. At first, it was going to be more like a boiler room for ideas. And then also, like, we could put on shows and organise things and do the admin work around it to allow artists to just be what they are. It goes against the entrepreneurial kind of model of what we think we need in the arts.

Participants further highlighted the centrality of place-based community spaces for strengthening personal relationships, providing peer support, securing more work opportunities for members, affording greater visibility and increasing musicians' capacity to undertake advocacy projects. Participants described the need for physical spaces for communities to get together and host a wide range of activities, such as education, upskilling, hui and conversations on topical issues. Face-to-face interaction was reported to be the basis of social support.

As section 1.5 demonstrates, communities are heterogeneous spaces with multiple, competing tensions. They are fragmented and dynamic, marked by inequalities across race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, migration status and a range of other categories. Therefore, how community and collective spaces are defined matters. Building invitational spaces with attention to such inequalities can have many flow-on benefits for musicians, increasing their autonomy and authority over work and wellbeing. The mutual support and collective organising made possible by community-led spaces can translate into advocacy campaigns, such as those identified in this report (3.5, 3.6).

2.4 Appetite for mentorship opportunities

The desire for mentorship was frequently articulated in interviews and survey responses. When asked, 'What support do you feel your community needs right now?' Participants said:

> Well, apart from money, I think it also needs mentoring. … It needs people with experience and knowledge to give that time back.

> Try and match you with the right kind-a mentors who can help you with that. Sometimes, like, you know, like two of the sessions where like you gotta write a funding application so you can work towards a show.

Participants identified mentorship opportunities as a way to improve the music sector overall. Beyond the craft of making music, they identified areas for further training and development to make music-related work more viable—e.g. recording and sound engineering experience, help with identifying suitable grants and ways of generating funds, and community hui for the sharing of technical knowledge. Professional development and capability building programmes such as these can be anchored in the work of existing and new artist-led collectives. It is recommended that artist-led collectives—especially those attending to race, gender and class-based inequalities—be sought and supported with sufficient funding to deliver such programmes.

2.5 Insufficient infrastructural support

SURVEY SNIPPET

38% (21 of 55) of the participants did *not* have all the equipment they needed to do their music-related work.

When asked to specify the equipment, musicians reported:

> 'I have necessary musical equipment but not other equipment for music-related peripheral work such as photography and other related visual works.'

Other musicians also noted restricted access to peripheral equipment:

> 'access to equipment and tools that are not always immediately available or expensive'
> 'access to software and some electronic devices'
> 'recording equipment'
> 'performance speakers, but most of the time provided by venue. but if it were not a venue, i need to rent them'
> 'I borrow or hire out equipment'
> 'no amp, equalizer, etc'
> 'technical equipment (mics, amps etc.)'

Musicians reported that current infrastructural support does not match community-level demand. One musician explained that despite being skilled in music, they did not have the kind of high-end electronic equipment required to realise given work opportunities:

> We turn down concert opportunities simply because we don't think we can do it because we don't know how to. And it's overwhelming. And it's frustrating, because these concerts would be great opportunities and we don't know what would come with them.

Participants reported difficulties in accessing infrastructural support and resources, with some suggesting that an artist and label services firm could provide some help towards the kinds of opportunities that improve participation of Asian New Zealanders in the music sector. Such an initiative could help address related challenges at the same time, such as the poor circulation of relevant and timely information for musicians, connecting artists with audiences, and providing the necessary technical expertise and equipment for musicians to realise their aspirations.

To be sure, infrastructure encompasses more than equipment to include a range of auxiliary supports for the music industry at large—from venues for live performance to platforms for music distribution to personnel for legal support.

SURVEY SNIPPET

10% (4 of 42—i.e. not counting 13 who reported N/A) feel well-supported by existing record labels to further their career in music

58% (32 of 55) felt that there exist appropriate venues and events for their work in music

48% (24 of 50—i.e. not counting 5 who reported N/A) felt well supported by venue managers and event organisers

A Wellington-based Asian New Zealander who has worked as a gigging musician since the late 1990s explained their frustration with the current infrastructure:

> We have the artists. We have the people, we have the creative energy. But what we don't have is the scaffolding around it. You know? And it's putting that scaffolding up around us that really needs to happen.

This lack of infrastructural support is echoed in another interview by an emerging band who are popular and well-respected overseas but invisibilized in Aotearoa New Zealand's music sector:

> Why is it so exclusive? Like we're a tiny country. It's so hard to get exposure. And maybe my one bit of advice to like the New Zealand music industry would be to break down the barriers, make it more accessible.

2.6 Overseas recognition

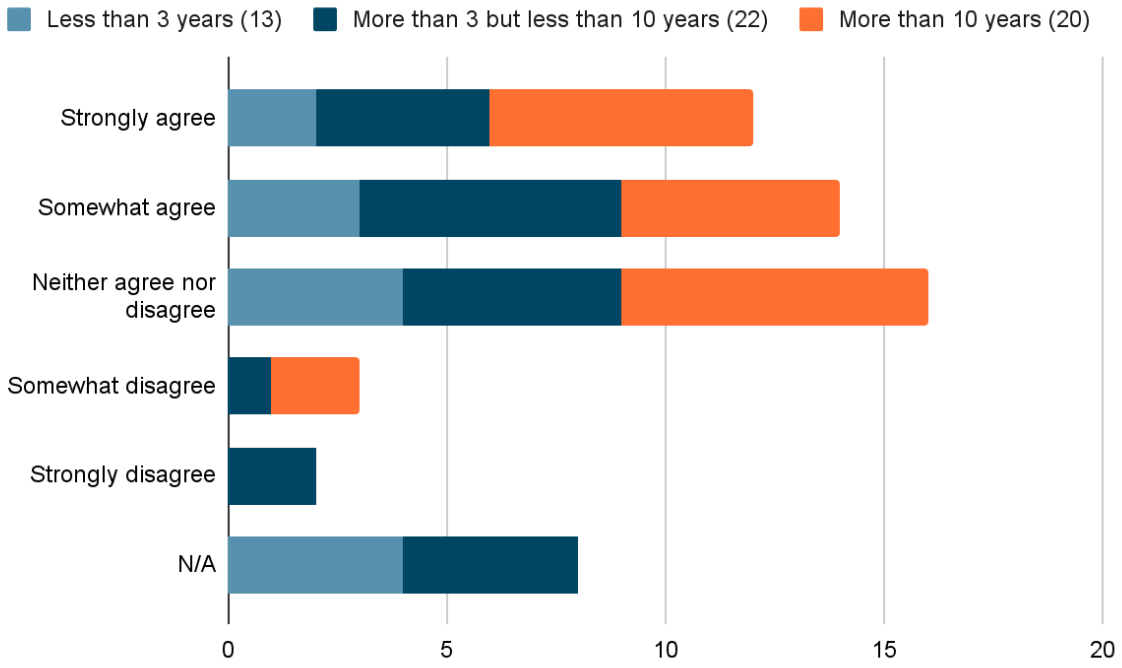
The need for greater infrastructural support (2.5) extends to musicians seeking international opportunities —e.g. touring, publishing contracts, etc. Many participants reported that they receive greater support and recognition overseas as compared with Aotearoa New Zealand. While this may reflect persistent undervaluing of musicians generally, it's likely to be further exacerbated for Asian New Zealand musicians in the backdrop of racism (1.2) and cultural imperialism (1.7). One musician who migrated to North America for music-related work suggested that support of this kind might help to retain talent within Aotearoa New Zealand.

SURVEY SNIPPET

20% (11 of 55) musicians reported they had the **necessary resources should they choose to tour and perform overseas**

SURVEY SNIPPET

I receive greater support or recognition for my music-related activities overseas than in Aotearoa New Zealand



2.7 Musicians' definitions of success

Public perceptions of success in music typically centre on fame, popularity or audience growth. There's a commonly-held belief that musicians desire to be rewarded financially to the point of riches and be popular to the point of national or international fame. Despite the alienating effects that fame and wealth can often have, and the risks associated with leaving behind one's original community of collaborators and social support structure, these definitions of success persist in the public sphere.

In this study, such views were not reflected by musicians themselves. When asked what they defined as the most important overall thing to achieve from music-related work, study participants overwhelmingly chose responses related to their craft as musicians:

SURVEY SNIPPET

Personally, what do you see as the most important overall thing to achieve from your music related work? (choose up to 3)

43 of 55 (78%) 'feel personally satisfied by what I'm creating'
32 of 55 (58%) 'continually improve my craft'
25 of 55 (45%) 'feel validated by a supportive and engaged audience'
25 of 55 (45%) 'support myself financially though music-related work'

10 of 55 (18%) 'consistently book shows or go on tour'
8 of 55 (15%) 'release and distribute new music'
3 of 55 (5%) 'receive critical acclaim for my work'

0 of 55 (0%) 'consistently grow my listenership and number of fans'

Worth noting is that no respondents prioritised 'consistently grow my listenership and number of fans' among the top three most important overall things to achieve.

Although musicians' ability to sustain a career is dependent, in part, on the decisions of 'management' or other industry professionals, musicians themselves do not hold such allocation of resources front of mind. In this way, the familiar dynamics of oligopsony—e.g. a few extremely profitable record labels dishing out pitiful royalties to millions of struggling musicians—are given less narrative power. The agreed-upon social value of perceived gatekeepers is ideologically challenged. It could be said that by giving importance to personal satisfaction and the development of one's craft, study participants are affirming a values system contradictory to expected markers of commercial success.

Some of the participants articulated what might be called an anti-growth or anti-fame mindset, which was tied to their alternative definitions of success:

> It's like everyone is in the GDP, it's all about growth. It's like, what's wrong with a band just chugging along and making enough dollars a year? It's like, why does a band have to make more millions and millions dollars a year? … The artists with the most consistent careers are the ones who can put out an album every two years, count on selling out venues. … It's just that success doesn't have to be about growth.

> To be super blunt, it's like, 'For me to succeed, I have to be famous.' That's kind of, that's the enemy of creativity for me.

> We didn't go out being like, 'Oh, we're gonna be a famous punk band.' Because I feel like if you're a punk band, surely you can't expect to be famous.

Other study participants suggested that different definitions of success result in different music aesthetics. And when this difference goes unrecognised by funders and industry professionals, it can result in incentivising an aesthetically homogenous music sector:

> It inhibits certain ways of working, I guess, because it encourages, encourages creating music that will be popular or will be easily accessible. Or, aesthetically speaking, that is. And it disincentivizes any work that is actually, in any way radical—not that I, I don't like that term either actually. Disincentivizes any work that is actually challenging to the status quo, or any work that is challenging to long held sort of aesthetic beliefs or whatever. Because those will be obviously more risky. …
>
> I used to run festivals, and it'd be festivals of experimental music, and we got funding for a year or two. And then they're, then they're saying, well, now that you've had funding for a couple of years, you need to be in a position where you are funding yourselves and being commercially successful. Our response of course was, well we will never be commercially successful in that way because the music that we present is difficult for people to, to process. So the role of the state's funding body is to support that music. If you think it's important enough to fund then you should continue, you know what I mean? So that's, yeah, so that's, I mean, that makes—it's not that the success criteria, success sort of structure, stops people making music, it's actually, it just encourages the wrong sorts of music.

> It's much easier to get funding through creative communities. You know the small, small council funding, because their focus is very much on community engagement and cultural engagement and local, you know, localism for lack of a better word, I guess. … I say the council's much more willing to sort of go well here's a, here's two or three thousand dollars, and you want to do this weird weird music? But you're attempting to engage with the public with it and you're attempting to expand your audience and you're attempting to make the city a richer place? And that's, and these are the sort of criteria that I can get on board with. I can go 'yes, that's totally what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to expand my artwork but I'm also trying to engage with people. I'm trying to make the place where I live a more interesting and a richer place. And a lot of the time I'm trying to engage with cultures that aren't my own.'

2.8 Resistance to market logics

Musicians' definitions of success articulated in 2.7 stood in contrast to neoliberal frameworks of market value, commercial growth, human capital, wealth creation and so on. Interviewees and survey respondents demonstrated resistance to adopting corporate language and a social marketing approach to music. Many went further and articulated the need for activist resistance to the entrepreneurial imperatives reinforced by funding agencies and 'management', which threaten to restructure how musicians understand their own work:

> Musicians are made to get into the frame of mind of being entrepreneurs in some way. … Like, it feels like we've adopted some kind of corporate culture in the way that we have to, we have to talk like small businesses.

Dominant neoliberal frameworks construct musicians as responsible for the creation of their own commercial success. Those who do not strive to grow a fan base and adhere to other commercial metrics of success are seen as lacking in motivation and aspiration. One survey respondent recommended: 'We need to stop focusing so much on "hit" music and making everything marketable.' An interview participant suggested that the neoliberal frameworks are ultimately detrimental to the pursuit of their creative practice and the artistic dimension of their music:

> The artists' lexicon now has to, like, expand to include words like revenue and reporting. … It's not that the art practices have changed, but other things that you need to show for the value of your work has changed. So, like, reporting has now changed in the last 10 years. Streaming, and your profile on Spotify and iTunes, and all that sort of stuff. And it's interesting when you think about how people are made to reorient themselves as artists every generation. … There's *** who's a master of Facebook ads and Spotify streams. And he's done so well for himself just as an independent artist with a microphone in his house rapping on beats that he buys off particular producers. And he gets, like, you know, a million streams. He's playing the game, but he knows it. It blows my mind. I think, amazing, like, good for you. But also, you know, it seems to me if we were all doing that we would lose something in the arts, and something in the music would not be there. We would just be competing to get streams to get ears on our music. That won't necessarily translate the same way.

SURVEY SNIPPET

What have been your greatest challenges in pursuing a fulfilling and sustainable career in music? (choose up to 3)

42 of 55 (76%) 'Insufficient music-related earnings and lack of job security'
34 of 55 (62%) 'Commercialised, corporatised, profit-based and/or 'market-driven' industry culture'
28 of 55 (51%) 'Lack of community, professional networks and/or connection to opportunities'
14 of 55 (25%) 'Insufficient other financial resources and support'

- The above responses were then followed by 11 of 55 (20%) who reported 'structural prejudice and/or discrimination in the industry (e.g. racism, sexism etc.)'
- Worth noting is that only 5 of 55 (9%) reported 'publicity and promotion' as among their greatest challenges

3. The Worth of Music-Related Work

3.1 Precarity and poverty

> I barely earn royalties from the recordings. And that's just the nature of those recording deals. They are just really exploitative, and so, you know, you take into account discrimination based on gender and race, and it just becomes harder, even harder.

New Zealand does not have an official poverty measure. However, one way to indicate low-income thresholds is to use the distribution of wealth by selected wealth percentile. If the average annual income of the poorest tenth of New Zealanders was around $11,000 in 2013, then with 41 of 55 (75%) of the participants earning less than $10,000 annually from music-related work, relying solely on it would drive the vast majority below the poverty line.

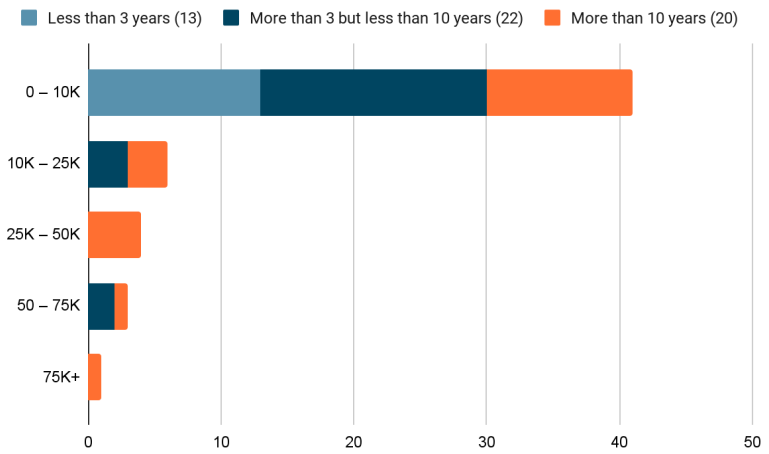
The condition of precarity is a salient feature of the work of musicians. Precarious work arrangements tend to be one-off, short-term, low-paid and with limited to no entitlements. Musicians reported working many unpaid hours in the music sector to assist in their career advancement. In order to build a liveable wage, they worked multiple jobs in a variety of other industries.

The below survey snippets show that both the *amount* of earnings from music-related work as well as the percentage *proportion* of overall annual income are low. Note that early career musicians (less than 3 years) and experienced musicians (more than 10 years) reported, in a like manner, that it was difficult to make a living wage from music-related work:

SURVEY SNIPPET

41 of 55 (75%) musicians reported that they earnt $0–$10,000 annually from music-related work

The figure below compares the number of years of respondents' music-related work with their annual income. The figure in brackets gives the total number of respondents in each category.



SURVEY SNIPPET

38 of 55 (69%) musicians reported that music-related earnings accounted for 0%–20% of their overall annual income

Among the 38 included experienced musicians with
12 of 38 having worked in the music sector for more than 10 years
20 of 38 having sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards work in the music sector

7 of 55 (13%) musicians reported that 80%–100% of their overall annual income came from music-related work

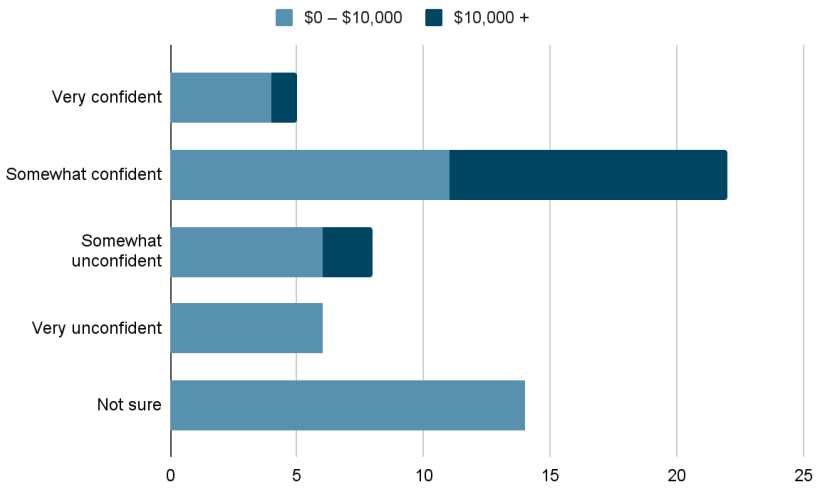
Further recall from section 2.8: Respondents were asked, 'What have been your greatest challenges in pursuing a fulfilling and sustainable career in music?' The topmost response with 42 of 55 (76%) was 'insufficient music-related earnings and lack of job security'.

Challenges to navigating self-employment have flow-on consequences. Consider that one survey respondent with more than 10 years of music-related work experience reported struggling to obtain permanent residency in Aotearoa New Zealand as a migrant. Consequently, the musician reported 'very unlikely' to pursue music-related work in the long term.

It is worth noting that respondents who reported comparatively higher music-related earnings were more likely confident about having sufficient work in the coming year. The following figure compares music-related earnings with their outlook:

SURVEY SNIPPET

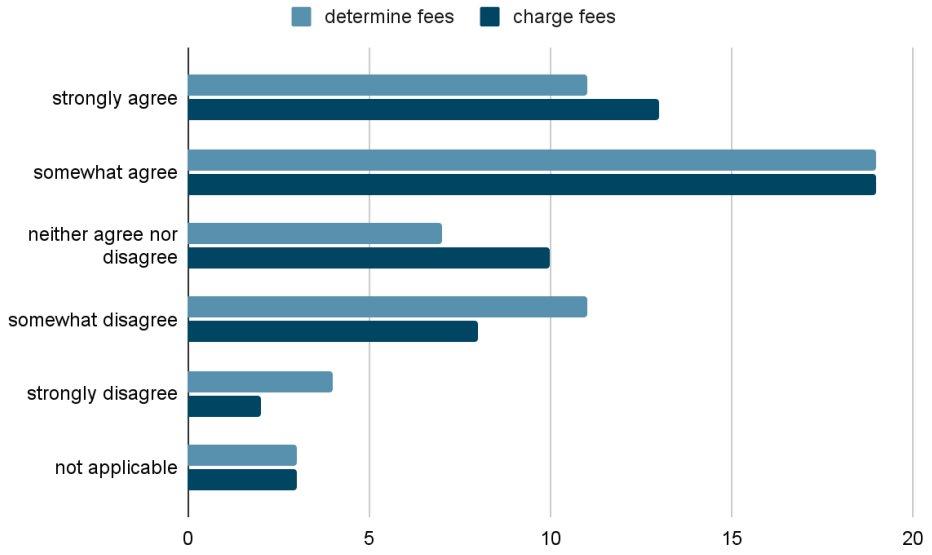
Thinking about your work and well-being, how confident are you that you will have sufficient ongoing music-related work in the next 12 months?



Finally, the below figure suggests that musicians by-and-large knew the value of their work and were relatively confident in their ability to determine and charge appropriate fees:

SURVEY SNIPPET

- I am confident in my ability to determine the appropriate fee for my work
- I am able to quote for and charge appropriate fees for my work



3.2 Music education

Based on the following responses, it is reasonable to suggest that formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards music-related work situates musicians within supportive informal networks of practice, but it remains unconvincing as a 'pipeline' for financially sustaining music-related work in the long term.

Recall section 2.3: Musicians were asked, 'What has been most helpful to you in your career in music?' Among the lowest responses with 6 of 55 (11%) was 'higher education, schooling'.

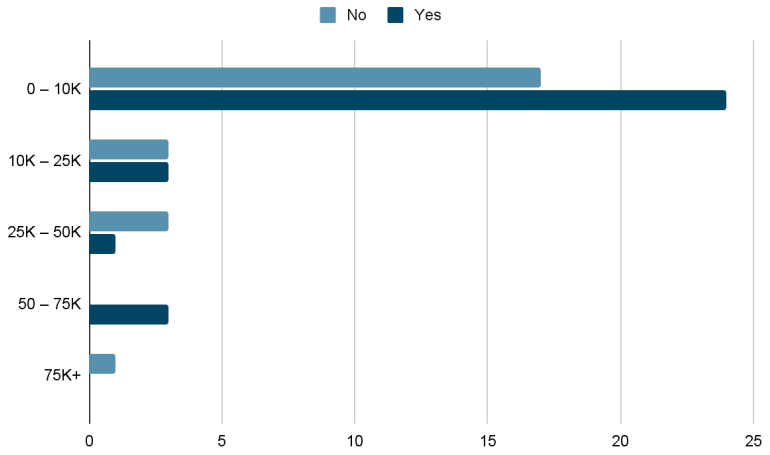
Consider this alongside section 2.1: Musicians were asked, 'Where do you perceive to be the biggest problems and therefore the greatest potential for change that would improve the status quo of the music sector as a whole?' 'Higher education, schooling' was the bottommost response with only 1 of 55 (2%).

Further recall from section 3.1: Of the 38 musicians who reported that music-related earnings accounted for only 0%–20% of their overall annual income, over half (20 of 38) had sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards their music-related work.

In a similar manner, the figure below compares the annual music-related earnings from those who had sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards their music-related work (yes), with musicians who had not (no). Note that of the 41 musicians who reported $0–$10,000 annual music-related earnings, 24 had sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications:

SURVEY SNIPPET

The figure below compares annual music-related earnings of those who had sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications towards music-related work (yes), with musicians who had not (no)

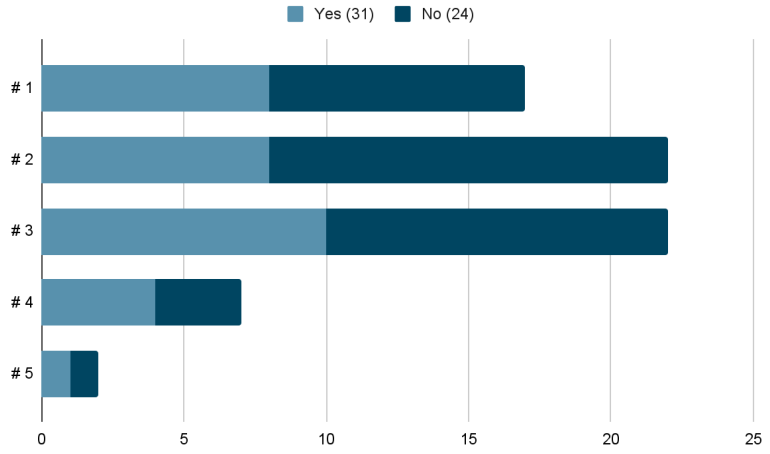


Given that music-related earnings remain low for trained and untrained musicians alike, music education as a pathway progressing to sustainable music-related work remains doubtful.

SURVEY SNIPPET

How sustainable do you feel your music-related work is in the long term?
On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is the least sustainable and 5 is the most)

The following table shows the responses of the 31 respondents who had sought formal training and/or tertiary qualifications (yes), alongside 24 respondents who had not (no)



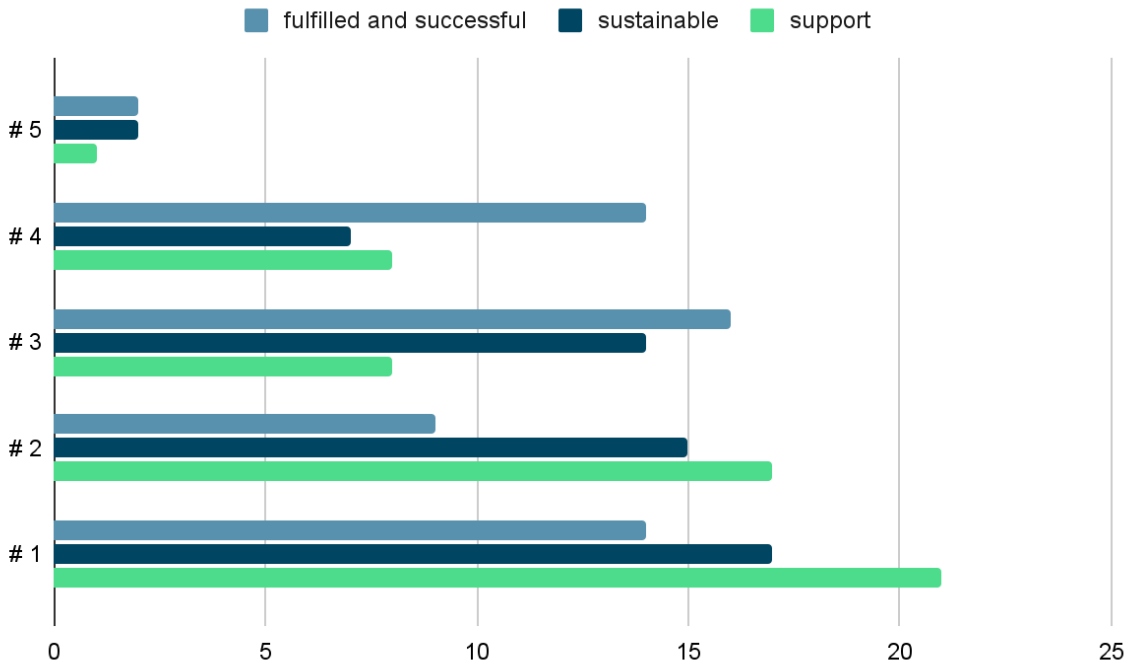
3.3 Musicians' outlook

There was a range of reflections on participants' music careers, from those who felt relatively fulfilled and successful to very unfulfilled and unsuccessful. On the matter of sustaining music-related work and support in case of a future crisis (e.g. natural disaster, outbreak etc.), the outlook of musicians was by and large pessimistic:

SURVEY SNIPPET

- How fulfilled and successful do you feel in your music career?
- How sustainable do you feel your music-related work is in the long term?
- If there was a crisis in the future (e.g. natural disaster, outbreak etc.), how confident do you feel that you would receive adequate support to sustain your music-related work?

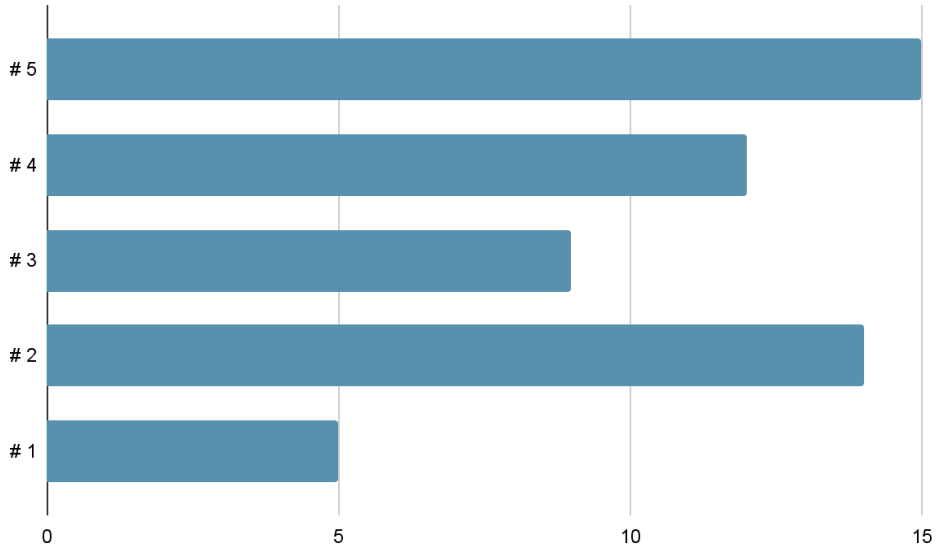
On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is the least and 5 is most):



A range of stress levels from music-related work was reported in the survey:

SURVEY SNIPPET

How would you rate your current levels of stress from your music-related work?
On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is the least and 5 is most):



Despite the pessimistic outlook, and in spite of the precarious working arrangements and low earnings reported from music-related work, many continue to pursue a career in music:

SURVEY SNIPPET

How likely is it that you will pursue music-related work long term?

26 of 55 (47%) Very likely
17 of 55 (31%) Likely
5 of 55 (9%) Not sure
2 of 55 (4%) Unlikely
5 of 55 (9%) Very unlikely

The main reasons given by respondents who were 'likely' or 'very likely' to pursue music-related work long term centred on music as a vocation:

'Because my musical existence is not an option'
'It's my qualification and love'

Worth noting is the relationship between music-related earnings and musicians' outlook:

SURVEY SNIPPET

All earners above $10,000+ reported 'likely' or 'very likely' to pursue music-related work in the long term.

All respondents who reported 'not sure', 'unlikely', and 'very unlikely' earned $0–$10,000 from music-related work annually.

Participants with regular work and music-related earnings reported they were 'likely' or 'very likely' to pursue music-related work in the long term, and provided the following reasons:

'Been active for some time, the work is regular'
'I have been working as a musician with my family for 22 years'
'Full-time musician'

The main reasons given by respondents 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely' to pursue music-related work long term centred on financial reasons:

'Financial sustainability (or rather, lack thereof)'
'The uncertainty of financial stability within the music industry as a performer within New Zealand'
'Not many job opportunities'

3.4 The importance of live performance

This study finds live performances and touring to be the main ways that musicians are remunerated for their work. Shows are also considered by musicians as offering the greatest community-building and place-making opportunities. This stood in contrast to anecdotal suggestions from industry professionals who saw financial possibilities for musicians through publishing and branded content:

SURVEY SNIPPET

When asked how musicians have primarily been able to make money from their music-related work, the top three responses were:

- 36 of 55 (65%) 'fees from performances and touring'
- 12 of 55 (22%) 'teaching and community engagements'
- 10 of 55 (18%) 'I haven't made money through my music'

‘Attending live shows’ was overwhelmingly reported by participants to be their most frequent method of directly spending money on music and/or musicians:

SURVEY SNIPPET

When asked, ‘What is your most frequent method of directly spending money on music and/or musicians?’ The top three responses were:

- 40 of 55 (73%) ‘attending live shows’
- 5 of 55 (9%) ‘buying digital songs and/or albums’
- 5 of 55 (9%) ‘buying physical albums’

Given that the majority of musicians prioritised live performance, attention should be given to measuring and supporting increased diversity in this area. Consider that the majority of participants reported that less than 25% of the shows they attended included Asian New Zealanders:

SURVEY SNIPPET

Roughly what percent of performing artists at shows you attend (including those at which you perform) are by Asian New Zealanders?

32 of 55 (58%) reported 0%–10%
13 of 55 (24%) reported 10%–25%
6 of 55 (11%) reported 25%–50%
4 of 55 (7%) reported 50%–75%

0 of 55 (0%) reported 75%+

3.5 Campaign to fix streaming

> I’m very grateful that I don’t need the funds from music to keep me afloat. But yeah, if I were a full-time musician, like, the streaming money is so bad. You can’t live off streams. The only way to make it in music in New Zealand is to do constant shows.

> Being able to see streaming numbers, I just personally hate it so much. Oh, this artist has a million plays, but how much money are they actually gonna make?

> Spotify's failure is that it's driven by commercial interests. It's simply that the people who do this sort of programming within Spotify are in it to make money. They're not in it to provide a creative or satisfying or fulfilling experience. In spite of what they say, in spite of their ostensible appeal to a broad spectrum of humanity, and likes and dislikes and cultures. I think the reality is that they focus on the disposable income that's available from specific markets.

Since the 1990s, musicians have suffered from the impacts of digital piracy. Even as streaming platforms have helped to rescue the *industry* from piracy, the returns for *musicians* are poor. With streaming being the dominant mode of consumption of recorded music worldwide, the poor remuneration for its artists impacts the entire ecosystem and has effects as wide as limiting the participation of emerging musicians, curbing the development of talent, challenging the long term sustainability of established musicians' careers and reducing the number of paid specialist support roles.

Existing laws are not necessarily set up to prioritise the remuneration of artists. UGC (user-generated content) streaming services such as YouTube have, in some instances, been able to use safe harbour legislation to undermine licensing agreements with collection societies. This practice of delivering low revenues to artists and their representatives suppresses the value of digital music.

Other issues, like missing metadata, complicate the delivery of streaming revenue to artists. This metadata provided by music industry companies to streaming services is often incomplete at source, possibly due to the complexities of how recording and song rights are licensed. The resulting non-attributable royalties, or unallocated income, can constitute a significant portion of overall collection.

Another factor in poor remuneration is the asymmetry of information that exists between streaming services, and artists and their representatives. Although artists legally have a right to know how their works are being used, in practice, there is a systemic lack of transparency regarding licensing.

Despite copyright management organisations such as Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) having been established nearly 100 years ago, public understanding of artist remuneration is low. This lack of understanding is compounded in the case of streaming services, with ambiguities about whether streaming is best classified as sale, rental or broadcast, and how the terms of use set by streaming service providers might differ from local laws.

Fundamental laws need to be changed to prioritise the remuneration of artists from streaming. This report recommends bringing together a body of musicians, policy analysts, activists and others to deliberate on and campaign to fix streaming.

SURVEY SNIPPET

When asked how musicians have primarily been able to make money from their music-related work, only 9 of 55 (16%) respondents reported 'digital distribution and streaming royalties'.

Compare this with the topmost responses:

- 36 (65%) 'fees from performances and touring'
- 12 (22%) 'teaching and community engagements'
- 10 (18%) 'I haven't made money through my music'

SURVEY SNIPPET

Streaming was among the topmost responses when participants were asked where they perceive to be the biggest problems and therefore the greatest potential for change that would improve the status quo of the music sector as a whole:

- 34 (62%) 'artist management, booking agencies, presenters, promoters'
- 28 (51%) 'streaming services, digital platforms'

3.6 Campaign for Basic Income

Recorded music royalties and existing schemes that provide an ongoing income to individual artists are a valuable part of the music ecosystem. However, the findings from this research suggest that the amounts received from existing schemes are well below current living costs. A Basic Income scheme is one way to provide musicians with a more stable social protection mechanism. Such a scheme could support musicians to be able to stay in their sector and contribute to its growth.

One of the challenges to the implementation of Basic Income is public understanding of its benefits. Despite numerous pilot programmes internationally ranging as far back as the 1970s, it is still considered to be politically, even morally controversial. The view that giving people money 'for free' will encourage inactivity, or that recipients will benefit at the expense of other taxpayers, are both frequent concerns. Such views were reiterated in this study by some interviewees. Reflecting on whether artists are sufficiently deserving of the income they receive, one participant said:

> The only issue with artists getting money is how they use it. Sometimes that money is kind of abused. … Because it's government money that the artists are getting paid by, people like NZOnAir and things like that, it's just how it's used. And whether or not it does assure productivity is the question.

The greatest barrier to Basic Income appears to be the ingrained societal resentment. It is a form of resentment that suggests being a musician is a social privilege, and the consequences of precarity and poverty are par for the course. Some participants actively resisted the idea that music-related work is privileged work:

> I have to unpack that being, like, 'Oh, I see being an artist as a privilege.' You know? I think that's where tension comes from. Is it a right to practice art versus it's a privilege. I remember meeting a Belgian artist a handful of years ago. He's like, 'Oh, yeah, we just kind of like have this funding, where it's just like a, it's not the dole, but it's just the base income. This is kind of like welfare. This is what you get kind of as a salary from the state.' And I'm like, 'That's so cool!'

However, the fear that a Basic Income scheme might have a net negative social effect is challenged by Basic Income pilots. Many pilots suggest that income recipients have a positive impact on their wider community through their increased employment opportunities, health and wellbeing, social cohesion and trust in others, and life satisfaction.

A related local scheme from 2001 to 2012 called Pathway to Arts and Cultural Employment (PACE) supported artists in Aotearoa with a weekly income. Administered by Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ), the PACE scheme was reported to have provided artists with the chance to develop their creative practice, adapt to being a sole trader, seek mentorship opportunities, build sustainable careers and receive validation for their career choice.

Another experiment in artist income is the Creative Careers Service, a pilot income scheme currently administered by WINZ in partnership with Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage. The Creative Careers Service is targeted to recent graduates of creative degrees, existing beneficiaries with relevant experience in the creative sector, and established creatives who have lost work due to COVID-19. The pilot is only accessible to residents of Auckland, the Waikato and Nelson, and is set to run until February 2023.

> I've heard a lot of artists say that the living wage or a pay scheme would be really helpful. And I rather think that's true, because I mean, you see the way capitalism has kind of reached a sort of point where the rich are really holding up everyone's wealth, so it's really hard. I mean, I think, you know, there's talk about everyone being on a living wage one day. … I've been told the PACE system was actually really successful. We had huge success out of it. And I think a couple of people that were on that system became massive. And I think it's people like … yeah, Taika Waititi. And, like, seriously, like I said, because they were supported. And that way, they did their art, and they just, they probably made a lot to the economy. I don't know, you'd have to research that.

This report recommends bringing together a body of musicians, policy analysts, activists and others to campaign for Basic Income. There have been Basic Income pilots and schemes in arts sectors of other countries which allows for international comparison. It would be crucial, however, that any campaign for Basic Income take into account the complex needs of different groups. Advocating for a Universal Basic Income (UBI) at a threshold too low could have the adverse effect of undermining existing access and assistance for vulnerable groups.

3.7 Learning from COVID-19

The wage subsidy scheme administered as part of the COVID-19 response offers a way forward on a campaign for Basic Income to remedy the experience of precarity and poverty for musicians. Although not a regular form of income, the relief packages provided to musicians and others as part of the government's COVID-19 response were unanimously cited by participants in this study as a welcome protection:

> That wage subsidy was there for musicians. And then on top of that Creative New Zealand have done something really good, which is the emergency relief fund for arts practitioners and musicians, which was beautiful. … I think government should do something specifically about freelancer musicians.

> When the country was announced to go into the lockdown, how fast that wage subsidy programme was set up! And this idea, like, could there by Universal Wage for practitioners and people? … One of the things that really struck me, that we have the capacity to make so many big changes and, when something that's beyond us … when something happens in a global kind-a scale, the speed in which decisions were made are, and the scale in which support can be offered just makes me really re-think about structures that kind-a exist. And for me going forward solutions like, there are ways that we can better support, not just the arts sector, but all working sectors.

A campaign for Basic Income stands also to address musicians' bleak outlooks on sustaining work in the long term. Recall from section 3.3: Respondents were largely unconfident that they would receive support to sustain music-related work if there was a crisis in the future (e.g. natural disaster, outbreak etc.).

3.8 Community advisory groups

The preliminary research indicates the need for the formation of community advisory groups attending to the margins of race, class and gender-based inequalities. Importantly, emphasis ought to be placed on listening to the voices of those at the 'margins of the margins', including musicians experiencing higher burdens of precarity as well as ongoing forms of marginalisation within ethnic communities.

Funding to form community advisory groups would be a practical next step of this research. The groups would serve as spaces for musicians to co-create solutions to the problems conceptualised by them, and would support decision-making and development of culture-centred social change in the music sector. Questions such as 'Who is not present here?' and 'How can we invite those voices in?' would shape the formation and ongoing transformation of these groups.. The advisory groups would be trained in the culture-centred approach to develop community-led solutions, engage with sector stakeholders and advocate for changes in policy to address local needs of musicians.

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