

Institution: The University of Edinburgh
Unit of Assessment: 35 Music
Title of case study: Live Music Exchange: a resource for music policy making
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Live Music Exchange (LMX) is a resource used by the UK live music sector. It is underpinned by research findings from an AHRC funded project directed by Simon Frith (Edinburgh University) and Martin Cloonan (Glasgow University), which documented shortcomings in the UK's music policy-making process. LMX has had an impact on such policy making through the provision of relevant data and data analysis and by improving communication between the sector's stakeholders. It has had an impact at both the local and national level, improving the quality and reach of policy discussion. By August 2013 its online hub had 2177 hits/month, and in 2012/3 it organized 4 policy events across the UK with 180 participants.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The research underpinning the Live Music Exchange was a study of the history, economics and sociology of the live music sector in the UK (AHRC Project AH/F009437/1, which ran from May 1 2008 to April 30 2011). The research was conducted by Simon Frith (Tovey Professor of Music) and Matt Brennan (Research Assistant on the project from May 2008 to April 2011), in collaboration with Martin Cloonan (Glasgow University). The importance of impact was built into the research strategy for this project from its inception and was the explicit focus of a subsequent KE initiative, also funded by the AHRC. Key findings of the initial project were that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the economic and cultural importance of live music was underestimated by both academic researchers and policy makers, who tended to focus on the recording industry and copyright issues; • the value of live music could not be understood simply in terms of cost: cultural factors were equally important in determining live music promoters' abilities to sustain a business; • the health of the live sector, particularly over time, depended on a balance of different kinds of promoter (enthusiast, state, commercial) and types of venue (in terms of both size and audience experience); • the activity of local government in terms of regulation, licensing and the interpretation of national legislation had a significant impact on the health of the live music sector in different cities and UK regions. <p>The second strand of the research focused on music policy makers' knowledge of and approach to the live music sector and what effects their beliefs and assumptions were having on the sector's practices. In May 2011, meetings were organised in collaboration with UK Music and PRS for Music to examine how policy making in the sector could be improved. The object was to identify key stakeholders and their positions; to assess the quality of data used; and to document how the sector represented its interests to government. The first meeting involved large and small promoters, agents, the Arts Council, festival organisations and venue owners; the second meeting involved representatives from all the UK's major music sector bodies (International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, British Phonographic Industry, Featured Artists Coalition, Musicians Union, Association of Independent Producers, Phonographic Performance Limited, and the Music Manager's Forum as well as UK Music and PRS for Music). Key findings from this research (which also drew on more than 100 interviews with promoters) were that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the music industry in general needs a reliable source of statistical data and advice on how to read the continuous flow of market research data so as to improve its effectiveness in lobbying government and responding to policy proposals; • music policy makers need to be better informed about long-term trends and comparative data from policy experiences in other markets and legislations; • the live music sector needs authoritative and impartial support in negotiating between its

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interests and public interests represented by local government;

- there is a lack of support and useful information or training material for new entrants into the live music sector, particularly following the decline of the student union entertainment sector.

LMX was created to meet these needs as an open access source of online information and discussion and through its organisation of focused meetings and research services.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

3.1 Frith S. (2007): 'La musique *live*, ça compte ...,' *Reseaux* 25 (141-142), 179-201. Peer reviewed journal article, DOI:10.3166/réseaux.141-142.179-201

3.2 Frith S. (2008-2011): 'The Promotion of Live Music in the UK—a Historical, Cultural and Institutional Analysis', AHRC Research Project AH/F009437/1.

3.3 Brennan M. and Webster E. (2011) 'Why concert promoters matter', *Scottish Music Review*, 2 (1), 1-25. Peer reviewed journal article, ISSN 1755-4934

3.4 Williamson J., Cloonan M. and Frith S., (2011): 'Having an Impact. Academics, the music industries and the problem of knowledge', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17(5), 459-474. Peer reviewed Journal Article, DOI: 10.1080/10286632.2010.550682

3.5 Frith S. (2013): 'The Value of Live Music' in *Ware Inszenierungen: Performance, Vermarktung und Authentizität in der populären Musik* (Helms, D. and Phelps, T. ed.) Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2013, 9-22. Peer reviewed book chapter, ISBN: 978-3-8376-2298-0

4. Details of the impact

The Live Music Exchange (<http://livemusicexchange.org/>) was set up with support of a follow-on grant of £119,064 from the AHRC to develop knowledge exchange in the live music sector. Three kinds of activity were seen as necessary to support and improve music policy making: information provision; events to bring stakeholders together; expert input into particular decision-making processes.

As a source of information, LMX operates an online hub for promoters, musicians, agents, researchers, educators, journalists, venue staff, local authorities, national policy makers, technicians and more. It provides:

- blogs, posted weekly by members of the LMX team and guests, academics and participants in the live music sector. a digest of live music news, originally as a weekly summary on the website now as a continuous twitter feed;
- access to a growing archive of relevant academic, industry and government reports and other publications;
- information about live music meetings, workshops and training events.

By August 1, 2013 the average number of **site hits** had reached 2,177 per month and LMX has 328 **Facebook** 'likes' (people who get LMX news feeds)—the majority of these are from the UK but 20 countries are represented altogether. The site has 290 **Twitter** followers at the time of writing, the majority from the music industry: people involved in training; officials in governmental organisations; officers of music industry bodies and festivals, as well as individual promoters and agents. There are 198 **direct subscribers** to the site, people who get email updates of posts. These are divided fairly evenly between the music industry (all sectors, including musicians and local councils) and the music and music industry education sector. Through its online activities, as indicated on the sites blog, resource and events pages, LMX has had an impact in a number of areas:

1. Training:

"The Live Music Exchange has been a positive and significant factor in my professional practice. I have recently been tasked with developing a new live music module and LMX has enabled me to add a breadth and depth to the learning and teaching that the module would otherwise have sorely lacked. It also provides me with a living resource to engage the students in supporting their own growing interest in this hitherto under-researched area." [[text removed for publication], Fringe on

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Top and founder of the Green Man Festival] (5.1);

2. Promoters' understanding of changes in their business:

"I found [the LMX] paper on the UK promoter landscape absolutely fascinating, and shared it with our entire company. I am very interested to follow [its] research on the changing nature of the UK's music economy and its relation to the global music economy. With the majority of non-American dates being booked from London, this is a very relevant commercial story for the UK's music industry." [[text removed for publication], Songkick and Detour] (5.2)

In response to the need revealed by research for stakeholders in the live music sector to have a better knowledge of each other's interests and to develop effective ways of dealing with conflict, LMX has co-organized a series of issue-based **events**: on May 5, 2012 in Leeds (36 participants, on the problems facing a local live music scene); on November 12, 2012 in Cardiff (40 participants, on the place of Welsh and Welsh language promoters in the UK live music sector); on January 23, 2013 in Glasgow (33 participants, on the relations between venues, promoters and local council officials); and on May 14, 2013 in London (71 participants, on the effects of digital technology on the relations between the live and recorded music sectors). These meetings have brought together major commercial players in the field), small local promoters and venue managers in the cities concerned, local councillors, planners, and environmental health officers, representatives of arts organisations, the organizers of such musical events as the Green Man Festival and the Glasgow Jazz Festival, and representatives of new digital businesses such as Spotify and SongKick. The impact of these meetings has been to establish new understandings and ongoing relations between different stakeholders such as local council officials and venue owners (as has happened in Glasgow) and between music administrators and entrepreneurs (as has happened in Wales). (5.3)

3. Provision of expertise

Members of the LMX team have provided their **expertise** on specific live music research and policy issues in the following forms:

- confidential reports on and interpretation of census data gathered by Festival Awards, the Association of Independent Festivals and Guilfest (5.4);
- expert advice on the drafting of and relevant data for Lord Clement-Jones' attempt to lift the leafleting ban, his Cultural and Community Distribution Deregulation Bill (5.5);
- advice on the problems of gathering and interpreting the statistical data involved in measuring the value of live music for the UK Music Report on Live Music and Tourism (5.6);
- advice on the sourcing of and interpretation of live music data for Creative Scotland's Review of the Music Sector (5.7).

A significant strand of the research underpinning LMX concerned the nature of the impact of academic work on the music industry and the best strategy for having such impact in a sector in which knowledge resistance is more common than knowledge exchange. The evidence of LMX impact is therefore not only the effect of specific input into specific policy issues, as listed above, but also the fact that LMX team members now have a voice as academic researchers in high-level policy meetings. For example, LMX participated in a meeting organized by Music UK on the live music sector in the House of Lords in July 2013 and the subsequent meeting, brokered by LMX itself, to discuss the future of music industry policy in Scotland, between representatives from UK Music, the Scottish Music Industry Association, Creative Scotland and the Scottish Government. Here impact takes a different form. In the words of Lord Clement-Jones: *"Live Music Exchange's research impact takes the form of significant influence on the way issues are perceived and evidence used in public policy-making in the field."* (5.8)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Copies of these web page sources are available at
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/REF2014REF3B/UoA+35>

5.1. Fringe on Top (Promoters)

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This source can corroborate the positive and significant impact of this project in his professional practice and in particular on training activities.

5.2. Songkick (Promoters)

This source will be able to corroborate the impact that the "Live Music Exchange" had on his business, and especially how it helped promoters to understand the changing nature of the UK's music economy and its relation to the global music economy.

5.3. Welsh Music Foundation

This source can corroborate the impact that this project had in establishing new understandings and ongoing relations between different stakeholders such as music administrators and entrepreneurs.

5.4. Guilfest (Festival)

This source can confirm the expertise provided by LMX team on specific live music research and policy issues in the form of confidential reports on and interpretation of census data gathered by GuilFest.

5.5. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130705-0001.htm#13070536000304>

This report was prepared thanks to the advice provided by LMX team on the drafting of and relevant data for Lord Clement-Jones' attempt to lift the leafleting ban, his Cultural and Community Distribution Deregulation Bill.

5.6. UK Music (2013): *Wish You Were Here. Music Tourism's Contribution to the UK Economy*. London: UK Music (<http://www.ukmusic.org/assets/media/MUSICTOURISM-REPORT-WEBSITE%20version.pdf>)

This report was prepared thanks to the expert advice provided by LMX team on gathering and interpreting the statistical data involved in measuring the value of live music in the UK.

5.7. Creative Scotland (2013) : *Music Sector Review*, Edinburgh: Creative Scotland (<http://www.creativescotland.com/about/sector-reviews/music-sector-review>)

This report was prepared thanks to the expert advice provided by LMX team on the sourcing of and interpretation of live music data.

5.8. Spokesman for Culture, Media and Sport in the House of Lords, Parliament of the United Kingdom.

This source can corroborate the influence of this project in public policy-making in this field.