



WSIS
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Session Outcome Document

Tool or Takeover? AI, Music, and the Future of Creative Ownership

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Wednesday, July 8 (1 pm)

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/en/Agenda/Session/317>

Key Issues discussed:

- AI now allows anyone to create a song in a matter of seconds, disrupting traditional pathways and livelihoods for musicians and songwriters
- Bad actors are using AI to disenfranchise human creators of music, including diverting royalties, infringing on ownership rights, and using bot networks to manipulate systems built for human creators
- The session identified three priorities for protecting human creators in music: clarity on what is legal, consequences for bad actors, and human assistance when navigating issues
- Positive use cases of AI for musicians were highlighted, including tools that let people become songwriters without owning an instrument, AI lowering the cost of music production, and non-songwriter musicians using AI to create songs they then perform with real instruments
- The session featured video clips from Lindsey Mastis' mini-documentary "Is AI Ruining Music?", including Rock & Roll Hall of Fame songwriter Jackson Browne, a representative from a California musicians' union, a music influencer, and a touring and session musician using AI tools to gain inspiration for a film score
- A robust audience Q&A followed the keynote, raising questions about royalties, how generative music technology is trained, whether that training constitutes theft or mirrors how musicians have always learned by being influenced by what they hear, and how to use AI as a tool rather than a takeover

Key Outcomes of the session

- Key insights and findings: there is a clear need for clarity on what is legal, establishing clear rules and guidelines so artists can create, share, and grow with confidence; consequences for bad actors, enforcing the rules, investigating abuse, and holding bad actors accountable; and artist protections, appeals, and human review, protecting artists from unfair harm through easy appeals and real human review that resolves issues
- The robust discussion following the keynote focused on how the technology is impacting the music industry and individual musicians, including questions about royalties, how generative music technology is trained, whether that training constitutes theft or is comparable to how musicians have always learned by being influenced by what they hear, and how to use AI as a tool rather than a takeover

Key Recommendations and Forward-Looking Actions

- Prioritize legal clarity: establish clear, enforceable rules on what is and isn't permitted so independent artists can create, share, and grow with confidence
- Continue to highlight positive use cases of AI for Good in music on international stages such as WSIS and AI for Good, to balance the narrative around risk with real examples of empowerment
- Require that AI companies provide dedicated assistance channels with real human intervention. This must include a way to reach a helpful human, not just an automated appeals process. And this must especially be available for cases where AI systems misidentify independent musicians' music or accounts as non-human