# Elton John and Simon Cowell rally against copyright changes impacting UK artists



Sir Elton John and Simon Cowell have raised their voices against proposed changes to copyright regulations that could significantly impact the UK’s creative sector. Their call for action comes amidst concerns that new rules allowing corporations to utilise online content for artificial intelligence applications without compensating original creators could undermine the creative arts in the country.

Currently under discussion, the government’s proposals would shift the burden of protection onto creators, requiring them to actively opt out if they do not wish for their work to be used by AI systems. This has sparked considerable discontent among prominent figures in the artistic community.

In a statement, Sir Elton John emphasised the significance of the UK’s creative industries, labelling them the “envy of the world.” He shared his worries that the suggested copyright adjustments could jeopardise this status. “We only achieved that success with the backing of our long-standing copyright protection – the world’s gold standard,” he stated, speaking to the Daily Mail. He further noted that the creative sector not only contributes to the nation’s cultural identity but also generates substantial employment and economic growth. “The music community has always been quick to adopt new technologies… but adoption of this copyright exception would destroy the UK’s leadership that has been hard won, and what’s worse, it would give it all away. For nothing,” he added.

Simon Cowell, the mastermind behind the X Factor franchise, echoed these sentiments, underscoring the idea that inadequate regulation of AI could lead to the marginalisation of artists and professionals in the background. In his remarks published in the Mail, Cowell expressed concern over the potential disenfranchisement of creative individuals. “The thought that anyone would believe they have the right to blindly give this country’s creative ideas away – for nothing – is just wrong,” he asserted. He further emphasised the importance of protecting the work of those who create with passion: “Anyone who is able to create something they passionately care about deserves to have their work protected.”

The campaign has also garnered the support of other notable figures in the arts, including singer-songwriter Joan Armatrading, Bafta-winning composer Nick Foster, and author Kate Mosse. Mosse highlighted the importance of fair compensation for artists in relation to the advancing capabilities of AI. While recognising the “possibilities” that AI presents, she declared that ensuring tech companies remunerate artists for their work is “a matter of principle, of fairness.” She advocates for an opt-in system where AI companies must seek permission and offer payment for the use of original content.

In December, Sir Keir Starmer, Leader of the Labour Party, acknowledged the significance of the UK’s creative industries and noted that the government was consulting on relevant proposals. “I think we need to get the balance right, but I also think we have a huge opportunity,” he stated, referencing the potential for growth and innovation in the sector.

As discussions continue, the outcome of these proposals remains critical for the future of creative professionals in the UK, as they navigate the intersection of technology and traditional artistic practices.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.wrighthassall.co.uk/knowledge-base/uk-government-introduces-new-ai-regulations-key-developments> - This URL supports the claim that the UK Government is proposing changes to copyright laws in response to AI, including potential rules allowing AI developers to use online content without explicit permission, which has drawn criticism from artists like Sir Elton John.
2. <https://www.globalpolicywatch.com/2025/01/uk-government-proposes-copyright-ai-reform/> - This URL corroborates the government's objectives for a new copyright and AI framework, including supporting right holders and promoting transparency in AI development.
3. <https://www.dentons.com/en/insights/articles/2025/january/2/the-uks-new-ai-copyright-consultation-a-path-to-clarity-or-controversy> - This URL explains the ongoing consultation on copyright reforms related to AI, including proposals for text and data mining exceptions and the debate over balancing creators' rights with AI innovation.
4. <https://www.noahwire.com> - This URL is the source of the article discussing the opposition from Sir Elton John and Simon Cowell to the proposed copyright changes, highlighting concerns about the impact on the UK's creative sector.
5. <https://www.vacourts.gov/courts/scv/rulesofcourt.pdf> - Although not directly related to the article's main topic, this URL provides general legal context regarding court procedures and could be tangentially relevant to legal discussions around copyright.
6. <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/49008a/siteassets/publications/benchbooks/evidence/evidbb.pdf> - Similar to the previous URL, this one provides legal context, specifically on evidence and court procedures, which might be relevant in broader discussions about legal frameworks for AI and copyright.
7. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/sir-elton-john-and-simon-cowell-call-for-creative-talent-to-be-protected-from-ai/a1709615128.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data