# Musicians unite against copyright law changes with protest album



More than 1,000 musicians, including high-profile names such as Kate Bush, Annie Lennox, and Damon Albarn, have united to release an unusual album titled **Is This What We Want?** in protest against proposed changes to copyright law in the UK that would facilitate the training of artificial intelligence (AI) on copyrighted materials without the need for licensing.

The initiative comes as a response to UK Government proposals that would create an exemption to existing copyright laws, allowing tech companies to use creators' works for training AI. Under these proposals, artists would be required to actively opt out if they do not wish for their material to be used. Musicians and other creatives have expressed concern that these changes could significantly undermine the creative sector and lead to long-term job losses as AI-generated content becomes more prevalent.

The album features recordings of vacant studios and performance spaces, which the artists argue could become a common sight if the proposed legislation goes through. The message is made clear through the track listing, which articulates a strong message: “The British government must not legalise music theft to benefit AI companies.” Profits from the album will be directed to Help Musicians, a charity supporting musicians in the UK.

Ed Newton-Rex, the album's organiser, emphasised the potential impact of the government's proposal, stating, “The government’s proposal would hand the life’s work of the country’s musicians to AI companies, for free, letting those companies exploit musicians’ work to outcompete them.” Newton-Rex further expressed that such a shift would be disastrous and unnecessary, suggesting that the UK can maintain its leadership in AI while simultaneously protecting its creative industries.

This protest follows a notable surge in public opposition to the proposed changes, with high-profile figures from the music industry such as Sir Elton John, Simon Cowell, and Sir Paul McCartney voicing their concerns. The UK music sector contributed £7.6 billion to the economy in 2023, with £4.6 billion attributed to music exports, emphasizing the significance of the industry in the national landscape.

The debate around the proposed copyright changes is not limited to musicians alone. Members of the publishing sector have also voiced their apprehensions, with Dan Conway, chief executive of the Publishers Association, highlighting the widespread nature of support for copyright protection among creatives. Conway stated, “The extraordinary strength of support shown in recent weeks for copyright and our world-class creative industries is something the Government ignores at its peril.” He urged the government to listen, as calls for fairness in copyright practices have gained momentum from esteemed cultural figures including Nobel laureates and Oscar winners.

The ongoing discussion touches upon broader issues related to the interplay between technology, creativity, and the value of intellectual property. As the landscape of AI continues to evolve, the need for regulations that ensure fair compensation for creators while fostering innovation remains a critical topic of discourse in the creative community.

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

## References

* <https://www.independent.co.uk/business/musicians-protest-against-ai-copyright-plans-with-silent-album-release-b2703943.html> - This article supports the claim that over 1,000 musicians, including Kate Bush and Damon Albarn, have released a silent album titled 'Is This What We Want?' to protest against proposed changes to UK copyright law. It also highlights the economic impact of the UK music industry and the concerns about AI-generated content.
* <https://www.rte.ie/entertainment/2025/0225/1498661-musicians-release-silent-album-in-protest-of-ai/> - This article corroborates the release of the silent album as a form of protest against UK government proposals to change copyright laws for AI training. It emphasizes the musicians' concerns about the potential damage to the creative sector.
* <https://techcrunch.com/2025/02/24/1000-artists-release-silent-album-to-protest-uk-copyright-sell-out-to-ai/> - This article provides further details on the silent album release by 1,000 artists, highlighting their opposition to the UK government's plans to exempt AI training from copyright laws. It discusses the implications for the music industry and the broader creative sector.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/business/musicians-protest-against-ai-copyright-plans-with-silent-album-release-b2703943.html> - This article mentions the involvement of high-profile figures like Sir Elton John and Sir Paul McCartney in opposing the proposed copyright changes. It also discusses the economic contribution of the UK music industry and the concerns about AI's impact.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/business/musicians-protest-against-ai-copyright-plans-with-silent-album-release-b2703943.html> - This article supports the claim that the publishing sector, represented by figures like Dan Conway of the Publishers Association, is also voicing concerns about the proposed copyright changes. It emphasizes the need for fair practices in AI usage.