

SXSW[®] ↙
LONDON

MUSIC FESTIVAL

APPLY TO PLAY SUBMISSION GUIDE

Apply now for the chance to perform at one of Shoreditch's iconic live music venues during SXSW London, 1 to 6 June 2026. Play the world's most exciting new music showcase festival. A curated platform where emerging and established artists perform not just for fans, but for audiences of global music industry professionals, media, and tastemakers. A rare opportunity to build careers, forge connections, and break into new markets.

DEADLINES

- Submissions Open: 22nd September 2025
- Submissions Close: 24th November 2025 9AM GMT



**Important details:**

- Each SXSW London Music Festival showcase features at least one artist selected from the Apply to Play submission pool.
- If successful then the artist will be guaranteed at least one showcase performance at SXSW London 2026
- Showcase slots run an average of 40 minutes, not anything longer
- SXSW does not cover artist travel or accommodation expenses
- Some showcases may not provide backline
- See full list of FAQs below

Apply to Play is open to:

- All music genres
- Artists from around the world
- Signed and unsigned artists

HOW TO APPLY

The SXSW London Music Apply to Play submissions process is managed via Awardsforce, a platform that allows us to securely collect and review entries while ensuring that confidential information is protected before being shared with our Music Jury and other external partners.

To help you prepare, we've outlined below some guidance on what information is required and how to make your submission stand out.

Awardsforce includes a Save Draft feature, so you can start your submission and return to it later if you're not able to complete all the questions in one sitting. At the end of this document, you'll also find a full list of the questions for each section. This gives you the option to prepare your answers in advance and then transfer them into Awardsforce at your convenience.

Please note that all submissions must be completed via Awardsforce. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept written or emailed submissions under any circumstances.



Craft a Strong Submission

A clear, concise, and creative submission will help us understand your music and make it stand out. Answering the questions thoughtfully and showcasing your best tracks / live videos is a great way to leave a strong impression.

Tell Us Why You Want to Perform at SXSW London

A key part of a successful submission is thoughtfully and succinctly answering the question in the Submission Information section: 'What do you hope to accomplish by showcasing at SXSW London, and why is this the right moment for you?'

This question helps us understand why you believe you should perform at SXSW London and what you hope to achieve by taking the stage at the event.

Overview of Awardsforce Process

Landing Page

To start your submission, please visit www.sxswlondon.awardsplatform.com. On the landing page, enter your email address in the "Log in or register" section and click Continue. You'll then receive a verification code from the SXSW London email system—enter this code to complete your registration.

Once registered, you can log in to the Awardsforce platform at any time. To start your submission, simply click the "Start Submission" button, which will guide you through the full process step by step.

Start Here

As well as SXSW London Music submissions, Awardsforce platform is also used for the Conference submissions.

Please ensure on this page you select "Music Festival" and then "Apply To Play" on this page to ensure you are taken to the right page for your submission.

Apply To Play Submission Information

This section is to collect all the information of the Artist who is the focus of the submission. We ask for examples of their work as well as basic information about who they are.



In this section we ask the artists “Key Music Genre” this is the most relevant genre to the artist, if they are cross-genre artist we still ask to select one main genre and select other relevant genres underneath. This is used to ensure that the submission is matched with the right member of our jury who is a specialist within that music scene.

We also ask for the Artists recent achievements which should be used to specify any recent achievements that are relevant e.g. support slots, signing to a label, new music, future release plans, etc.

Optional Artist Monitoring Information

SXSW London is committed to creating a event that celebrates diversity, equity, and inclusion. This section is an opportunity to share information about artist and their backgrounds. This helps us understand who is engaging with SXSW London and ensures we are reaching a wide range of voices.

Answering these questions is optional, with no expectation to complete them unless you choose to.

Any information you choose to provide will be kept confidential in accordance with the SXSW London Privacy Policy, [LINKED HERE](#), and will not be available to our Music Jury during the judging process

If the artist is a group with multiple performing members, please provide answers based on the lead performer. Should your application be successful, we will request information about the remaining members at a later stage. As with this section, providing that information will be optional.

Applicant Information

This section is designed to collect your personal details as the individual completing the submission. Providing accurate contact information allows us to reach you directly if we require clarification, updates, or any additional details during the judging process.

Please note that the identity of the person submitting an entry is not considered during judging. The evaluation is based solely on the content of the submission itself. For this reason, it is essential that you provide only your own information in this section and not the artists if you are submitting on their behalf.

Any submission containing false, misleading, or impersonated details will be disqualified from the process.

FAQs

Can I apply to talk about music at the Festival?

As part of the Conference at SXSW London, we will be hosting a series of talks and discussions focused on the Music Industry.

If you're interested in becoming a speaker and sharing your expertise, stories, or perspectives with an international audience, we encourage you to visit the [Apply to Talk](#) page on our website.

There, you'll find all the details on how to submit your proposal and take part in shaping the conversation at SXSW London.

Does SXSW London cover artist expenses?

SXSW London provides a standard expenses stipend for all participating artists: £150 for solo performers or duos, and £350 for groups of three or more. This stipend can be used to cover costs related to performing at the festival.

Please note that SXSW London does not cover additional expenses beyond the standard stipend, including backline or technical requirements beyond what is provided. Each venue will offer a basic backline package for artists, including a full drum kit, microphones, and amplifiers.





If successful, what access will I get to SXSW London?

Each act will receive one SXSW London delegate badge, granting full access to the event, including the music conference and industry mixers. This badge can be assigned to any member of the group, though we recommend giving it to the person who handles most of the business on the group's behalf, such as a manager, booking agent, or band leader.

All performers will receive a wristband, which provides access to all other music showcases throughout the week (note: these wristbands do not grant access to the conference or industry mixers)

Do I have to pay a fee for my submission?

Yes, each submission is required to pay a £15 administration fee.

If this cost makes it difficult for you to apply, please get in touch with us at music@sxswlondon.com to access our fee waiver scheme.

If I perform at SXSW London can I play other shows in London or other UK & European showcase festivals?

SXSW London does not impose a strict exclusivity policy on Showcase Artists. In fact, we encourage emerging artists to perform at as many other festivals and events across the UK and internationally as possible.

That said, we ask that you refrain from confirming any other performances in London, during the week of the festival and one week either side of the event, without prior written approval from the SXSW London Music team.

We also ask that you inform us, as a courtesy, of any other UK performances outside of this period.

What is SXSW London's process for judging submissions and how are artists chosen to play?

SXSW London follows a multi-stage process once we receive an Apply to Play submission.

Each application is carefully assessed on the overall quality of the music, the artist's readiness to perform, and whether they are at the right stage in their career to fully benefit from showcasing at SXSW London.

All submissions are reviewed by both our internal programming team and the SXSW London Music Jury, with each application evaluated by at least two people.

The Music Jury is made up of senior professionals from across the music industry, including radio presenters and executives, label representatives, A&Rs, venue programmers, booking agents, promoters, and festival bookers.

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Submissions are matched with jurors who have expertise in the artist's genre or scene, and every evaluation is given equal weight to ensure a fair and balanced review.

If I am not selected to showcase, should I still come to SXSW?

Opportunities for artists go far beyond the stage. SXSW London allows access to insightful panels, exclusive parties, and one-on-one mentoring sessions, alongside countless networking opportunities with industry leaders.

Throughout the week, you can connect with fellow artists, discover new ideas, and gain the knowledge and contacts to take your career to the next level.

If I'm unsuccessful, will I get any feedback?

Unfortunately, due to the volume of applicants, we're unable to offer individual feedback. However, general online feedback sessions are planned for Spring 2025.

Are there any age restrictions to participate at SXSW London?

Applicants must be at least 16 years old to participate. However, please note that depending on venue restrictions and licensing requirements, artists under the age of 18 may be required to attend with a parent, guardian, or another adult aged 18 or older.



Full List of Questions

Apply To Play Submission Information

- Artist Name
- Link to the Artists Recorded Music e.g. Spotify, Soundcloud, etc (please only add one link)
- Recorded music link password (optional)
- Link to a Live Performance by the Artist (please only add one link)
- Live performance link password (optional)
- Artist Website (optional)
- Instagram (optional)
- TikTok (optional)
- YouTube (optional)
- Key Music Genre (most relevant) - select from drop down list of Genre
- Other Relevant Music Genres (optional)
- Recent achievements (max 200 words)
- What do you hope to accomplish by showcasing at SXSW London, and why is this the right moment for you? (max 200 words)
- If the Artist is represented by a Booking Agency, please note the Agency name here. (optional)
- If relevant, please note the name of Booking Agent. (optional)
- Press Shot (optional)
- Artist Biography (200 words max) (optional)

Equity, Diversity and Representation

This section is entirely optional. Please refer to the information above to learn why we collect this data and how we manage it.

- What pronouns does the Artist use? (optional)
- What best describes the Artists gender identity? (optional)
- What best describes the sexual orientation of the Artist? (optional)
- What age is the Artist? (optional)
- What best describes the Artists ethnicity / racial background? (optional)
- Does the Artist identify as a person with a disability? (optional)
- If Yes, would you like to share how we can make reasonable accommodations for the Artist? (optional)
- What is the Artists country of residence? (optional)
- What is the Artists nationality? (optional)

Applicant Information

- Full Name of Person Managing Submission
- Email Address
- Phone Number (optional)
- Are you the Artist / member of the Band or a representative of the Artist?
- If a representative, what is your relationship to the Artist? (optional)
- If other, please specify here (optional)
- If a representative, please state your company name? (optional)
- How did you hear about this submission opportunity? (optional)



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