



FACTOR-FUNDED KEYCHANGE MOVEMENT REACHES MILESTONE AS 500 ORGANIZATIONS WORLDWIDE COMMIT TO GENDER EQUALITY

CALL FOR CANADIAN APPLICATIONS TO 2022 TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM NOW OPEN

21 July 2021 (Toronto, ON) – As the lead funder of their work in Canada, FACTOR (The Foundation Assisting Canadian Talent on Recordings), today shares the news that Keychange, the collaborative project launched in 2017 to promote gender equality in the music industry and beyond, has now reached the monumental milestone of 500 signatories worldwide. As well, Canadian women and gender minority artists and innovators can apply to the Keychange annual participant program which is [now open](#).

“Gender equality does not materialize without a great deal of focused effort by the industry as a whole,” says Meg Symyk, President & CEO of FACTOR. *“Keychange is committed to building a framework for implementing this needed change and bringing about a music industry which reflects the people who contribute to it. FACTOR applauds the organizations that are joining us in this commitment for positive change and are proud to be financially supporting and playing an active role in this global initiative.”*

The Keychange gender pledge aims to achieve at least 50% representation of women and gender minorities in the work of festivals, record labels, broadcasters, venues, publishers, collections societies, orchestras, and more. The pioneering global campaign brings together all sectors of the industry in a movement for change and EBU Music, part of the European Broadcasting Union, is the 500th signatory to this pledge. 32 Canadian music organizations are signatories to the pledge. See the full list of organizations [here](#).

“There is gender disproportion in all aspects of the music industry. And it’s institutions like these (EBU Music) – established institutions – that are willing to discuss and address these very essential issues, that can bring about real change.” - Peaches, Keychange Ambassador

Further, Keychange hosts an annual participant program to champion, spotlight, and upskill exceptional women and gender minority artists and innovators from 12 countries across Europe and Canada. The [open call](#) for 74 participants worldwide (8 from Canada – four artists and four entrepreneurs) to this coming year’s program has now launched and will be accepting applications until October 4.

“My experience with Keychange was nothing that I could ever have expected,” says Mar Sellars of Mar On Music. *“First, when we had our only meet up in Sweden, I was blown away by the amazing people I met as fellow Keychange participants, incredibly smart, talented, worldly, creative humans. Then the pandemic hit and all the travel I was looking forward to throughout 2020 was cancelled. But Keychange never stopped and, with the amazing network, we provided each other with support through the first lockdown. There were group therapy sessions and workshops and, while I was locked away in my house in Toronto, Keychange kept me feeling connected with the outside world during those dark times of Spring 2020. I’m looking forward to what Keychange brings in the future once borders are open and we are allowed to embrace each other again.”*

Rebecca Szymkow of Birthday Cake Media echoes: "*Keychange EU has been an instrumental program in my life and career. Being able to connect with other like-minded individuals from many different countries who also want to find actionable ways to achieve gender equity within the music industry has been so influential in giving me the forward momentum I need to help make this change happen.*"

As a Sponsor, FACTOR has committed up to \$350,000 over four years towards the work of Keychange in keeping with the mission of promoting inclusiveness in the Canadian music industry which is reflective of the diversity of Canada's population. The SOCAN Foundation is also a sponsoring organization in Canada, alongside Keychange Partners Mutek and Breakout West.

As Keychange celebrates this milestone, it is clear there is still a long way to go for gender equality in the music industry. In most areas of the music industry, representation of women and gender minorities is 20% or less. The pledge campaign by Keychange started in 2017 and the progress made by all signatories will be evaluated and reported on until 2023, culminating in a Keychange conference and gender report at Tallinn Music Week in 2024.

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About FACTOR

The Foundation Assisting Canadian Talent on Recordings (FACTOR), is a private, not-for-profit organization whose programs provide financial support to Canadian recording artists, labels, songwriters, publishers, event producers, and distributors making investments towards their success. Whether an artist is looking to record a demo or a full-length sound recording, market an existing album, or go on tour at home or internationally, there is a purpose-built funding program. With funding and services designed to assist the spectrum of musical expressions and talent, FACTOR is committed to reflecting the diversity of the Canadian population in its programs and operations while also promoting inclusiveness within the broader Canadian music sector.

About Keychange

Keychange is a pioneering international initiative which transforms the future of music by encouraging festivals and music organizations to achieve at least 50% women and under-represented genders in their programming, staffing and beyond. 74 emerging artists and innovators each year from across Europe and Canada will take part in international festivals, showcase events, collaborations, and a program of creative labs. Keychange aims to accelerate change and create a better, more inclusive music industry for present and future generations.

Keychange is led by **Reeperbahn Festival**, **PRS Foundation** and **Musikcentrum Öst**, supported by the **Creative Europe programme of the European Union**, in partnership with **Tallinn Music Week**, **Iceland Airwaves**, **BIME**, **Oslo World**, **Linecheck/Music Innovation Hub**, **Ireland Music Week**, **SACEM**, **Sound City**, **Way Out West**, **MaMA Festival**, **MUTEK** and **Breakout West**.

Keychange is sponsored by **FACTOR**, **Fundación SGAE**, **GEMA**, **Gorwelion Horizons**, **IMRO**, **the Musicians' Union**, **Norsk Tipping**, **Roskilde Festival**, **SOCAN Foundation**, **Songtrust**, **SoundCloud**, **STEF**, **STIM**, and **Talent Norge**.

Keychange Ambassadors are **Shirley Manson**, **Imogen Heap**, **Tony Visconti**, **Alexa Feser**, **Dermot O'Leary**, **Hinds**, **Emily Eavis**, **Nadine Shah**, **Paulette Long OBE**, **Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla**, **iskwē**, **Corinne Bailey Rae**, **Joy Denalane**, **Kate Nash**, **Sara Potente**, **Ave Tölpt**, **planningtorock**, **Jess Partridge**, **Carla Marie Williams**, **Claire Edwardes**, **Avtomat**, **Karolina Czarnecka**, **Darcy Proper**, **Tones and I**, **Tegan and Sara**, **Margherita Vicario**, **Claudia Pereira**, **Brisa Fenoy**, **Linnea Henriksson**, **Mari Boine**, **Samsaya**, **AURORA**, **First Lady of Iceland Eliza Reid**, **Anna Thorvaldsdóttir**, **Peaches**, **James Foley** and **LYDMOR**.