

SMIRNOFF™ Launches The "Equalizing Music" Initiative In An Effort To Double The Number Of Women Headliners By 2020
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NEW YORK, March 8, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- The most inclusive genre of music in the world has a severe gender diversity issue.

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According to a sample study conducted by *THUMP*, women only made up an average 17% of headliners in 2016 at music festivals around the world. This percentage is far from gender parity. Women face challenges because they do not receive the same amount of exposure and access to opportunities as men. This creates biases against their skills.

Today, on International Women's Day, SMIRNOFF announced a global commitment to create change through its "Equalizing Music" initiative. By bringing music fans and industry leaders together, SMIRNOFF aspires to double the number of woman-identified headliners by 2020.

SMIRNOFF will do this by releasing a new platform together with *THUMP*, *Broadly* and Spotify that will generate exposure of women who are equalizing electronic music. SMIRNOFF has also encouraged industry leaders to sign a pledge and will be releasing a new inspirational documentary.

"We believe that our brands should have a purpose greater than just amazing drinks, and SMIRNOFF brand's purpose is to move the world to be inclusive," said Syl Saller, Diageo Chief Marketing Officer. "We believe we can make a difference by using our presence in electronic music culture to drive diversity within the community. By 2020, SMIRNOFF aims to make a difference by doubling the number of women headliners and this mission requires music fans and industry leaders to work together to achieve this bold goal."

"Equalizing Music" began with a push for industry partners to get involved. By signing a pledge, each partner made a commitment to increase representation. Key industry leaders who have signed include Spotify, *Pitchfork*, iHeartRadio, Deltic Group, *Mixmag*, *THUMP*, *Broadly*, and Insomniac, the global leader in dance music and creative partner of Live Nation Entertainment. Together, these organizations are advancing gender representation across performance bookings, exposure in media and music availability.

"We are committed to promoting gender equality on Spotify through the diversity of the music available on the service and the artists, songwriters and DJs who create it," said Austin Kramer, Spotify Global Head of

Dance and Electronic Music. "We applaud the SMIRNOFF "Equalizing Music" initiative, and look forward to supporting their goal of increasing gender diversity within the electronic music industry."

"Insomniac has always been committed to supporting equality within the industry, whether it's the artists we book on our stages, the performers who bring life to our festival experiences, or most importantly, the talented individuals that make up our brilliant internal team," said Pasquale Rotella, Founder and CEO of Insomniac. "As we celebrate International Women's Day, we shine a light on the strong female figures that have forever shaped dance music. We encourage our community to respect and love one another regardless of gender, not just today but every day. The spirit of inclusion should extend well beyond our culture, and we aspire to help spread that message around the world."

Working with *THUMP* and *Broadly*, SMIRNOFF is also releasing the "Top 50 Women Making Noise" list, a global list of 50 of today's most influential woman-identified headliners and collaborators. Recognized for their credibility in culture and in electronic music, the two publications will help raise awareness of the issues around gender equality.

The "Top 50 Women Making Noise" list includes artists such as Sandunes (India), Honey Dijon (United States) and Anna Lunoe (Australia) who will be featured alongside other talented women on the "[Equalizing Music](#)" online platform. Adding to this initiative and working in partnership with SMIRNOFF, Spotify has curated a unique playlist that features music from many women artists on the list. Music fans are encouraged to listen to and share the playlist to as a way to create demand of women artists in electronic music.

Additionally, SMIRNOFF, in partnership with Virtue Worldwide, VICE Media's in-house creative services agency, has released a new documentary series, titled "SMIRNOFF: Equalizing Music." The new documentary amplifies the voices of women by sharing the stories of two electronic music DJs – The Black Madonna from the United States and DJ Rachael from Uganda. Both have overcome many challenges that women face in the industry and are sharing their stories of success and perseverance.

To celebrate the kick off of these initiatives on International Women's Day, SMIRNOFF markets across the world have booked DJs featured on the "Top 50 Women Making Noise" list to show support for women in electronic music. In the United States and in the United Kingdom, the Black Madonna performed in celebration of the SMIRNOFF brand's push for inclusivity, while guests responsibly enjoyed Smirnoff No. 21 vodka cocktails. Similar events like these will also take place in Germany, Thailand and Latin America.

Whether mixing it up behind the bar, behind the DJ booth or at home, SMIRNOFF reminds music fans of all gender identities to pace themselves and drink responsibly. To learn more visit [DRINKiQ.com](#).

To find out more about the events happening around the world, you can visit the SMIRNOFF brand's [Facebook page](#).

About SMIRNOFF

The SMIRNOFF brand that boasts the world's number-one selling premium spirit and the top-selling flavored vodka in North America, traces its heritage back to 19th century Russia. As the most awarded vodka brand in the world, SMIRNOFF has always been known for quality and is enjoyed responsibly in 130 countries around the world. For more information, log on to [www.smirnoff.com](#).

About Diageo

Diageo is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands including Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, Bulleit and Buchanan's whiskies, SMIRNOFF, Cîroc and Ketel One vodkas, Captain Morgan, Baileys, Don Julio, Tanqueray and Guinness.

Diageo is proud that we have focused on achieving greater diversity at the most senior level, with 38% of our Executive being women, one of the highest in the Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 Index.

Diageo is listed on both the New York Stock Exchange (DEO) and the London Stock Exchange (DGE) and our products are sold in more than 180 countries around the world. For more information about Diageo, our people, our brands, and performance, visit us at [www.diageo.com](#). Visit Diageo's global responsible drinking resource, [www.DRINKiQ.com](#), for information, initiatives, and ways to share best practice.

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