# Spotify to Launch Artist-First AI Music Tools in Landmark Industry Deal



Spotify is set to announce a major partnership with five leading music companies—Sony Music Group, Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group, Merlin and Believe—to co-develop AI music tools that prioritise artist rights and compensation.

The initiative comes as the music industry faces growing concerns over the use of copyrighted material to train AI models without consent. Spotify’s collaboration aims to place musicians at the centre of innovation by involving record labels and artists directly in the development of generative AI tools.

In documents seen by LBC, Spotify reaffirms its support for copyright: “Some voices in the tech industry believe copyright should be abolished. We don’t. Musicians’ rights matter. Copyright is essential.” The company warns that without music industry leadership, AI innovation could continue unchecked, potentially undermining creator rights and earnings.

With more than 700 million monthly users, Spotify sees its platform as a key space to foster responsible AI-driven creativity. The company aims to use AI to deepen fan engagement and generate new revenue streams, while ensuring that rights holders are fairly compensated.

A source close to the deal described it as “good news for the ambitions of creators in the UK,” adding that a market-led approach is preferable to potentially restrictive government regulation. The UK Government is currently debating a proposal that would allow artists to opt out of having their work used in AI training datasets—a measure critics say risks weakening copyright protections.

The announcement builds on Spotify’s broader licensing strategy. In February, it signed a multi-year deal with Warner Music Group covering both recorded music and publishing through Warner Chappell Music. Similar agreements with Universal Music Group and Merlin reinforce Spotify’s ties to both major and independent sectors.

These licensing deals support new fan experiences and tiered subscription models, including premium offerings for superfans. Warner Chappell’s catalogue alone includes more than one million copyrights, making these partnerships central to Spotify’s efforts to offer diverse content and protect intellectual property.

Yet tensions remain. Major labels have filed lawsuits against AI firms Suno and Udio, accusing them of training models on copyrighted music without permission. These cases underscore the urgency of finding solutions that balance innovation with legal and ethical safeguards.

Spotify’s move signals a deliberate shift towards artist-first AI development, aiming to integrate technology into music creation without compromising creator rights. As legislation on AI regulation looms, the partnership may set a precedent for how platforms and rights holders can responsibly collaborate in the era of generative AI.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/article/music-spotify-record-labels-ai-5HjdFW9_2/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://newsroom.spotify.com/2025-10-16/artist-first-ai-music-spotify-collaboration/> - Spotify has announced a collaboration with Sony Music Group, Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group, Merlin, and Believe to develop 'artist-first' AI music products. This partnership aims to create responsible AI tools that empower artists and songwriters, ensuring fair compensation and new revenue streams. The initiative focuses on partnerships with record labels, distributors, and music publishers, offering artists choice in participation, and building products that enhance artist-fan connections without replacing human artistry. Spotify emphasizes the importance of copyright and musicians' rights in this venture.
3. <https://newsroom.spotify.com/2025-02-06/warner-music-group-spotify-agreement/> - Spotify and Warner Music Group (WMG) have entered into a new multi-year agreement covering both recorded music and music publishing. This deal aims to strengthen their commitment to artists, songwriters, and fans, fostering growth and innovation in the music ecosystem. The partnership will deliver new fan experiences, an expanded music and video catalog, additional paid subscription tiers, and differentiated content bundles. It also introduces a direct licensing model with Warner Chappell Music in several countries, reinforcing benefits for songwriters.
4. <https://newsroom.spotify.com/2025-09-30/merlin-spotify-partnership-renewal/> - Spotify and Merlin have renewed their global, multi-year licensing partnership, emphasizing the vital role of independent music on Spotify. This expanded partnership reflects both companies' commitment to the independent community and its impact on global culture. Over their 17-year collaboration, Spotify and Merlin have supported independent artists and labels, contributing to the global rise of various music genres. The renewed agreement ensures that Merlin's independent membership continues to shape the future of streaming as a key partner.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/spotify-warner-music-group-sign-new-multi-year-distribution-deal-2025-02-06/> - Spotify and Warner Music Group (WMG) have signed a new multi-year distribution deal, granting Spotify a direct license from WMG's music publishing arm, Warner Chappell Music, which holds a catalog of over 1 million copyrights globally. The agreement aims to expand paid subscription tiers and introduce new content bundles on Spotify, potentially attracting more subscribers with offerings like a premium tier for 'superfans of music.' Financial terms were not disclosed. This follows a similar agreement Spotify made with Universal Music Group.
6. <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/universal-music-group-spotify-strike-new-agreement-2025-01-26/> - Universal Music Group (UMG) and Spotify have reached a new multi-year agreement for recorded music and music publishing. The publishing agreement establishes a direct license between Spotify and UMG across Spotify's current product portfolio in the U.S. and several other countries. The partnership aims to benefit artists, songwriters, and consumers with innovative offerings, new paid subscription tiers, and an expanded audio and visual content catalog. Spotify's CEO, Daniel Ek, emphasized that the partnership will enhance music subscriptions' appeal on a global scale.
7. <https://www.reuters.com/technology/artificial-intelligence/music-labels-sue-ai-companies-suno-udio-us-copyright-infringement-2024-06-24/> - Major music labels Sony Music, Universal Music Group, and Warner Records have filed lawsuits against AI companies Suno and Udio, alleging mass copyright infringement. The labels claim that the AI companies used their music recordings without permission to train music-generating AI systems, which compete with human artists' work and cheapen their efforts. Filed in New York and Massachusetts federal courts, the lawsuits highlight incidents where the AI systems recreated recognizable elements of prominent songs and generated vocals indistinguishable from famous artists.