

## Safety & Reputation Checklist

This document offers practical guidance for artists, agents and organisations experiencing boycott pressure, public criticism or reputational risk. It aims to support clear, measured decision-making, with attention to safety, communication and professional responsibilities.

You do not need to follow every step – use the sections that are relevant to your situation.

### Checklist for Artist's Personal Safety & Reputation

*Use this checklist if you are experiencing boycott pressure, online targeting or public criticism. You do not need to complete every step. Use what is relevant to your situation.*

#### 1. Immediate Personal Safety

Your **safety comes** first.

- Pause and assess whether any messages contain:
  - Threats of physical harm
  - Doxing (sharing or threatening to share your address, phone number or personal details)
  - Stalking or repeated unwanted contact
- If any message feels threatening:
  - Stop engaging immediately
  - Save evidence (screenshots with usernames, dates and URLs)
  - Report the content to the platform
  - If there is a credible threat of harm, consider contacting the police
- Trust your instincts. You are allowed to prioritise safety over visibility.

#### 2. Digital & Online Safety

**Online pressure can escalate** quickly and unpredictably.

- Consider temporarily:
  - Turning off comments or replies
  - Limiting who can message you
  - Logging out of platforms for a short period
- Avoid:
  - Responding late at night or when distressed
  - Quote-posting hostile content
  - Sharing your location, travel plans or personal routines
- If possible:
  - Ask a trusted person to monitor messages or mentions on your behalf
  - Keep one clear channel of communication open and close the rest

These steps are about containment, not retreat.

#### 3. Document and Record

**Accurate records** protect you.

- Save:
  - Emails, direct messages and public posts
  - Screenshots showing usernames, dates and platforms
  - Any communication from venues, funders or publishers
- Keep records:
  - In one secure folder
  - With brief notes on dates and impact
- Do not rely on memory alone. Documentation helps if you later seek advice or support.

#### 4. Reputation Management Basics

You do not have to respond immediately.

- Pause before making any public statement
  - Avoid issuing multiple or evolving responses
  - Decide whether to make a:
    - Holding statement or
    - A brief values-based statement, which is sufficient
- Remember:
- Silence is not an admission
  - One clear position is stronger than repeated explanation

If in doubt, wait.

#### 5. Decision Discipline

**Pressure often creates urgency.** Urgency is rarely your friend.

Ask yourself:

- Am I responding because I choose to, or because I feel pushed?
- Will responding now materially improve the situation?
- Would waiting 24 hours reduce risk or confusion?

You are entitled to slow this down.

#### 6. When to Seek Support

You do not need to manage this alone.

Consider seeking advice if:

- A venue, festival or publisher raises concerns or asks you to withdraw
- Your contract or payment is threatened
- Media enquiries begin
- Online harassment becomes sustained or organised

Support may include:

- Your agent or manager
- Your union or professional body
- Independent legal advice

Seeking advice is not escalation. It is protection.

## 7. Wellbeing and Aftercare

Public pressure can take a real toll.

- Notice signs of stress such as:
  - Sleep disruption
  - Anxiety or rumination
  - Avoidance or emotional exhaustion
- Give yourself permission to:
  - Step back temporarily
  - Limit news or social media exposure
  - Talk to someone not involved in the situation
- After the situation settles:
  - Reflect on what support helped
  - Update your personal boundaries or statements if useful

Care is part of professionalism.

### Remember

- You cannot be compelled to take a political position as a condition of work
- You are allowed to protect your safety, reputation and wellbeing
- You are not required to satisfy everyone
- Calm, proportionate responses are usually the most effective

## Venue Checklist for Safety & Reputation

*Use this checklist when your venue, festival or institution is facing boycott pressure, public campaigns or demands to cancel or withdraw work.*

*You do not need to complete every step. Use what is relevant to your situation.*

### 1. Pause and Hold Process

- Do not respond publicly immediately
- Avoid apologising or signalling decisions before facts are established
- Confirm who holds decision-making authority
- Activate agreed internal protocols

*Speed increases risk. Process protects everyone.*

### 2. Assess Safety Separately from Reputational Pressure

- Identify whether there are credible threats or legal risks
- Distinguish protest, offence or disagreement from safety concerns
- Document any threats or incidents clearly
- If needed, seek professional security advice to enable the event to proceed safely

*Discomfort is not risk. Protest is not harm.*

## 3. Protect Artists and Contributors

- Inform artists early that pressure is being received
- Consult artists before issuing any public statements
- Do not speak on artists' behalf without agreement
- Consider how staff and front-of-house can shield artists during events

*Artists should not carry institutional risk alone.*

## 4. Contain Communications

- Nominate a single spokesperson
- Brief staff clearly and early
- Use a short holding statement if required
- Avoid multiple statements or moral explanations

*Less said publicly often reduces escalation.*

## 5. Record and Document

- Log all correspondence, complaints and pressure
- Keep a clear record of decisions and rationales
- Retain copies of contracts and policies
- Assume records may be reviewed later

*Good records support good governance.*

## 6. Check Governance and Legal Duties

- Review contractual obligations before changing plans
- Confirm compliance with charity law, equality law and employment duties
- Ensure decisions sit with the correct governance body
- Seek independent legal advice if cancellation or withdrawal is proposed

*Reputational fear is not a legal instruction.*

## 7. Consider Reputational Impact Carefully

- Ask whether cancellation would escalate rather than contain pressure
- Consider long-term trust with artists and audiences
- Avoid actions that imply wrongdoing where none is established
- Remember that most campaigns are short-lived

*Reputation is often damaged more by panic than protest.*

## 8. Review and Learn

- Once pressure subsides, review what happened
- Identify what worked and what increased risk
- Update internal protocols if needed
- Brief boards and senior staff for future readiness

*Learning strengthens institutional resilience.*

**Remember**

You are not required to arbitrate political disputes in order to present art. Responsible leadership means holding clear processes, protecting artists as part of reputational care and responding calmly and proportionately - all of which reduce risk rather than increase it.

**Agent Checklist for Safety & Reputation**

Use this checklist when you are representing an artist under boycott pressure, reputational risk or cancellation threat. You do not need to complete every step. Use what is relevant to the situation.

**1. Pause and Hold Your Role**

- Do not respond immediately
- Do not pass pressure straight to the artist
- Remind yourself that your role is to buffer, not absorb
- Slow timelines wherever possible

*Speed increases risk. Agents buy time.*

**2. Identify the Type of Pressure**

- Who is applying pressure and through what channel?
- Is the request explicit or implied?
- Is this reputational, political or ideological pressure?
- Is there any credible legal or safety risk?

*Not all pressure requires action.*

**3. Separate Risk from Anxiety**

- Has any actual legal breach been identified?
- Are safety claims evidence-based and documented?
- Is reputational anxiety being framed as urgency?

*If no credible risk exists, treat the situation as reputational pressure, not crisis.*

**4. Protect the Artist from Direct Exposure**

- Avoid forwarding hostile messages or demands
- Shield the artist from direct engagement where possible
- Advise against public response while pressure is live
- Monitor online escalation without amplifying it

*Artists should not be placed on the front line.*

**5. Clarify What Is Being Asked**

- Is the artist being asked to withdraw, explain or apologise?
- Is silence being requested or assumed?
- Is a political or ethical declaration implied?

*Ask for clarity before advising any response.*

**6. Check Contractual and Legal Reality**

- Review contracts before agreeing to any change
- Distinguish obligation from preference
- Do not accept venue panic as legal instruction
- Seek independent advice if cancellation is proposed

*Reputational fear does not override contracts.*

**7. Control Communication**

- Decide whether a response is needed at all
- Keep communication factual and minimal
- Do not speak on the artist's behalf without consent
- Avoid issuing multiple or evolving statements

*Less communication often reduces escalation.*

**8. Decide Whether to Escalate or Hold**

- Can pressure be allowed to subside without response?
- Is escalation likely to increase attention?
- Would waiting 24–48 hours change the picture?

*Holding is often the most protective option.*

**9. Document and Review**

- Log all correspondence and requests
- Keep records of advice given and decisions taken
- Review what increased or reduced risk
- Adjust approach for future situations

*Good records protect artists and agents alike.*

**Remember**

- You are not required to manage institutional fear
- You do not arbitrate ideology
- Buffering pressure is active work
- Calm judgement protects careers