

Sustainable Innovation 2023

Accelerating Sustainability in the Creative Economy and Creative Industries

24th International Conference

Online Conference: 20th – 26th March 2023

Business School for the Creative Industries

University for the Creative Arts

Epsom, Surrey, UK

A Case Study on the Development of Evolution Music's Bioplastic LP as a Step Towards Circular Products and Production Systems in the Music Industry.

S Charter, Evolution Music Ltd, UK

This paper will use the format of a case study to address the key theme of the SI2023 by focusing on Evolution Music's journey to develop the world's first commercially available bioplastic LP as an illustration of how the creative industries in general, and the manufacturers of music industry products in particular, can help to tackle the inter-connected challenges of climate change, ecosystems pollution and the biodiversity crisis.

The Case Study will offer a definition of what Net Zero means for music industry products, production processes and supply chains, with a view to this definition being more broadly applicable to products and manufacturing for the creative industries. This will describe how the company's practical first step (the bioplastic LP) and its medium-term Vision (a circular economy net zero pressing plant and supply chain system) provide a practical way to address the 3 core dimensions of Net Zero: net zero carbon, net zero waste (i.e. circular economy), net zero biodiversity impacts (i.e. non-toxic). The paper will also offer the term CENZ (circular economy net zero) as a conceptual model that captures the systems thinking approach used by Evolution Music to help it define the relevance of its practical first step towards its long-term vision for CENZ solutions for the music industry and the creative industries as a whole.

It will illustrate how circular design approaches provide a way forward for physical media in the music industry, with reference to how permaculture ethics and principles provided a foundation for practical design-based solutions to key environmental and social challenges.

The Case Study will detail 5 approaches to accelerating sustainability in the music sector, and will describe how Evolution Music see CENZ music solutions as drivers for social transformation. The paper will illustrate this by citing the rapid and enthusiastic take-up of the bioplastic LP by highly concerned high-profile artists (Michael Stipe; Bicep; etc), labels (Beggars Group/4AD; Ninja Tune; BMG; etc) and music industry working groups and activist bodies (AIM Climate group; Music Declares Emergency; Earth Percent).

The Case Study will describe the essence of Evolution Music's sustainable business model as an R&D business that commercialises its innovations, designed for significant scalability and significant and verifiable impact reduction, with the goal that concerned, enthusiastic and satisfied customers become its most powerful advocates, through their appreciation of high quality and desirable CENZ products, which thereby builds a music-driven social movement for change.

The Case study will describe EM's mission to demonstrate that manufacturers of music industry products can tackle the challenge of climate change by developing genuinely CENZ products, manufacturing processes and supply chain systems that a) deliver significant transformation of impacts (not superficial change), b) fit with existing manufacturing processes, and c) deliver healthy profits and returns for investors, and positive work for staff.

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The Case Study will define replicable circular economy principles and lessons learnt that can be taken up across the creative industries, and will draw conclusions regarding the key factors needed to ensure that CENZ solutions in the creative industries are technically and commercially viable, and highly scalable, whilst also driving transformative change.