The Malta Sound Women Network is a new organisation, affiliated with the Yorkshire Sound Women Network (UK) and supported by the Malta School of Music. We aim to bring like-minded women together; to share knowledge and skills in music and sound technology, sonic arts, production, audio-electronics and basically anything to do with using kit to create sound!

- Network Meetings
- Education
- SoundWalks
- Installations
- Gigs
- Events
- Showcasing Women and Girls in Sound
The Malta Sound Women Network is a new organisation, affiliated with the Yorkshire Sound Women Network (UK) and supported by the Malta School of Music. We aim to bring like-minded women together; to share knowledge and skills in music and sound technology, sonic arts, production, audio-electronics, and anything to do with using kit to create sound!

In addition to professional networking the MSWN will provide free education and mentoring to women and girls in fields relating to music technology.

We also aim to organise soundwalks and events featuring/promoting women’s music throughout the year; we are open to collaborations with other organisations/events with similar goals. Events, shows, installations, concerts and soundwalks hosted by the organisation are inclusive of everyone, however the monthly network meetings are a space exclusively for women.

People

The network is currently run by Jess Rymer, a composer and musician from the UK, and Yasmin Kuymizakis, a Maltese sound artist who studied in London. The network aims to become a government recognised Voluntary Organisation in 2018 and therefore will open positions for board members and leaders of outreach programs over the next year. Any interested parties are encouraged to contact us for more information.
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The MSWN’s plan to bring like-minded women together begins with the launch of a professional network, with the aim to build a database of professional and institutional contacts who share the desire to encourage and promote women in sound. The meetings aim to bring like-minded women together to share their knowledge, skills and experiences in a supportive environment.

Education

The MSWN’s education initiative, with support from the Malta School of Music, offers free workshops exclusively to girls/women of any level interested in sound. Workshops are held on Saturday afternoons and will feature local and international female electronic artists. Material created in these workshops will be featured in events throughout the year, for example in the Action Planet exhibition, St James Cavalier, Valletta.

Other events

We also aim to organise soundwalks and events featuring/promoting women’s music throughout the year. These events, in addition to events showcasing the results of our educational projects will be promoted via our social media pages.
We are frequently asked “Why have you created a group specifically for women, and women only?” The answer is not simple, but here is a brief summary of our reasons for creating the Malta Sound Women Network:

- Being the only woman in the room can be very exhausting over time; a women-only professional space can offer respite and even act as an antidote to the phenomenon.

- Access to professional bodies and forums can often be more difficult for women due to the often surprising levels of sexism and the general lack of awareness around inclusivity.

- Most sound technology spaces are male dominated and can therefore be intimidating to women entering those spaces for the first time.

- Female students on Music Technology courses are hugely outnumbered by their male counterparts; as such they have a greater need for additional support networks.

- So long as the majority of social, political, and economic power is held by men, women-only spaces will continue to be an essential tool for acknowledging and coping with inequality.

Women need safe, collaborative spaces where we can share our experiences, learn from each other and support one another.

MSWN feel that it is important and helpful to undertake proactive intervention in order to address the status quo. Organisations such as the Yorkshire Sound Women Network (UK) and Women’s Audio Mission (US) have proven that girls and women are interested in music technology, and that all-female environments provide bridges into existing networks and environments. Therefore we offer learning mentoring and confidence through community.
Reasons why we feel like our aims are best met through a women-only approach (based on research by the Yorkshire Sound Women Network):

- Statistics show particular imbalance of gender diversity in many music industries.
- 90% of music technology students have been male since these undergraduate courses began flourishing in the late 1990s (Borne and Devine’s paper presents details from analysis of UCAS data, published 2015).
- All-women environments do encourage engagement and interest in areas that have not historically encouraged women.
- We believe that it is important to provide role models and foreground visibility of women working in various areas of music and sound technology.
- Some all-male environments can feel less inclusive to girls and women, for a variety of reasons.
- To offer an alternative to a predominantly male environment for girls and women that are feeling considerable pressure to outperform to represent the gender.
- Because of normalised cultures around music technology. This short NPR on women and computer science provides a helpful discussion on this. http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2014/10/17/356944145/episode576-when-women-stopped-coding
- It is important to create environment that facilitates risk taking for learning. We provide an environment which enables engagement with technology on those terms.
- People are more inspired to follow a path when they see people like themselves represented.
- To provide information on the diversity disciplines in music technology and sound. Disciplines that connect with computer science (such as coding), physical computing (such as Arduino), and physics.
- To help establish new norms regarding the identity of the workforce in areas such as digital signal processing (designing software interfaces and hardware systems for sound in toys, games, commercial music production etc.); sound production; music composition; live sonic and electronic arts; DJing; education; studio recording and live sound; audio for TV, film, games, radio; etc.
- To help raise awareness about inclusivity for women in music industries.
- Because women report that apprehension over the possibility of sexual harassment is lifted in women-only spaces.
- And, finally: In Music Tech, all-male spaces happen all the time. For women they only happen by design.
The meetings aim to bring like-minded women together to share their knowledge, skills and experiences in a supportive environment.

We meet once a month to share skills, discuss the current scene, swap ideas, collaborate, and discuss any topics relevant to women working in sound. Come along to meet new people and talk about sound and music technology in an informal setting.

There is no pressure to share work with the group, but if there is something you would like to bring along for people to look at/listen to you are more than welcome. We have access to speakers and a projector, but if you require any other equipment please let us know and we will do our best to provide it. Please bring a small donation for tea, coffee and cake while we talk!

If you have accessibility requirements please get in touch and we will do our best to accommodate these.

If you cannot manage to make the scheduled meetings due to caring/childcare responsibilities please get in touch and we will do our best to organise a meetup time to accommodate you.

This is a community that warmly welcomes and includes all women; including transgender and transsexual women. If you are uncertain please don’t hesitate to write.

Database

The MSWN’s plan to bring like-minded women together begins with the launch of a professional network, with aim to build a database of professional and institutional contacts who share the desire to encourage and promote women in sound. Any individuals or organisations interested in becoming part of this database are encouraged to contact the network or come to an event, and inform the group of your aims and intentions.
This education initiative is available exclusively to women and aims to encourage, mentor and promote women in electronic music.

**Adult course (18+)**

There are no academic entry requirements; participants do not need any prior training in music, electronic music or technology. However each participant will be expected to bring a fully charged laptop to every workshop.

The workshops will give an introduction to electronic music before guiding and encouraging participants in creating material for exhibitions, installations etc. and therefore a commitment to attend regularly is the only requirement.

Workshops will run from November till June with breaks for the holidays and will cover recording, soundwalks, soundscapes, MIDI, audio FX, basic DAW interfaces, sample editing, synthesis, a history of women in electronic music and more.

For course dates see following pages, please register by email before attending.

**Junior course (13-17)**

There are no academic entry requirements; participants do not need any prior training in music, electronic music or technology.

The workshops will give an introduction to electronic music before guiding and encouraging participants in creating material for exhibitions, installations etc. and therefore a commitment to attend regularly is the only requirement.

Workshops will run from November till June with breaks for the holidays and will cover wiring custom instruments, recording, basic DAW interfaces, audio FX, a history of women in electronic music and more.

For course dates see following pages, please register by email before attending.

**Mentoring**

The MSWN offers mentoring to young female artists in electronic music.

Applicants are assigned a mentor with expertise in their area within sound/electronic music who will guide them for a period of 6 months before the mentoring is reviewed and either renewed, changed or terminated.
Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2017</td>
<td>Introduction 1</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>25/11/2017</td>
<td>Introduction 2</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/12/2017</td>
<td>Break for women in music event at Spazju Kreattiv 6pm-10pm (all students encouraged to attend)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16/12/2017</td>
<td>Afternoon concert showcasing women in electronic music</td>
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First Project

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06/01/2018</td>
<td>Introduction to recording and Audacity</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/01/2018</td>
<td>Soundwalk; location tbc, own transport required</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/01/2018</td>
<td>Begin working on soundscape</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/02/2018</td>
<td>Optional tutorials for soundscape creation</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/02/2018</td>
<td>Deadline to send soundscape via email</td>
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<tr>
<td>16/02/2018</td>
<td>Exhibition including soundscapes opens at Spazju Kreattiv</td>
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Audio Editing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03/03/2018</td>
<td>Audio FX in detail</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<td>10/03/2018</td>
<td>Optional Audio FX tutorials</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>17/03/2018</td>
<td>MIDI</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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Synthesis

Course dates for the synthesis course TBC once dates for Malta Arts Festival 2018 are discussed.

Public soundwalk events TBA.

Workshops to be held at the Malta School of Music, Ħamrun. Please register before attending and send any queries to malta_soundwomen@gmail.com
Junior course
Group 1

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<td>Introduction 2</td>
<td>14:00-15:30</td>
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<td>Break for women in music event at St James 6pm-10pm (all students</td>
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<td>14:00-15:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>20/01/2018</td>
<td>Clean-up event to collect materials for instruments, location TBA.</td>
<td>14:00-TBC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/01/2018</td>
<td>Create instruments from recycled materials</td>
<td>14:00-15:30</td>
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Public soundwalk events TBA.

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Public soundwalk events TBA.

Workshops to be held at the Malta School of Music, Ħamrun. Please register before attending and send any queries to maltaSoundwomen@gmail.com
Statement of intent

Malta Sound Women Network (MSWN) recognises that many people are discriminated against and will take positive action against discrimination in our areas of concern. We aim to ensure that no job applicant, staff member, volunteer, or organisation or individual to whom we provide services will be discriminated against by us on the grounds of: race, colour, gender, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, marital status, caring responsibilities, age, physical disability, learning difficulty, mental ill health, religion, lack of formal qualifications, class, employment status, or unrelated criminal conviction. The purpose of this statement is to state MSWN’s commitment to prevent discrimination in its service provision and employment practices, and to take active steps to stimulate genuine equality of opportunity.

Actions

The group will take action to ensure that group activities and events are open and welcoming to everybody entitled to become a member as defined in the MSWN Constitution.

All members of the MSWN will have the Equal Opportunities Policy and Safer Spaces Policy explained to them, and as group members, will undertake to comply with and implement these policies.

We aim to make our meetings and events accessible to people with disabilities – e.g. provide transport where possible, meet in accessible premises, produce information in large print, etc. Where carers/interpreters/key workers are male and the women-only nature of a workshop or event would therefore be compromised, the committee will consider on a case by case basis.

We aim to use local training opportunities to help our committee and members better understand how discrimination occurs and how to prevent it.

We aim to hold meetings and events at a range of times and in a range of locations to facilitate attendance by all members, e.g. those with caring responsibilities or limited mobility.
Harassment

Harassment includes but is not limited to threats, verbal abuse, use of derogatory language, invasion of personal space, inappropriate touching, sexual propositions, and over-familiarity. MSWN events are educational events and as such conversation should be kept professional and polite. Any instances of harassment will be treated in accordance with the guidelines set out in the MSWN Safer Spaces Policy.

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually at AGM meeting or more frequently as required.

Complaints

Members who have experienced discrimination or harassment at one of our events, or have been the victim of any other practice which violates this policy, can report the incident immediately to the MSWN volunteer present at the event. If it is not possible to resolve the complaint immediately, it will be referred to the MSWN Committee for further action. Where a member feels more able to report an incident after an event, they may make the complaint to a member of the MSWN team (once formed), whose names and contact details will be made available on the MSWN website and social media pages.

MSWN is committed to learning and improving, and to changing our practices to ensure this policy is upheld and applied across all areas of practice. Any person who feels that this policy has not been upheld can make a statement to that effect or register a complaint. This will be dealt with by the MSWN Committee who will investigate the matter, listening to all individuals involved. We recognise that Equal Opportunities policies can often become mere lip service and we aim to work hard to prevent this happening within our organisation. As such MSWN will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against, and will not victimise or stigmatise them because they have raised a complaint. We are strongly committed to being a fair, inclusive and accessible organisation.

For more information please see our Statement on Widening Participation.
The Malta Sound Women Network aims to create friendly and safe spaces at all of its meetings and events. We wholeheartedly believe that no attendee should have to tolerate behaviour that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

It is not realistic to assume that we can prevent anything bad from happening in our group. Truly inclusive spaces are only achieved through ongoing dialogue to which all members are invited to contribute. We recognise that often things that make people feel excluded or threatened are very subtle in nature, which is why we aim to take seriously any issue that is brought to our attention.

Detailed below are the types of behaviour that we don’t tolerate and the reaction that can be expected from us should these situations occur. We hope that it will be possible to resolve issues in a mutually supportive manner without the need for strong sanctions or the banning of disruptive individuals. However we are fully committed to keeping our events friendly and safe; as such if there are attendees who are unable or unwilling to comply with this policy then they will be asked to leave.

**Prejudiced behavior**

**Definition**

- Prejudiced behaviour is any action motivated by prejudice; this includes but is not limited to sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, transphobia, disablism, sizeism, ageism, etc.

**Immediate action**

- Prejudiced behaviour is often subtle in nature and will therefore usually need to be reported in order for the Working Group to be aware of its presence. A member of the Working Group will speak to the perpetrator about the behaviour, entering into the conversation in a spirit of compassionate instruction as safer spaces can offer a unique opportunity for learning and reflection. The perpetrator will be provided with the Safer Spaces Statement and behaviour will be monitored throughout the rest of the event.

**Follow up action**

- **With regard to the complainant:** A follow-up conversation will be initiated with the complainant to ensure that they are satisfied with the way the incident was handled. If they have any criticisms, these will be used to help inform future actions and to influence the development of this policy.

- **With regards to the perpetrator:** If the perpetrator’s behaviour improves and is acceptable for the remainder of the event, no follow up action will be taken. The perpetrator will be welcome at other events, provided this policy is adhered to.
Harassment

**Definition**
Harassment includes but is not limited to threats, verbal abuse, use of derogatory language, invasion of personal space, inappropriate touching, sexual propositions, and over-familiarity. MSWN events are educational events and as such conversation should be kept professional and polite.

**Immediate action**
Like prejudiced behaviour, harassment is often subtle in nature and will therefore usually need to be reported in order for the Working Group to be aware of its presence. A member of the Working Group will speak to the perpetrator about the behaviour and ask them to refrain from harassing other attendees. The perpetrator will be provided with the Safer Spaces Statement and behaviour will be monitored throughout the rest of the event.

**Follow up action**
*With regard to the complainant:* The complainant will be informed of the Working Group’s decision on follow up action and their feedback will be solicited to ensure that they are satisfied with the way the incident was handled. If they have any criticisms, these will be used to help inform future actions and to influence the development of this policy.
*With regards to the perpetrator:* The Working Group will decide what action is to be taken dependent on the severity of the incident. Unlike with prejudiced behaviour, which can be the result of ignorance, harassment is often carried out with intention and therefore may require a more uncompromising response.

Physical Violence

**Definition/ Explanation**
Any behaviour that physically intimidates or injures other people.

**Immediate action**
In the case of physical violence the perpetrator will be asked to leave the premises immediately and the police will be informed.

**Follow up action**
Follow-up communication will be entered into only if the Working Group decides it is safe to do so.
Statement

MSWN was founded with the purpose of widening participation within the sound and music technology fields to incorporate greater numbers of women and girls. Our work, however, does not end there. Gender imbalance is just one of the problems facing our industry: racism, classism and ableism, for example, play their part in narrowing participation by making spaces exclusive rather than inclusive and thus limiting access to knowledge, training, equipment and opportunity.

In order to combat this inequality an organisation must be inclusive and truly representative; we can achieve this by only by thinking deeply about our principles, consulting widely on our practices, and actively seeking out those who experience barriers to participation. Only then can we be a catalyst for true and lasting change within our industry.

For more information please see our Equal Opportunity Policy and our Safer Spaces Policy. We are a young organisation and us such are only just beginning to form our action plans for outreach; we particularly welcome any input on equal opportunities and inclusivity from our members as well as those interested in joining MSWN. If you have any comments please contact a member of our Working Group. We will be creating an Equal Opportunities/Outreach Team in future; please let us know if you are interested in joining this team.