

## **UK Work permits (Non-EU artists only)**

### **Introduction:**

Any non European Union (EU) musician that is paid for performing in the UK requires a points based work authorization sponsorship (technically Tier 5: Sporting and Creative) that has to be guaranteed from a UK Border and Immigration Agency (UKBIA) licensed UK sponsor. Licensed sponsors must have at least 5 years experience and must be incorporated companies within the UK.

Although musicians must be in possession of appropriate visas, in Commonwealth countries a visa waiver program usually means this is not required unless the musician is staying for more than three months, expects multiple entry during their work period in the UK or has a prior transit layover in the UK before starting their work (see "Important Notes" below).

Certificates of Sponsorship are given per musician per act. The certificate is a virtual document and all the act will typically see is the authorization number for each musician. In addition, groups will receive a group authorization number.

In practice, it is not difficult to obtain a work permit authorization for international artists (see "Information we need to process your work authorization" below) but to do this you must go through a UK based and licensed sponsor.

### **Fees:**

We have over five years experience with a 100% track record for bringing international musicians into the UK. This has resulted in the UK Border Immigration Agency awarding CME Artist Services a Grade A Level Sponsorship rating. This, and the fact that promoters receive a limited number of certificate allocations per year, for which there is considerable demand, means that we charge a reasonable, but professional, fee for authorizing artists.

We charge a flat £100 for each Certificate of Sponsorship (i.e. for each musician) though additional musicians in a group of a trio or more are charged £50 additional (so a solo act would be charged £100, a duo £200 and a trio £250).

We charge a flat £100 for the contract formalising your agreement with our agency while also covering any questions UK Immigration may have about your visit. Although the contract is not strictly necessary if you have any doubts at all we recommend it as we have an excellent relationship with UK international airport immigration and UKBA. The contract fee remains the same regardless of the number of musicians in the group.

There are no permit fees for acts selected to participate on one of our showcase tours (see <http://cmeas.com/opportunities.htm> for current openings).

### **Payment:**

We can accept the fee in £GBP payable via secure online payment (all major credit cards), by Pay Pal or by check in £GBP made payable to CME Artist Services and sent to:

CME Artist Services  
3 Kensington House  
Greaves Road

**Information we need to process your work authorization:**

1. Passport information for each band member:
  - Country AND place (i.e. town) of passport issue
  - Full name as it appears on the passport
  - Date of birth
  - Place (town and country) of birth
  - Passport number
  - Passport issue and expiration date
2. Current address of each band member
3. Dates you plan to work in the UK and ALL dates you plan to arrive and depart during the work period if more than just initial and final
4. Remuneration (gross) of the tour in British pounds (this is needed for the Border Immigration Agency to report to the UK Inland Revenue Service – tax liability is not a problem providing the artist is making less than £12,000 in the UK in one year so don't fret about this!)
5. Has the artist performed in the UK before?
6. Name of the tour.
7. Name of the act.

**Contract:**

We can provide you with a contract whereby CME Artist Services agree to be your agent in the UK and stating that you agree to abide by the terms of your engagement, not overstay agreed time and not take on any other work than stated on the contract. It also serves to cover any questions Immigration may have about your stay. The contract will include your work permit authorization and group numbers (latter where applicable), along with relevant information on the tour and your temporary place of residence. Present to immigration on arriving in the UK.

**Processing time:**

Since the Border Immigration Agency gave successful UK promoters the responsibility for issuing a limited number of permits a year rather than deciding the application themselves, our work load in this regard has shrunk. We can usually process the sponsorship and complete the contract within 24 hours (current work load permitting).

**What Next:**

When we have all the information we require we will then process your application and provide you with your sponsorship numbers (and contract and invoice as required). On arrival at a UK international airport, Immigration will ask you for your certificate number when you declare that you are working as a musician and then check this against the UK Border and Immigration database

which will include the authorization profile that we have created for your act. Very quick and very simple (and no, it wasn't always this easy!)

### **IMPORTANT NOTES**

In five years of obtaining work permits for international musicians we've had only one entry refusal (and that artist had returned without obtaining a multiple entry visa and didn't ensure we knew of her intent) but the following are important and although we can certainly advise you some matters are up to the artist:

1. Visa: If you are not an EU, or not a commonwealth (Canadian, USA, New Zealand, Australian, Malaysian), citizen you will probably need a visa.

We cannot provide visas, only the British Consulate nearest you in your country of origin can do this. Although there are plenty of companies out there willing to charge you to provide a visa all they do is put in an application on your behalf. Our advice is to ignore 3<sup>rd</sup> parties and do it yourself as it's cheaper and safer to deal with the UK government directly.

2. Multiple Entry: If you plan to leave and re-enter the UK during the time covered by your work permit you will need to obtain a multiple clearance visa prior to your visit here or you won't be let back in after your first departure. *NOTE: This applies to Commonwealth nationals as well (European Union residents are exempt).*

3. Transit visas: It might be that you have to enter the UK and leave before your work permit period. If so, you will need a transit visa *if your layover is greater than 24 hours or if you are on the UKBIA list of countries that need layover visas* (most countries are exempt).

For example, we had two Malaysian acts that had a show in Dublin, Ireland (which is not part of the UK) before their performances in the UK. However, there are no direct flights to Dublin from Malaysia (at that time) and so the acts had to fly to London first in order to fly to Ireland. However, even though one act stayed overnight and the other act departed from another London airport, in both cases the time the acts were in the UK was less than 24 hours and Malaysia is exempt from requiring a transit visa so there was no problem.

4. If the applicant has a single sponsor, for example an agent, and there is no more than a maximum of 14 calendar days between each engagement, that sponsor can issue a single certificate of sponsorship to cover the whole period.