

A ZINE ABOUT RUNNING A
CO-OPERATIVE RECORD LABEL

by Third Nature

WE ARE OUR LABEL

ABOUT

Third Nature experiments with radical future musicking. This is a blueprint for running a co-operative record label, which works much like other independent labels, but with 4 key differences:

- (1) It is ran by its artists and contributors.
- (2) 100% of profits are reinvested into new projects.
- (3) Decisions are made by its members.
- (4) We are transparent about how we operate.

Inspired by solidarity economics and established co-operative principles, the aim is to contribute to a new kind of artist-controlled and financially transparent label structure that is vitally essential to the creative communities of our current time.

In addition, the aim is to support interesting musical projects, and become an outlet for the eclectic breadths of its artists.

WE WANT FAIR PLAY

THE MISSION

A co-op label structure intends to make music more equitable for artists, baking transparent, mutualist values into the financial, legal, and curatorial structure of a record label.

We propose that music communities are far from dying, however, they are in desperate need of a new organisational structure that more explicitly realises their implicit value.

The aim is to work with and alongside traditional indie labels that continue to do good work, not compete with them or oppose them.

Embracing a co-operative model attempts to build and encourage a structure that reflects music community's implicit values of kind, adventurous mutualism explicitly.

WE DEFINE OUR SUCCESS

ON BEING A CO-OP

A co-operative is a for-profit, private enterprise, owned and controlled by its workers, customers, or both. Its profits are distributed back to its members, instead of to a separate person(s) 'at the top'.

Choosing to be a co-op creates a social contract with artists and contributors alike - to serve its members, not profit. It means making a commitment to aligning the interests of artists, workers, and the organisation at large seriously - and embedding it within the organisational structure.

Being a co-op means having the opportunity to measure success outside of a wealth-obsessed lens and focus on what is important to the community. We can reject win-or-lose models of success, and instead, measure success based on sustainability, values, and the change we seek to make.

ONE MEMBER ONE VOTE

MEMBERSHIP

As a co-op, artists aren't 'signed', they become [Artist Members](#), people that contribute to operations are [Contributor Members](#), and fans that join the co-op become [Community Members](#).

Each of these 3 member classes operates on a one-member, one-vote basis. If you become a member, you get a say.

Membership to the co-op is a low-maintenance commitment, and is designed to be as flexible as possible to suit the lifestyles of its members.

ARTIST MEMBERS

Artist Members create and release musical works as recordings, live shows and other audible oddities.

Artists are supported by other members with feedback and/or shared skills to help realise creative projects, and where possible they are also provided financial investments.

Post-recoupment, revenue is then split between the artist and the label. Crucially, Artist Members then collectively decide how the label share is spent.

CONTRIBUTOR MEMBERS

Contributor Members support label projects with their knowledge and skills. In return they gain voting rights, access to support from the rest of the member community, and revenue shares for projects they contribute to. This could range from mixing & mastering to graphic design, from t-shirt printing to management consultancy.

MUSIC IS ABUNDANT, PURPOSE IS SCARCE

- MAT DRYHURST

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Community Members support the mission by paying a regular membership fee, sustainably supporting the artists and giving them the opportunity to gain ownership of the label to which they are 'signed'.

In return, Community Members receive voting rights, and access to memberships benefits related to label outputs.

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