

SXSW Official Statement

Attributable to Roland Swenson, SXSW CEO and Co-Founder

SXSW has been vocal in its opposition to President Trump's Travel Ban and is working hard to build a coalition of attorneys to assist artists with issues at U.S. ports of entry during the event. We have artists from 62 countries from around the world performing and have always supported our international music community. We have never reported international showcasing artists to immigration authorities.

We were sorry to learn that one of our invited performers chose to cancel his performance at this year's SXSW Music Festival due to a misunderstanding of our policies regarding international artists.

We understand that given the current political climate surrounding immigration, the language that was published seems strong. Violating U.S. immigration law has always carried potentially severe consequences, and we would be remiss not to warn our participating acts of the likely repercussions.

Language governing SXSW's ability to protect a showcase has been in the artist Performance Agreement for many years. It is, and always was intended to be, a safeguard to provide SXSW with a means to respond to an act that does something truly egregious, such as disobeying our rules about pyrotechnics on stage, starting a brawl in a club, or causing serious safety issues.

The SXSW Performance Agreement states:

If SXSW determines, in its sole discretion, that Artist or its representatives have acted in ways that adversely affect the viability of Artist's official SXSW showcase, the following actions are available to SXSW:

- *Artist will be removed from their official SXSW showcase and, at SXSW's sole option, replaced.*
- *Any hotels booked via SXSW Housing will be canceled.*
- *Artist's credentials will be canceled.*
- *SXSW will notify the appropriate U.S. immigration authorities of the above actions.*

We hope never to be put in the position to act on this. Indeed, we spend a great deal of time communicating with

international artists concerning numerous issues, including how to avoid issues at U.S. ports of entry.

Moreover, there is language in the Performance Agreement which is included to inform foreign artists that the U.S. immigration authorities have mechanisms to create trouble for artists who ignore U.S. immigration laws. For example, those acts coming to SXSW to perform without a work visa are limited, by U.S. immigration law, to performing their showcase event only. If an artist wishes to perform elsewhere, they will require a work visa.

As such, both to protect SXSW and the interests of all the participating artists, we long ago added this language to our Performance Agreement:

1.4. Foreign Artists entering the country through the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), B visa or any non-work visa may not perform at any public or unofficial shows, DAY OR NIGHT, in Austin from [March 10-19, 2017](#). Accepting and performing at unofficial events (including unofficial events aside from SXSW Music dates during their visit to the United States) may result in immediate deportation, revoked passport and denied entry by US Customs Border Patrol at US ports of entry. For more information, please visit these pages:

1.4.1.(B Visa / ESTA) <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/business.html>

1.4.2.(Work Visas)

<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/employment/temporary.html>

1.4.3.SXSW general visa FAQ: <http://www.sxsw.com/travel/visa-faq>