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Culture / Music

Hong Kong music industry veterans teach newcomers how to run a record label

We have seen too many independent musicians have to make a living by teaching piano, says Wallace Kwok, one of those teaching Hong Kong bands on three-month business skills programme

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Rachel Cheung

44 SHARES



You are a singer-songwriter and have been uploading your music online to broaden your audience. However, you have no idea how to make money out of your hard work or to protect your music from being stolen by other people.

That's the starting point for a programme launched this month to help young musicians navigate the labyrinth that is the local music business today.

The Ear Up Record Label Creation & Incubation initiative, organised by the Renaissance Foundation and funded by Hong Kong government-backed CreateHK, has picked a dozen individual musicians and bands to take part in a pilot scheme that sets out to help them build a career.

Over the next three months, these musicians will learn how to create and run their own record label by taking part in workshops and symposiums, which cover all aspects of the commercial music industry, from publishing, distribution and copyright to management.



They will be mentored by a group of industry veterans, including singer and producer Alex Fung Hon-ming, artist and songwriter Vicky Fung Wing-ki and composer and violinist Kung Chi-shing.

“We have seen too many independent musicians who had to make a living by teaching piano because they could not break even,” says Wallace Kwok Kai-wah, who gave an overview of the development of the music industry in the first workshop.

“Musicians nowadays need to learn how to handle the business side of their career as well... You need to be able to manage your music career in order to share your music with more people,” says seasoned veteran Anthony Wong Yiu-ming, who also spoke in the workshop. “We have been through that and we would like to share our experiences and knowledge with the younger generations.

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“There will be tough challenges ahead but there are also great opportunities to be found.”

In September and October, the participants will go on a tour to showcase their work and some will be selected to perform in the RFHK Festival at the end of the year.

The selected musicians include IX, a contemporary rock band.