

The **Leading Light Award** is presented to a company or executive that has supported their staff via internal initiatives aimed at improving mental health, wellbeing and work/life balance.

Submission #1

Kerri Fox-Metoyer, Gabb

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<https://app.frame.io/presentations/0c018a70-42f3-422d-9c57-071893eca5dd>

Additional Links:

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/241-d92f5c786a5ee52ea6125735a6ca2dc8/2025/01/Gabb-Bizzy-Leading-Light-Award-Written-Application.pdf

Brandon Jeppson, Gabb

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Submission #2

Eileen Valois, Go West Creative

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Eileen Valois was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer at Go West Creative this past year, building on her leadership as President and Chief Operating Officer. From day one, her focus was clear—creating a new culture where employees don't just recognize company values but feel excited to live by them. Words to Live By became more than a philosophy, it became the foundation and a way of life for how our team collaborates, supports one another, and thrives.

Eileen embraced this new chapter at Go West head-on, fostering an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and empowered to grow both personally and professionally.

Eileen is a leader who always puts her team first. Rather than hiring externally, she creates personalized growth plans for existing team members, reinforcing that the company is invested in their success. Her leadership extends beyond career development as she cultivates a culture of well-being, encouraging open conversations about mental health, personal challenges, and work-life balance. Under her leadership, Unlimited PTO became more than a policy, it became a testament to the trust and respect she places in her team, allowing employees to step away from work and focus on the things that bring them joy. Understanding the importance of time away, she also led an initiative to rework the paternal leave policy at Go West, ensuring that new parents—both mothers and fathers—may take up to twelve consecutive paid weeks of parental time to be with their child.

One of the most powerful representations of our Words to Live By culture brought to life under Eileen's leadership, is captured in this video: https://youtu.be/_BS0ghNL7TU?si=Gn8IgUDDA5pYtxSN

Eileen is an advocate for every single person at Go West, from coordinators to the C-suite. She listens, acts, and leads with purpose. Her commitment to employee well-being and company culture makes it an honor to nominate her for The Leading Light Award.

Additional Links:

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/241-d92f5c786a5ee52ea6125735a6ca2dc8/2025/01/SOP-Parental-Leave-Policy.docx

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/241-d92f5c786a5ee52ea6125735a6ca2dc8/2025/01/Go-West-Creative-Benefits-Package.pdf

Jamie Bibler, Go West Creative
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Submission #3

The Core Entertainment

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The Core Entertainment is dedicated to fostering a work culture that prioritizes mental health, employee well-being, and work/life balance. As a modern entertainment company navigating the high-intensity demands of the music industry, The Core has implemented key initiatives to support its staff and create a sustainable, positive work environment. To support mental well-being, The Core provides confidential mental health counseling services for their staff and artists.

Beyond internal initiatives, The Core has been a strong advocate for mental health awareness in the broader music industry. By taking a proactive approach to employee well-being, The Core Entertainment has set a new standard in the music business, demonstrating that success and sustainability go hand in hand.

Through these ongoing efforts, The Core Entertainment continues to create an environment where employees can thrive both personally and professionally, making them a deserving recipient of The Leading Light Award.

Jennifer Kelleher, 2pm Sharp
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Submission #4

BMAT

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BMAT is a technology and innovation partner in the royalties allocation space, with 250 employees and customers in 80 countries worldwide, amongst which customers we find Universal Music Group, Universal Music Publishing, Warner Chappell Music, BMG, IFPI, GMR, SACEM, JASRAC, SIAE and SoundCloud.

Besides the services it provides, the company has also tried to approach management and organization from an innovative perspective focused on the wellbeing of its employees and the facilitating of their work/life balance. Some of the measures that are greatly appreciated by the team are:

- +Unlimited holidays: The team can decide how much time off they need and when.
- +Flexible hours: People can create their own schedule, deciding when they start and finish working, with the amount of hours spent not being monitored.
- +Remote: Even though BMAT offers an office space in Barcelona (Spain), each employee can decide from where they wish to work. BMAT provides all the tools and procedures necessary so that work can be conducted efficiently from any country in the world.

All these measures allow employees to adapt their work schedule around their own particular personal life, whether this means having small children with a strict school schedule, the need to move out of a crowded city for personal wellbeing, or in some cases even to take care of a parent in hospital. The BMAT team greatly appreciates this flexibility and they understand that for this system to work effectively each of the team members needs to deliver on what is expected of them and what they have committed to for our customers.

All of this has been recognised by local authorities and in 2022 BMAT received the Barcelona city council prize for 'Most innovative company for organisation and time management'. Here is a link to the video explaining the award: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3ZX30WjPoA

Besides this flexibility the company aims to create a transparent and supportive environment where people feel empowered and can take initiative:

- +Management does not have private offices: they are seated amongst other colleagues
- +A general meeting is held every Monday where employees have the opportunity to bring up topics and ask questions directly to C-level executives.
- +The organization aims to be as flat as possible so that problems propagate up to top management, and the people making key decisions are as close as possible to the customer.
- +BMAT has reached an agreement with the International Music Business School such that all employees have access to Music Industry training materials.

Last but not least, at BMAT we understand that even with all the above advantages people can find themselves in stressful situations, overloaded with work for a particular project, personal problems at home, and so on. For these situations:

- +Due to the war in Ukraine, which affected some BMAT employees, the company started providing personal psychological assistance to all employees via a collaboration with the company Mindgram. This program remains active and all employees have access to materials and personal sessions with experts.
- +BMAT actively promotes its core values of respect to colleagues, inclusion, diversity and providing an enjoyable environment in which to work.
- +BMAT has a gender equality program.
- +Via a current employee BMAT gives support to and promotes the GenderMusicTech project by DigitalFems

Finally, BMAT aims to be an active member of the community and to help individuals and companies within its area of influence. For example:

- +Collaborating with a local hospital in a program to bring music to children with cancer.
- +Providing resources and instruments to a youth orchestra in an underprivileged area on the outskirts of Barcelona.
- +Offering its office space to celebrate music gatherings like Measure of Music or AI Music Meetup.
- +Being an active member of the associations Music Tech Europe and Barcelona Music Tech Hub, where support is given to new companies being created in this space.

Due to all of the above we would like to submit BMAT as a candidate for the Leading Light Award. Many thanks for your consideration.

Jaume Vintro, BMAT
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Submission #5

Vinyl De Paris

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Vinyl De Paris is very dedicated to its employees. Local underprivileged, first time workers and less fortunate older aged job seekers are given priority for formal and technical training by long time industry experienced staff members.

Employee conditions are always maintained and promotion opportunities are equally offered within our company to all employees with the objective to reduce or eliminate staff turnover.

In 2024 Vinyl De Paris moved to a new factory site and to simplify the transition to the new site various steps were taken to maintain existing staff by arranging carpooling and transport options to our new site.

Frederic Mallefond, Vinyl De Paris
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Submission #6

Colleen Theis, The Orchard

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Colleen Theis is the President and Chief Operating Officer of The Orchard, the leading global music distribution and artist/label services company. Based in New York City, Colleen has grown the company's operations across 48 cities worldwide. In the past year, her team maintained the company's stature as the #1 global distributor of independent music and highest global market share in its 28-year history. She is dedicated to evolving The Orchard's value proposition to best serve its artist and label clients in an ever-changing industry.

A key focus for Colleen is empowering and promoting diverse leadership in regions around the world. Women lead 18 territories and hold executive positions at the global level in areas including label management, artist services, DE&I, sales, marketing, advertising, product development, rights management, corporate communications, people experience, and more. Colleen has led The Orchard to reach 50/50 gender parity across global staff.

Colleen is also an avid supporter of employee-led organizations such as the Council for Equity and Progressive Action (CEPA) and Women of The Orchard (WOTO). WOTO began on International Women's Day and unites colleagues across all territories and encourages equity, and community for women throughout the global organization. Together, they share information about recent challenges facing underrepresented genders globally and provide a safe space for women in all countries to learn, organize, and take action. She is an active member and as a leading company executive, is a huge advocate for women in the workplace.

Colleen steered The Orchard through closing major global distribution and long-term partnership deals with powerhouse rock and metal labels Napalm Records, Frontiers Records, and SPV Recordings, as well as top New Zealand indie distributor DRM. Additionally, she maintains oversight of The Orchard's widely diverse client roster including 88Rising, Cleopatra Records, Cosmos/Ace Records, GLAD Empire, LVRN Records, Mass Appeal, NWE Worldwide, Rimas Entertainment, and SB Music; along with artists Eric Nam, TEED (Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs), Joyce Wrice, DPR Ian, Barry Manilow, Tanner Adell, Alexander Stewart, Nas, and Caroline Polachek.

Over the past year, clients of The Orchard have amassed 11 Grammy Awards, 11 Latin Grammy Awards, 16 Latin Billboard Awards, and 3 Latin American Music Awards.

Colleen is committed to amplifying The Orchard's overall strategy to deliver local music on a global scale while supporting, developing, and sustaining the artistic vision of its clients and empowering its staff. She joined The Orchard in 2011 as MD of UK & Europe.

Renee Oliver, The Orchard
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Submission #7

Big Condo Records

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I am nominating Big Condo Records for the Leading Light award as they have proved time and time again their ability to create a safe, non judgmental and accepting work environment making mental health and diversity a priority.

Emilie Culshaw, Big Condo Records
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