

What is production music?

Production music (also called library or mood music) is music that is produced and licensed specifically for use in film, television, radio, online and other media. As opposed to commercial music (which is licensed exclusively for a one-off large license fee to one client), production music is licensed non-exclusively for lower license fees, to multiple clients. This means that one track could be used by many different clients all at the same time, and you therefore earn royalties on a larger number of usages, but at a lower rate than an exclusive sync license.

Is Mama Dance a record label?

Mama Dance is not a record label, and as such does not sign artists as a traditional label might. While we are able to offer an advance for albums to composers upon arrangement, we do not sign you as an artist, manage tours, organise shows or book you for any events.

What sort of music does Mama Dance look for

Thankfully all genres of music are needed due to the diversity of productions that require music. The Mama Dance ! Music Library contains everything from Boeremusiek to Kwaito to African horror to plain old Rock. Due to Mama Dance specialising in African music, we are on the lookout for African genres and elements in the tracks that we release. This means incorporating traditional African instruments and sounds in the tracks you submit is a big bonus!

How can I submit music for the library?

You can submit music by emailing us MP3s (if it is only one or two tracks), or you can send us the links to your SoundCloud or similar site.

What moods do you need?

Production music is often used to create a specific feeling or mood on-screen. We tag all our music with keywords so that editors can find these moods in the library easily. Having a clear mood in your track can help it find its place in an album and will increase the chance of it being used.

Are there special arrangement requirements?

Try and keep any section of your song arrangement for around 30 seconds before changing to another section (e.g. if you start with rhythm guitar and a piano melody, don't bring in a cello at the 5 second mark because if an editor wants to use the guitar and piano only for a 30 second TV ad...they can't!).

Your finished track should be a combination of four or five 30 second arrangements (that all have the same mood) and should be around 3:30 long.

How many songs should I aim for when submitting an album?

To create an entire album we usually need a minimum of 12 tracks.

What paperwork is required to submit my music?

Mama Dance is the publisher of the production music and as such requires all composers to sign a Library Music Agreement. The Mama Dance Library Music Agreement is signed in perpetuity (i.e., forever). This is the industry standard worldwide, and it allows us to broker the best deals possible for your music with our international distributors.

Feel free to request an example contract from our team.

Do I need to register with a performing rights society?

Mama Dance registers all its library tracks with SAMRO (South African Music Rights Organisation) in order to make sure that performance royalties are paid. We urge all our composers to register with SAMRO or another collecting society in order that they may benefit from the performance royalties.

When does Mama Dance pay out royalties?

Most production music library publishers tell their composers not to expect to see any royalties for the first 3 years, but we often have composers earning within their first 6 months. We pay out royalties twice a year in March and September.

Are Mama Dance ! releases exclusive?

The tracks that Mama Dance adds to its library are exclusively available on the Mama Dance ! Music Library. This means that any music released with Mama Dance cannot be released with other production music libraries, labels, or be self-released on streaming platforms.

How does Mama Dance ! distribute its library?

Mama Dance releases are uploaded to mamadance.com and are also uploaded by us to streaming services such as Spotify and Apple Music.

Does Mama Dance release music already on streaming services?

While Mama Dance has previously released albums that have already been self-released, we prefer to sign unreleased music, as this is more attractive to the clients interested in using the music. This means that if you already have a publisher, we prefer to publish tracks that are not subject to an existing publishing deal.

What licensing model does Mama Dance use?

The Mama Dance ! Music Library is a CAPASSO and PMSA music library. The licensing model is a per-synchronisation usage (i.e., clients have to pay license fees every time they use the music for a new production). The benefit to the composer, as opposed to other models, is that you retain the copyright of your tracks, and you get paid royalties in perpetuity as opposed to just a smaller one-off payment upfront and the library owning the music. Another benefit of being a CAPASSO library is that the Mama Dance ! music library falls under the blanket licenses that CAPASSO has with the SABC, MNET and eTV.

What if I want to use an alias for my library music releases?

Many producers prefer to use an alias instead of their legal name when submitting their music to our library or prefer to keep their own existing private artist projects separate from their releases with Mama Dance. If you'd prefer this, then inform us when delivering your final mixes which existing or new alias we must credit when uploading your music to streaming platforms.

Sample Rights

Many producers make use of samples from packs or from sites like Splice in order to enhance their productions. In order for Mama Dance to guarantee no issues with sample clearance and rights to our clients, we ask our composers to use samples from packs and sites like these in a transformative and creative way (for example, re-pitching or chopping melodic loops and not using them as is).

This ensures tracks are not flagged by content ID systems that could cause trouble with royalty payouts to our producers.

Any uncleared samples from existing tracks or interpolations are not permitted.

Unique African instrumentation

The Mama Dance ! library specialises in African music, so if you have made use of any unique, niche or interesting traditional African instruments (kora, ngoni, ilimba, etc.), let us know so that we can tag these for better visibility on our site.

For any further questions

If you need any individual points explained further or have any further questions, feel free to reach out to a member of the team!