



For Immediate Release

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**Backline Seeking Three Milwaukee-Area Musicians or Bands
For Third Accelerator Session and \$20,000 Grants**

Intensive 12-Week Program Seeks to Boost Careers of Promising Milwaukee Musicians

Milwaukee (July 10, 2019) – Applications are being accepted through July 29 for the next musician accelerator program run by Backline, a grant and educational initiative of 88Nine Radio Milwaukee and gener8tor.

Three Milwaukee-area musicians or bands will be selected for the fall, 12-week accelerator program, the second session this year. The free program will include creation of new music, mentorship and connections from local and national experts, and \$20,000 grants to be used in consultation with Backline to further the musicians' careers.

Backline launched and held its first musician accelerator last year with its first cohort. A second group of musicians just completed the spring program – singer, songwriter and rapper Kaylee Crossfire; rapper, multi-instrumentalist producer and performer Klassik; and sister-led, '80s-inspired electro-pop group REYNA.

Applicants must:

- Be an individual artist or band creating original music. An "artist" is defined as a creator of original music of any genre – a songwriter, instrumentalist, vocalist or producer.
- Live within the 7-county Greater Milwaukee area (Milwaukee, Kenosha, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha counties). If a band is applying, 50% of members must live within the 7 counties.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Be able to participate full-time in the 12-week accelerator (approximately 20-40 hours per week). The fall 2019 program runs from Sept. 10 through Dec. 6.
- Demonstrate a commitment to making a full-time career in music.

Applications and details on the program, application requirements and selection process can be found at <https://www.backlinemke.org/apply>.

Industry experts will review the applications and narrow the pool. Three national experts from outside Milwaukee will make the final selections following in-person interviews and studio sessions with other applicants. Applicants will be notified of the results by Aug. 16.

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The program will be split into three main sections: “create,” “connect” and “plan.” During the create phase, musicians will spend time in the studio to create music and develop their projects. During connect, artists will receive introductions to mentors and industry experts both locally and nationally. The plan phase helps guide artists through a 12-month plan to develop their careers and will equip them with tools to navigate the business of the music industry.

88Nine Radio Milwaukee and gener8tor in partnership developed Backline to help Milwaukee musicians succeed, improve Milwaukee’s recognition as one of the country’s most vibrant music cities and assist companies in attracting and retaining employees.

“We’ve seen some amazing results from our first two programs,” Program Manager Mag Rodriguez said. “Zed Kenzo had a 9,800% increase on her total streams, accumulating over 130,000 and has received some major-label interest. REYNA signed a licensing deal with Downtown Record’s licensing company, Premier Music, through a meeting set up by the program. And of course, Backline has made invaluable connections to the local community through our free quarterly workshops, which average 200 attendees.”

To learn about future public workshops, which are held on topics of interest to musicians, sign up for the Backline email list at <https://www.backlinemke.org/sign-up/> or follow Backline on social media. Information about upcoming workshops is also available at <https://www.backlinemke.org/workshops/> as are videos of past workshops.

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Backline 2019 Sponsors

Government and Corporate: Wisconsin Economic Development Corp., City of Milwaukee Arts Board, Lyft, Visit Milwaukee, Northwestern Mutual, Manpower, Summerfest, Majic Productions, New Resources Consulting; Foundations: Novo Foundation, Herb Kohl Philanthropies, Meier Family Foundation, Wilson Family Foundation, Greater Milwaukee Foundation; Individuals: Lynde Uihlein, Sarah and Steve Zimmerman, Bill and Christie Krugler, Catherine Madden, John and Brigid Miller, Kelly Fitzsimmons, Josh and Sandi Adams, Juli Kaufmann, Barbara Klein, Ross and Angela Williams, Andrew and Margaret Krei, Jeff Rusinow, Lacey Sadoff, C.J. and Julie Krawczyk; In-Kind: Bentoff Communications, Cascio Interstate Music, Fender Musical Instruments Corp., Hal Leonard Corp., Transfer Pizzeria and Café, Wire & Vice.

About 88Nine Radio Milwaukee

A non-profit, community-funded radio station, 88Nine Radio Milwaukee (WYMS-FM 88.9) has focused on supporting Milwaukee musicians since its 2007 launch. The station plays at least one Milwaukee artist per hour, recognizes Milwaukee music through its Radio Milwaukee Music Awards, broadcasts a live weekly session with a Milwaukee band and spins Milwaukee music 24/7 on 414Music.fm, via its HD2 broadcast radio channel and on mobile and online streams. Learn about 88Nine and stream the station at <http://www.radiomilwaukee.org> or via the 88Nine mobile app.

About gener8tor

[gener8tor](http://gener8tor.com) is a turnkey platform for the creative economy that connects startups, entrepreneurs, artists, investors, universities and corporations. The gener8tor platform includes pre-accelerators, accelerators, corporate programming, conferences and fellowships focused on entrepreneurs, artists and musicians. gener8tor is a nationally ranked, GOLD-tier accelerator in the U.S. as ranked by the Seed Accelerator Rankings Project: <http://seedrankings.com>.