

COME TOGETHER



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National Coalitions of Advocates and Artists Launch Initiative to Combat the Public Health Crisis of Social Isolation and Loneliness in the U.S.

The Foundation for Social Connection Action Network, in partnership with [Artist For Action](#)®, Name Legendary Hall of Fame Guitarist Neil Giraldo (Pat Benatar & Neil Giraldo) Founding Chair of “Come Together”

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The [Foundation for Social Connection ACTION NETWORK](#) (F4SCAN)- the nation’s leading advocacy organization dedicated to advancing policies and initiatives to address social isolation and loneliness - and [Artist For Action](#)® - a coalition of artists and musicians using the power of music to strengthen mental health and community connection – today officially announced the launch of [Come Together](#)— a national, multi-year initiative to address the growing crisis of social isolation and loneliness through music, creativity, and cross-sector policy action.

[Come Together](#) previewed last week at SXSW during a festival panel titled “[Mental Health in Music: Beyond Awareness](#),” where artists, including Neil Giraldo and Passion Pit’s Michael Angelakos, scientists, and cultural leaders convened to explore what drives meaningful human connection and how those insights can scale into real solutions. The new national partnership unites artists, researchers, educators,

policymakers, and community leaders to elevate loneliness as a public health issue and advance policy actions that rebuild connection across communities and generations.

In conjunction with today's launch, the Foundation for Social Connection ACTION NETWORK and Artist for Action announced legendary guitarist, producer, and Hall of Fame inductee Neil Giraldo (Pat Benatar + Neil Giraldo) to serve as the Founding Chair of *Come Together*. Giraldo, who has rarely spoken publicly about his own experiences with loneliness and mental health, is sharing his story for the first time as Founding Chair of *Come Together*, adding a deeply personal dimension to a national conversation that often lacks visible cultural voices.

“As someone who has felt the impact of social isolation, with claustrophobia, agoraphobia, loneliness, and isolation being constant companions as I was growing up—I know firsthand that this is a moment to act—not just as artists, advocates, and policymakers, but as neighbors and citizens,” said *Come Together* Founding Chair and Hall of Fame inductee Neil Giraldo. **“If we choose connection over distance, collaboration over silence, and creativity over complacency, we can turn this era of disconnection into an age of belonging.”**

[Study after study](#) shows how music improves mental health and well-being. Most recently, research published by the University of Georgia and Brigham Young University, co-led by Dr. Richard Slatcher and [Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad](#), Chair of the Scientific Leadership Council at the [Foundation for Social Connection](#), the ACTION NETWORK'S sister organization that translates and disseminates evidence, finds that social connection is strengthened through in-person, participatory, and recurring experiences like live events, particularly when individuals engage alongside others.

“Addressing this crisis requires national leadership and a policy commitment to embedding social connection into how we design health, social, and community systems,” said Andrew MacPherson, Founder and Executive Chair of the Foundation for Social Connection ACTION NETWORK. **“The conversations started at SXSW made clear that we know what works—now it’s about scaling it and *Come Together* will be an instrumental tool in helping us advance that mission. By elevating music, the arts, and creative expression as essential tools for public health and community well-being, we can make a meaningful impact on people’s lives.”**

To drive that impact, *Come Together* is calling on Congress and the Trump Administration to:

- Increase federal funding for music programs in schools, hospitals, and community spaces as a public health intervention;
- Pass the *CARE Across Generations Act* to strengthen caregiving and community-based supports with an intergenerational focus;
- Leverage federal funding to support creative recovery programs, concerts for recovery communities, and music therapy services;

- Integrating standardized social isolation screening into Medicare and Medicaid programs to better compare challenges and share which solutions work well across communities,
- Utilize Medicaid waivers to support evidence-based, non-clinical arts-based interventions;
- Encouraging Medicare Advantage plans to partner with community organizations to improve social engagement;
- And much more.

Together, this federal policy agenda draws on extensive research demonstrating that stronger community connections are linked to better health outcomes, and reimagines our current health system to integrate social connection as a complementary tool alongside traditional medical care.

“Music has always been one of the most powerful forces for human connection,” said Matthew Reich, Co-Founder of Artist For Artist® and Artist For Action®. **“Live music and shared creative experiences bring people together in ways few other things can. At a time when loneliness and isolation are rising across the country, those moments of gathering matter more than ever. When we invest in music, culture, and human interaction, we strengthen the social fabric that helps create safer and more connected communities.”**

At a moment when nearly half of Americans report experiencing loneliness, *Come Together* aims to elevate this crisis not only in Washington but across the country, positioning artists as trusted cultural messengers who can draw public attention and mobilize communities. The partnership is responding to what experts now recognize as a growing public health emergency, harnessing the unifying power of music, creativity, and intergenerational connection to advance solutions that rebuild social bonds and strengthen community well-being.

Through *Come Together*, the ACTION NETWORK and AFA are translating research into action by advancing policies that strengthen connection, improve health outcomes, and rebuild a more connected society across generations.

To learn more about *Come Together* and how to get involved, visit:
<https://www.endsocialisolation.org/collaboration/cometogether/>

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About the Foundation for Social Connection ACTION NETWORK:

The Foundation for Social Connection Action Network (F4SCAN) is dedicated to advancing policies and initiatives that strengthen social ties and combat social isolation and loneliness. Through research, advocacy, and cross-sector collaboration, the Action Network works to create meaningful and sustainable solutions that promote connection, well-being, and community resilience. For more information about the Action Network and or the movement to end social isolation and loneliness, visit. www.endsocialisolation.org.

About Artist For Artist® / Artist For Action®:

Founded in 2018 by Matthew Reich and Neal Saini, [Artist For Artist® \(AFA\)](http://ArtistForArtist.com) is a New York City-based experiential agency specializing in music and culture. As former bandmates with years of industry experience, Reich and Saini bring both artistic credibility and business acumen to music-related campaigns, enabling them to create authentic

partnerships between brands and musicians that deliver lasting impact. From intimate sessions to global campaigns, AFA helps partners craft moments that resonate. Reich and Saini also founded [Artist For Action®](#), a coalition of musicians - including Billie Eilish, Peter Gabriel, Sheryl Crow, and Kevin Bacon - dedicated to ending gun violence and raising mental health awareness.