

AMPLIFY

How to Build a Fan-Based
Climate Movement



Planet
Reimagined

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Planet Reimagined is reaching 100 million people a year by harnessing the power of global media and entertainment to deliver fair solutions for people and the planet. Our **ACTION RESEARCH CENTER** is a new kind of academy turning research-driven **THOUGHT** into collective **ACTION** and fueling positive **CHANGE** by uniting and mobilizing climate experts, policymakers, businesses, young climate leaders, and broad audiences.

For more information, visit www.planetreimagined.com.



BUILDING A FAN-BASED CLIMATE MOVEMENT



In 2023, Taylor Swift supercharged National Voter Registration Day with a simple Instagram story, leading to the biggest single-day spike in registrations in years as thousands of Swifties became soon-to-be voters. “I’ve heard you raise your voices,” she wrote to her fans. “And I know how powerful they are.”¹

But how powerful can these audiences be? Can concert-goers and music fans become a force for positive social change? Despite the apparent potential, very little research has been done to understand how fans view this type of advocacy at live events or its impacts.

Now new research led by Planet Reimagined, focused on the critical issue of climate change, gives us new insights into what fans think and what they are prepared to do through an unprecedented survey sent to 350,000 fans and in-person research at arenas during concerts by major musical artists. The findings include:

- **Live music fans care about climate change and are ready to act**
- **Most fans support artists taking action on climate change**
- **Many fans are likely to take climate action when their favorite artist asks**

Every year in the United States, over 250 million people attend live shows and concerts.² At the same time, it is estimated that mobilizing only 11.5 million people around an issue — 3.5% of the population of the U.S. — is sufficient to bring about policy change on a national scale.³

Our research — via online surveys and in-person interviews at events — shows that live music fans want climate action and that they can be a catalyst for forceful change.

“Many people look up to their favorite music artists and celebrities, so seeing them getting involved in something so important will inspire them.”

- Fan of The Weeknd

“Many fans are greatly influenced by the performers they admire. This is a perfect platform to share the message of climate change. We all have a role to play in making it happen.”

- Fan of Leon Bridges

Face-to-Face with the Climate Crisis

Today, two out of three Americans are worried about climate change and want to see their leaders do more about it.⁴ We found music fans around the country may be more concerned about the climate crisis than most Americans. Many cite changing weather patterns or extreme weather events that they are already experiencing in their daily lives.

The world's leading scientists agree.

In 2023, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) described the climate crisis as "a threat to human well-being and planetary health" that is already creating adverse impacts worldwide.⁵ 2023 was the hottest year in recorded history,⁶ with extreme droughts, deadly floods, and record-breaking heat waves that produced 28 different billion-dollar climate disasters in the United States alone.⁷

With each new catastrophe, you can't help but hear Billie Eilish's haunting hook:

*"Hills burn in California — my turn to ignore ya — don't say I didn't warn ya."*⁸

To tackle the climate crisis, we must transform climate awareness into climate action.

When considering climate change, many ask, "What can I do?" Choices such as recycling or driving less produce fewer personal emissions. But they alone aren't enough. They must be part of wider structural and cultural change. And that demands policy change.⁹

Asking the Fans

There is very little information currently available to help us understand to what extent fans attending live events are prepared to hear messages about actual policies that could deliver the necessary structural changes.

How would they feel about being asked to join a public protest, for instance, rather than use reusable water bottles? Or to demand legislative change from their congressional representatives, rather than just buy fewer new fashion items? Or, would they feel like the artist should not be talking about these issues at all?

To tackle this challenge, Planet Reimagined partnered with **Climate Outreach**, a UK-based organization focused on effective climate change communications, to design a digital and in-person study to better understand how fans perceive artists who actively use their platform to engage with critical social issues.

"Sometimes people need to see who else believes what they believe in, and a music artist could be the person who gives someone the courage to speak up and take action"

- Fan of U2

With the help of **Ticketmaster**, Live Nation's sustainability arm **Green Nation**, and **REVERB**, a US-based non-profit working to accelerate climate action at live music events, Planet Reimagined was able to send a first-of-its-kind survey to 350,000 live music fans across the US, including fans of over 400 artists from genres including pop, rock, R&B, hip-hop, country, and metal. In collaboration with **iHeartRadio** and REVERB, Planet Reimagined researchers bolstered the survey findings with in-person studies, testing action mobilization techniques at concerts and interviewing fans on the arena concourses.

What is Climate Action?

Climate action is “all activities and behavior of individuals, groups, and organizations at various levels... deliberately directed at preventing or reducing climate-related damages to society.”¹⁰

Yet, not all actions are equally effective.

In the early 2000s, BP popularized the term “carbon footprint” to convince people around the world to evaluate the greenhouse gas emissions created by their individual lifestyles, leading many people to think that saving the planet comes down to choices they make in how they live and what they buy: actions like recycling, riding a bicycle to work, eating less meat, and flying less often.¹¹ However, individual lifestyle and shopping choices are not the primary sources of the emissions driving climate change. Unfortunately, as the world’s biggest emitters continue to blame individuals for “emitting pollution,”¹² many have adopted this mindset, believing that solving climate change boils down to being a better consumer. Even if millions of people made those individual choices, it would only address a fraction of greenhouse gasses. **The majority of emissions are caused by systems and processes outside of individual reach:** energy production, manufacturing, agriculture, and transportation systems: **since 1988, 100 companies produced more than 70% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions.**¹³

While making environmentally conscious lifestyle choices can provide an initial step to understanding that greenhouse gasses contribute to climate change, it is simply an ineffective path to a viable climate solution that matches the scale of the problem.¹⁴ **Solving climate change requires vast collaboration to change systems through government policies, regulation, finance, and corporate actions.** And those systems will only change if a mass of people - a social movement - wield their power as citizens. To be a citizen is to see ourselves as “part of civil society, as actors in the political systems,” who have the power to shape how decisions are made, how systems are set up, and what choices are available to us.¹⁵ We have the choice to recycle because recycling laws were passed, and corresponding infrastructure was built. We can choose to take public transit because of smart city planning, public investments, and sound policies.

Climate action should focus on helping individuals respond to the climate crisis as engaged citizens who participate in collective efforts that pressure decision-makers in every sector of society. This way, we can change policies and produce the systemic changes needed to keep the planet from heating up.





INSIGHTS : WHAT FANS THINK



1

Live Music Fans Care about Climate Change and are Ready to Act

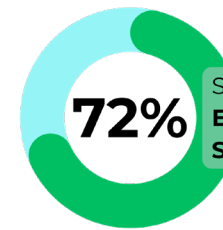
Nearly three out of every four survey respondents said climate change is an important issue (72%).

These results are 7% higher than national polling published by Yale University (2023),¹⁶ indicating that live music fans may be more likely to care about climate change than the general public.

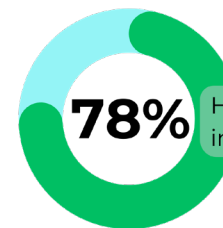
Plus, 78% are already taking climate action, mostly discussing the issue with family and friends or making changes to their personal lives.

Importantly, the results of the study reveal that prior participation in climate action closely correlates to the likelihood of taking future action--meaning the more music fans engage with this issue, the more likely they are to take action.

There remains a vocal minority who disagree, saying that climate change is not at all important (17.5%).



Say Climate Change is **Extremely, Very, or Somewhat Important**



Have taken **Climate Action** in the past 12 months.

“I find that leading by example is very effective at encouraging behavior change. Not only is it inspiring, but it makes the changes needed for climate action seem more accessible.”

- Fan of Terra Lightfoot

2

Most Fans Support Artists Taking Action on Climate Change

53% of survey respondents agreed that artists should use their platform to speak out.

Due to the common misperception that views on climate change are deeply divided, some public figures may fear a possible public backlash for taking a bold stance in support of climate action. However, Planet Reimagined found that **70% of live music fans do not oppose artists speaking out.**

Fan interviews at concerts validated this claim, where **78% agreed that artists should speak out on climate change,** often noting that they have an influential voice to make a real difference.

Artists who do speak out may even be seen as more inspiring (40%), especially among those who are concerned about climate change.

Fans also support artists engaging in a variety of climate advocacy efforts, including artists sharing their personal climate stories and inviting their fans to join them in action.

Notably, **fans strongly support artists working to reduce the emissions and waste produced by their tours (69%),** highlighting the view that artists must lead with their words and actions.

“Artists have a platform to influence people, and if they truly believe in it, they should use it.”

- Fan of Nicki Minaj

Breaking the Climate Silence

Americans who know climate change is happening outnumber those who think it is not by nearly five to one (72% versus 15%). Yet most Americans rarely, if ever, discuss climate change with anyone.¹⁷ Our silence is creating a lot of confusion.

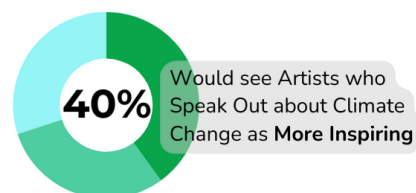
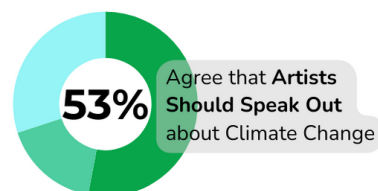
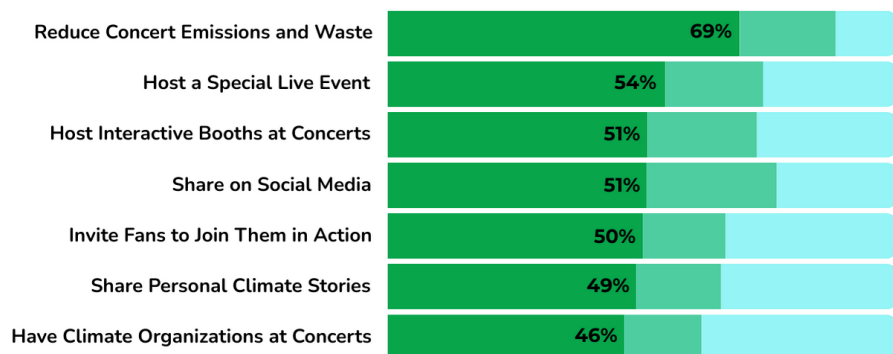
Nearly 90% of Americans dramatically underestimate public concern for climate change.¹⁸ While polls show that a supermajority of Americans support transformative climate policies, most believe such policies are unpopular. In other words, most Americans are deeply concerned about climate change but falsely believe they are in the minority — leading many to stay quiet.

Environmental psychologist Cynthia Frantz wrote, “Public misperception matters because what we think other people think strongly impacts our own behavior.” Our current social norm of not talking about climate change has us “... locked in a self-fulfilling spiral of silence.”¹⁹

If we’re going to overcome the climate crisis, we need to break this cycle — now.

By speaking up, you empower others to speak up, too.

Fan Support for Artist Actions



3

Many Fans are Likely to Take Climate Action When Their Favorite Artist Asks

When their favorite artist asks them to take climate action, survey respondents who are concerned about climate change are likely to take a wide variety of actions.



THREE IN FIVE fans would be likely to:

- Discuss climate change with others
- Sign a climate-related petition
- Make changes to their personal life for climate-related reasons
- Vote for a political party/candidate because of their position on climate issues



TWO IN FIVE would be likely to:

- Share climate-related content on social media
- Donate money to a climate-focused organization
- Volunteer with a climate-focused organization
- Contact government officials about climate change



ONE IN FOUR would be likely to:

- Eat a plant-based diet
- Participate in a protest

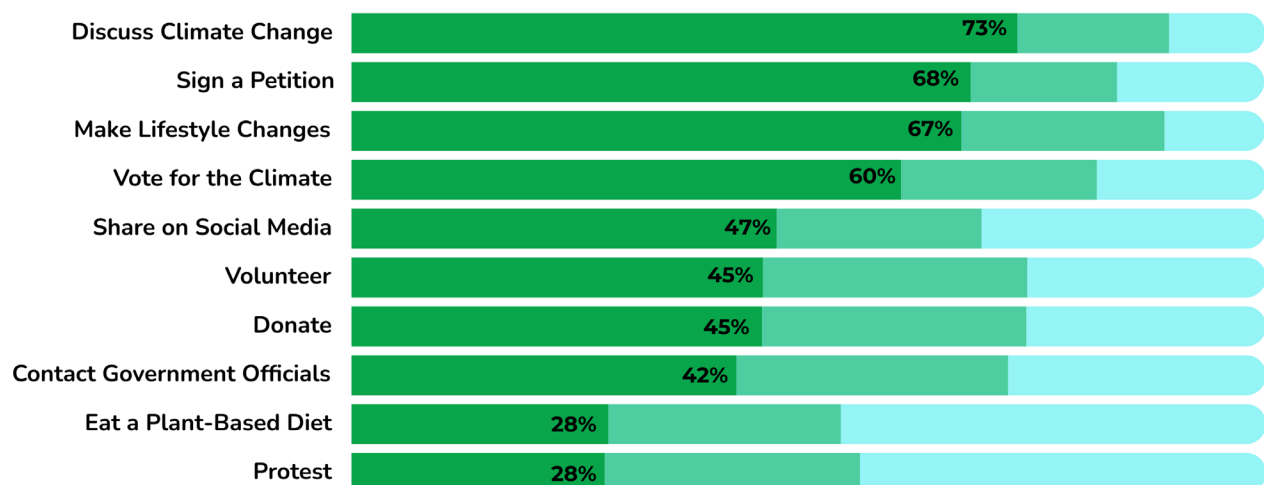
“Billie Eilish’s concert inspired me to go vegetarian. Coldplay allowed me to discuss climate change and social issues more with my family and friends. I think getting across the fact that every little bit helps is the best way.”

- Fan of Harry Styles

When artists lead by example and ask fans to join them, they may even increase the likelihood of their fans taking social or civic actions, like sharing climate-related content on social media, joining a climate-focused organization, contacting government officials, or participating in a protest.

During fan interviews at concerts, **76% of fans said that they and their fellow fans would take climate action if their favorite artists asked them to**. Notably, Planet Reimagined also found that **90% of fans believe that artists, fans, and music venues working together would make a meaningful difference in the climate movement**.

How Likely are Fans to Take Action if Asked by Their Favorite Artists?





CLIMATE ACTION : LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN



Every night, concerts bring communities together. As we sing and dance, many tap into a special energy that leaves us feeling more connected and empowered, an experience sociologists call “collective effervescence.”²⁰

Artists are trusted messengers.²¹ As the creators of these experiences, they have the potential to channel this energy into the climate movement — scaling up action by mobilizing their fans to sign petitions, call elected officials, participate in local protests, and share their climate stories. The Amplify survey and in-person research results show that fans are ready to be inspired to action on climate change — in ways that can deepen relationships with the artists they follow.

How many people do we need to bring about change on the scale we need? It has been suggested that the number of people needed to drive policy change is less than you might imagine: 3.5% of the population or 11.5 million Americans.²² With over 250 million people attending live shows every year, concerts provide a unique opportunity to build this critical mass.

The following are some of the most effective ways that artists and their teams who care about climate can connect with their fans every time they perform live.

“Music artists have the power and influence to encourage fans to take action. They can make a difference and have an impact on social issues by speaking up, leading by example, and showing their support. I believe that more music artists need to take part in this.”

- Fan of Taylor Swift



FOR ARTISTS, THEIR LABELS, AND THEIR MANAGING TEAMS

Engage Fans Through Mainstage Advocacy

Since many competing interests vie for fans’ attention inside music venues, artists should use personal, direct messaging from the stage to capture their fans’ attention, such as a pre-show video or a brief conversation between songs. In on-site studies, Planet Reimagined found that direct messaging from the stage was ten times more effective than passive signage.

Encourage Social and Civic Action

Artists should promote opportunities to engage in social and civic efforts instead of personal lifestyle changes. These could include signing petitions, contacting government officials, attending a protest, or volunteering with a local climate organization. These actions push decision-makers to set transformative policies that match the urgency and scale of the climate crisis.

Use Positivity to Highlight Solutions

When promoting climate action, artists should use language that cultivates a sense of possibility and the belief that people can make a difference if they work together. Fans surveyed resonated with language that grounded climate action in our shared hope for a better, safer future that benefits us all. A hope-based communications strategy that focuses on solutions can help fans imagine a brighter future if we get it right.²⁶

Promote Local Opportunities

While traveling from city to city, artists should highlight local climate efforts in each location and offer ways for their fans to get involved. By partnering with local organizations and community groups, artists can direct their fans to groups working on the relevant issues in their area and connect them to others in the movement, increasing the likelihood that they'll take further action in the future. Plus, local political institutions are often more responsible for implementing climate policies and more responsive to their constituents than national ones.²³

Lead by Example

Artists should clearly show their fans how they are taking climate action in their own lives to make their advocacy more credible and compelling. If an artist models specific climate actions, fans may be more responsive to their invitation to get involved. Plus, many people simply don't know where to start, so artists can make climate action more accessible by showing their fans the "how-to," like sharing an Instagram story of them calling their representative.²⁴

"With positivity and passion. Note the negative aspects but don't rely on them, because thinking about that can start making us feel hopeless at times."

- Fan of AJR

Dream Bigger

Many artists are actively involved in raising funds to help organizations do important work. However, focusing mainly on donations risks turning climate action into essential work that only professionals do. For more transformative change, artists should first encourage their fans to get involved and stay involved in taking civic and social steps, working with other people to make change in their communities.

Give Voice to Climate Emotions

Some fans may experience difficult emotions like anxiety and despair when thinking about climate change.²⁵ Artists should speak freely about their own difficult feelings to help validate these emotions, normalize the conversation, and make the issue more accessible to their fans.

Know Your Audience

How fans respond to climate messaging is highly influenced by their views on climate change, previous engagement in climate action, political leanings, and age. Artists pay close attention to their fans and likely already have information about their age and political leanings. But for any information they don't have — like their fans' views on climate change — artists should learn more. By combining what they know with additional data gathered through brief online fan surveys or social and streaming platform analytics, artists can tailor their action messages for greater impact.

Use Digital Tools to Expand Reach

To add to their high-impact mainstage advocacy, artists should use their digital tools to connect fans with action opportunities. While communicating directly with fans at concerts, artists can use QR codes or mass texting to share materials like petitions, volunteer signup forms, or downloadable guides. Across the tour, artists can add follow-up climate content to their regular email lists and social media to feature effective campaigns and fan action across the tour.

Team Up with Other Artists and Organizations

Artists can be incredible climate communicators, but they don't have to work alone. By partnering with climate organizations on the frontlines, artists can direct fans to existing opportunities rather than creating something new. To maximize their impact, artists can also collaborate with each other to bring attention to shared action opportunities for their fans, like when late-night comedians teamed up to tackle climate change on the same night.²⁷



FOR MUSIC VENUES

Support Artists and Facilitate Fan Engagement

Venues are essential partners for successful climate advocacy and have the power to facilitate increased sustainability efforts and direct fan engagement. Not only can venues help provide more sustainable systems for reducing the waste and emissions produced by concerts, but they can also magnify an artist's outreach efforts by allowing them to broadcast messaging across venue screens and invite outside organizations to interact with fans inside the facility.

Venues can also help disseminate best practices as they learn from each artist's sustainability and advocacy efforts. With each show, venues can learn how to implement these strategies most effectively in their context, helping other artists be more successful in the future. When systems and practices consistently succeed, venues can standardize them across all future shows.

Mini Case Study : The Climate Pledge Arena

The Climate Pledge Arena in Seattle, Washington aims to be the most sustainable arena in the world. By addressing energy, waste, construction, food, and production, the facility shows that the music industry can reduce its own greenhouse gas emissions. The arena's fan engagement strategy currently focuses on raising public awareness, but Planet Reimagined's research shows that venues can go much further. Alongside their current sustainability messaging and living art displays, arenas can actively promote civic and social climate actions that concert-goers can participate in. By combining venue sustainability efforts with fan engagement, the Climate Pledge Arena can be the gold standard of the music world.

"Music artists should 100% use their platform to speak on social issues. They should support what they're speaking on and actively show proof that they are taking action as well."

- Fan of Post Malone



DATA GATHERING METHODS



To investigate how to mobilize music fans to tackle the climate crisis, we used a mixed-method approach, including online surveys, in-person fan interviews, and real-time advocacy testing. We accomplished this with a coalition of partners, including Climate Outreach, REVERB, iHeartRadio, Ticketmaster, and Green Nation, Live Nation Entertainment's global sustainability platform.

Online Fan Surveys

After completing an extensive literature review to understand the current theory and practice around climate change, social movements, collective action, social justice, and celebrity advocacy, we designed an online fan survey with Climate Outreach. As a UK-based organization specializing in effective climate change communications, their expertise helped ensure that we developed a high-quality questionnaire and analysis plan built upon current climate advocacy advances.

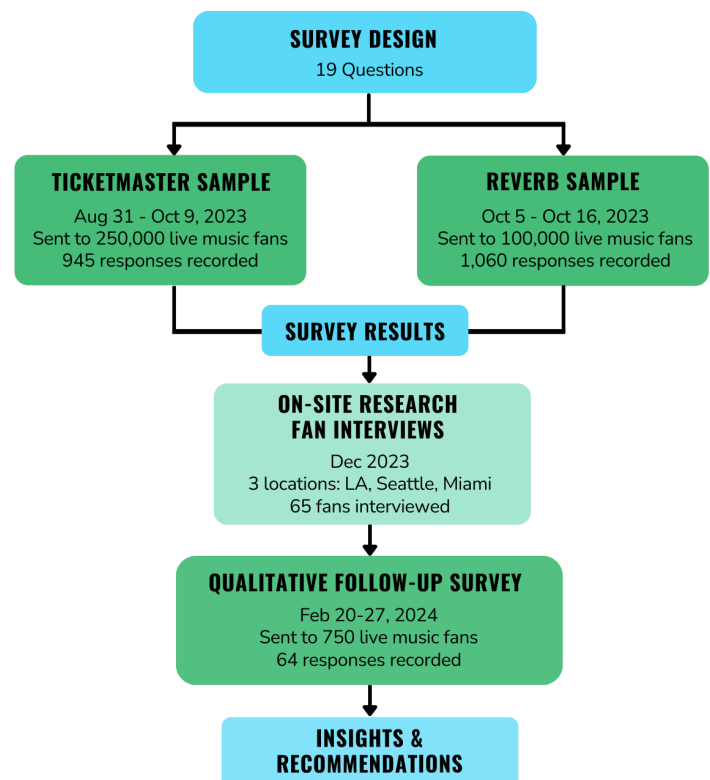
With the help of Green Nation, Ticketmaster, and REVERB, we shared our survey with approximately 350,000 live music fans across the U.S., including fans of over 400 artists from various genres.

Ticketmaster sent the survey to 250,000 people who purchased concert tickets through their service from March 1 - August 31, 2023, allowing us to sample the views of general concert attendees. REVERB sent the survey to 100,000 people who had taken action with them at a previous concert, allowing us to sample the opinions of concert attendees who have already engaged with climate advocacy.

In February 2024, we sent a follow-up survey to consenting respondents. After finding broad support for artists engaging in climate advocacy, this survey bolsters our recommendations by exploring how artists should communicate about climate change.

The survey data was analyzed using Qualtrics' in-house analytic tools, Google Sheets, and Microsoft Excel.

Research Process



In-Person Fan Interviews

To validate and expand upon the survey research, we interviewed a total of 65 fans at The 1975 show in Seattle and iHeartRadio's Jingle Ball in Los Angeles and Miami. These shows allowed us to speak to fans in different regions of the country who follow various major artists, including Olivia Rodrigo, The 1975, Niall Horan, AJR, Sabrina Carpenter, Nicki Minaj, and Marshmello. At each venue, we set up a Planet Reimagined table on the concourse and solicited interviews from fans passing by, who were offered the chance to win two tickets to AJR's upcoming tour in exchange for their time.

Real-Time Advocacy Testing

At the iHeartRadio Jingle Ball concerts in Los Angeles and Miami, we also tested when and where fans would most likely take climate action based on the original survey data. To accomplish this, we designed physical signage branded with the Jingle Ball logo and style, which included text reading "Take 30 Seconds to Help Protect the Planet." Each sign also included a unique QR code to track which signs the fans scanned. We placed these signs around the venue near the concession stands, merchandise booths, and at the entrance of the restrooms. We displayed another unique QR code on the mainstage screens in a 30-second video where Adam Met of AJR called on fans to take action "to make our communities a better place to live." In Los Angeles, this video played after AJR's performance, while in Miami, it played before.

When fans scanned the QR codes, they were directed to a Linktree offering three action opportunities: sign a petition, volunteer with a local organization, or register to vote. Using Linktree allowed us to quantify how many people clicked each action opportunity after scanning the QR code. Each petition was selected to address a local, non-partisan issue focused on transitioning to a clean energy future. For volunteering, we selected local, non-partisan organizations with active campaigns to participate in. Lastly, we included Headcount.org's voter registration tool, since they are currently the leading voter registration program in the music industry.

This mixed-method approach strengthened our research by allowing us to hear from a large and diverse audience of live music fans from across the country.



Planet Reimagined researchers Li-Ya Mar and Caleb Johnson collecting qualitative data from fans attending a live concert.

Want to learn more?

ALL DATA COLLECTED AND PRESENTED IN THIS REPORT IS AVAILABLE
TO THE PUBLIC AT [WWW.PLANETREIMAGINED.COM/AMPLIFY](https://www.planetreimagined.com/amplify)





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