

WHO Make Listening Safe Initiative

The Commitments guide - A step-by-step guide for applicants

Purpose of this guide

This guide has been developed to support individuals, organizations, and governments in developing meaningful and measurable commitments under the Make Listening Safe (MLS) initiative.

It complements the commitments submission template and outlines a step-by-step process to help applicants:

- Understand the scope of the MLS initiative
- Identify where their organization fits
- Draft a clear, evidence-informed commitment
- Structure actions with timelines and targets
- Submit successfully to WHO

About the Make Listening Safe Initiative

The WHO Make Listening Safe initiative aims to reduce hearing loss caused by exposure to loud sounds in recreational settings — including personal listening devices, video gameplay, and live music venues.

The initiative works across three key pillars:

- **Standards:** WHO has developed global standards for safe listening in devices (ITU-T H.870), video gameplay and esports (ITU-T H.872), and venues and events. These standards guide governments, manufacturers, and event organizers in designing safer listening environments.
- **Awareness:** WHO supports behaviour change by producing and promoting evidence-based communication materials — including toolkits, mobile messaging libraries, and campaign guides — to help individuals, especially youth, make safer listening choices.
- **Research:** Through global partnerships, WHO conducts and promotes research to track risk behaviours, assess interventions, and guide future safe listening strategies.

Together, these pillars support a global effort to make safe listening a cultural norm.

Who Can Make a Commitment?

Any entity working in or influencing the recreational sound environment is encouraged to participate. These include:

- Government ministries and regulators
- Audio technology manufacturers
- Venue and event organizers
- Streaming platforms and influencers
- Educators and school systems
- Civil society and youth organizations
- Researchers and academic institutions

What Makes a Strong Commitment?

Each commitment should be:

- Aligned with WHO's safe listening standards
- Specific – clearly define the issue and the solution
- Measurable – include indicators or targets
- Actionable – describe what will be done, and by whom
- Time-bound – typically within a 2–5 year timeframe

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Identify Your Role and Impact Area

Think about how your organization influences listening experiences. You might:

- Design technology used for listening
- Regulate or license sound environments
- Engage directly with young people
- Host or organize events
- Shape public policy or curriculum

Step 2: Define the Commitment

Frame a problem you are positioned to address. For example:

“To reduce the risk of hearing loss in adolescents using video gameplay devices.”

This becomes your commitment statement.

Step 3: Outline Specific Action(s)

Provide details about what you will do, such as:

- Embedding safe listening features in devices
- Hosting a demonstration of WHO standards
- Training venue staff
- Launching a curriculum in schools

Step 4: Set Targets and a Timeline

Describe your expected outcome, how many people you intend to reach, and when:

“Safe listening feature embedded in 100% of new product lines by end of 2027.”

Step 5: Explain the Rationale

Tell us how the commitment aligns with your strategic priorities, why it matters, and how it builds on past or ongoing efforts.

Step 6: Assign Responsibilities

Name the internal team or unit responsible. For example:

“Marketing and Communications Unit”

Step 7: Identify Partners

List any expected collaborators: youth ambassadors, health departments, media outlets, NGOs, etc.

Example Submission Snapshot

Field	Example Entry
Stakeholder Name	<i>EchoSound Audio Devices Ltd.</i>
Contact Person	<i>Jane Smith, Head of Compliance – jsmith@echosound.com</i>
Commitment	<i>To implement WHO's Global Standard for Safe Listening Devices & Systems (ITU-T H.870) in all new headphone and earphone product lines</i>
Specific Action(s)	<i>Implement dosimetry system, volume limits, display hearing safety messages and call to actions for users in line with ITU-T H.870</i>
Target(s) and Timeline	<i>Features included in 100% of new headphone and earphone models sold globally by December 2027</i>
Alignment with Organizational Priorities	<i>Part of EchoSound's sustainability and wellbeing agenda; aligns with corporate responsibility on safe product use</i>
Responsible Entity	<i>Product Development and Compliance Unit</i>
Partnerships	<i>World Hearing Forum Youth brand ambassadors</i>

How to Submit

1. Download and complete the Commitments Submission Template
2. Email the completed form to: mls@who.int
3. WHO will review submissions and post accepted entries on the global WHO website.

Need Help?

Contact the WHO MLS Secretariat at mls@who.int

You can also refer to:

- Commitments Submission Template
- Online Tracker of Submitted Commitments – *(URL forthcoming)*
- [WHO Safe Listening Guidance and Standards](#)