

The FYC Trap: Be Careful Who You Send Your Grammy Campaign To

I received two "For Your Consideration" (FYC) emails this week. One was from a friend—a Recording Academy member and producer—promoting an album he engineered. The other was from someone I don't know at all, promoting a New Age composer I'd never heard of.

1. Only send FYC materials to actual members you know.

The rules restrict members to "promoting only their own recordings." There's no lobbying on behalf of other members. So if you're sending on behalf of someone else, that's a violation.

2. Work with a legitimate publicist who understands the rules.

A good publicist will know the difference between legitimate FYC outreach and spam. They'll have relationships with actual voters—not a scraped email list.

3. Use the Academy's free listing system.

During the first-round voting period, the Academy provides a free listing system for eligible recordings. This is the sanctioned way to get your music in front of voters.

4. Never buy a "Grammy voter list."

If someone offers to sell you access to Academy members, walk away. You're either being scammed, or you're participating in something that could get you disqualified.

5. If you receive FYC emails and you're not a member, report them.

The Academy takes these violations seriously. If you're getting mass FYC emails and you're not a voting member, forward them to the Academy. You're helping protect the integrity of the process.

The Bottom Line

FYC campaigns are a legitimate part of the Grammy process—but they have rules for a reason. The Academy wants voters to make decisions based on artistic merit, not marketing budgets or mailing lists.

If you're an independent artist dreaming of a Grammy nomination, don't fall for the shortcut. Build real relationships. Work with people who know the rules. And if someone offers to sell you a list of Grammy voters, remember: **the Academy doesn't release that information, and anyone who claims to have it is not someone you want to do business with.**

4. FYC communications cannot include chart numbers, streams, or sales figures.

This was added in 2021. The Academy wants voters to focus on artistic merit, not commercial success.

5. FYC events cannot include gifts, meals, or alcohol.

Anything that could be inferred as "a value in exchange for vote consideration" is prohibited.

The Mass Email Problem

Here's where it gets tricky for independent artists.

A well-intentioned artist—or their publicist—might think, "I'll just buy a list of Grammy voters and send them my music. That's how this works, right?"

Wrong. And dangerous.

If you're sending FYC materials to people who aren't Recording Academy members, you're wasting your money and potentially violating the Academy's rules. If you're buying a list that claims to be Grammy voters, you're almost certainly being scammed—because the Academy doesn't sell or release that information.

The emails I received are a perfect illustration. The first one was from a friend who is a member, which is legitimate. The second was from a stranger promoting an artist I've never heard of—and that's almost certainly a mass mailing to a purchased or scraped list.

What You Should Do Instead

If you're an independent artist hoping for Grammy consideration, here's how to approach it ethically and effectively:

Here's the thing: **I'm not a Recording Academy member.** I'm not a voting member. I'm not affiliated with the Academy in any way beyond being a musician. So why am I on these mailing lists?

Because FYC campaigns have become a cottage industry of mass email blasts—and a lot of them are breaking the rules.

What the Rules Actually Say

The Recording Academy has strict guidelines about FYC communications. They're not just suggestions—violating them can get an artist's submission disqualified and a member's membership suspended or terminated.

Here are the key rules you need to know:

1. The Academy does not release member contact information.

This is stated plainly in their guidelines: "The Recording Academy does not release the contact information of its members, therefore you should exercise caution if doing business with any vendor claiming that the vendor has accurate contact lists of Academy members."

If someone is selling you a "Grammy voter mailing list," they're either lying or they've obtained that information improperly. Either way, you don't want to be involved.

2. FYC communications must include an opt-out option.

Any FYC email, mailing, or communication is prohibited unless it includes an opt-out option. If you're receiving FYC emails with no way to unsubscribe, that's a violation.

3. FYC communications cannot include personal pleas.

The rules explicitly prohibit "personal signatures, personal regards or personal pleas to listen to the eligible recordings." So that heartfelt note asking you to "please consider my album" is actually against the rules.