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RIAA DEBUTS ALBUM AWARD WITH STREAMS

58-Year-Old Gold & Platinum Program Modernizes Album Certification

Alt-J, Big Sean, Brett Eldredge, Coldplay, Elle King, Fifth Harmony, Halsey, Hozier, Kendrick Lamar, Michael Jackson, Miranda Lambert, Romeo Santos, Sam Hunt, Shawn Mendes, The Weeknd, Vance Joy and Wale Garner New Album Achievements Today

WASHINGTON—The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) today announced a new Album Award methodology for its Gold & Platinum Program, the industry’s premier award for recognizing artistic achievement in the music marketplace.

Effective Feb. 1, RIAA will include on-demand audio and video streams and a track sale equivalent in Gold & Platinum (G&P’s) Album Award. The modernization of the program’s album rule follows a similar update made to digital single certifications in 2013, when the RIAA first added on-demand streams to its Digital Single Award. Collectively, this now means that the program’s iconic [benchmarks](#) – 500,000 (Gold), 1,000,000 (Platinum) and 2,000,000 plus (multi-Platinum) – will count both sales and streams for single and album certifications.

“For nearly six decades, whether it’s vinyl, CDs, downloads or now streams, the Gold & Platinum Program has adapted to recognize the benchmarks of success in an evolving music marketplace,” said Cary Sherman, Chairman and CEO, RIAA. “We know that music listening – for both for albums and songs – is skyrocketing, yet that trend has not been reflected in our album certifications. Modernizing our Album Award to include music streaming is the next logical step in the continued evolution of Gold & Platinum Awards, and doing so enables RIAA to fully reward the success of artists’ albums today.”

Seventeen titles, encompassing albums from dozens of music labels and spanning many genres, are included in the inaugural certifications for the newly expanded Album Award. RIAA is today awarding the following artists with new certifications: Alt-J “An Awesome Wave” (Atlantic Records) Gold, Big Sean “Dark Sky Paradise” (Def Jam Recordings) Platinum, Brett Eldredge “Bring You Back” (Atlantic Nashville) Gold,

Coldplay “Ghost Stories” (Atlantic/Parlophone) Platinum, Elle King “Love Stuff” (RCA) Gold, Fifth Harmony “Reflection” (Epic) Gold, Halsey “Badlands” (Astralwerks) Gold, Hozier “Hozier” (Columbia) Platinum, Kendrick Lamar “To Pimp a Butterfly” (Top Dawg Entertainment/Interscope) Platinum, Michael Jackson “Thriller” (Epic/Legacy) 32X Multi-Platinum, Miranda Lambert “Platinum” (RCA Nashville) Platinum, Romeo Santos “Fórmula Vol. 2” (Sony Latin) 11X Diamante/RIAA Latin G&P Program, Sam Hunt “Montevallo” (MCA Nashville) 2X Multi-Platinum, Shawn Mendes “Handwritten” (Island Records) Platinum, The Weeknd “Beauty Behind the Madness” (XO/Republic Records) 2X Multi-Platinum, Vance Joy “Dream Your life Away” (Atlantic Records) Gold and Wale “Ambition” (Atlantic Urban) Gold.

After a comprehensive analysis of a variety of factors – including streaming and download consumption patterns and historical impact on the program – and also consultation with a myriad of industry colleagues, the RIAA set the new Album Award formula of 1,500 on-demand audio and/or video song streams = 10 track sales = 1 album sale. Also effective today, RIAA’s Digital Single Award ratio will be updated from 100 on-demand streams = 1 download to 150 on-demand streams = 1 download to reflect streaming’s enormous growth in the two plus years since that ratio was set.

The RIAA created its Gold & Platinum Awards Program in 1958 to honor artists and create a standard to measure the commercial success of a sound recording. The program trademarked the Gold record and formalized the industry practice of presenting awards to artists for music sales achievements. Almost 60 years since its inception, the iconic Gold & Platinum brand is the preeminent form of recognition for success in the music marketplace.

Music dominates the conversation on popular social media platforms, with artists being the [most followed people](#) across these channels, and Gold & Platinum recognition is often among the most celebrated news in an artist’s social media feed. The RIAA utilizes a myriad of social media platforms – [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Flipagram](#), and a [YouTube page](#) – to market and publicize artist award achievements. The RIAA also recently unveiled a new [RIAA.com](#) and [Gold & Platinum database](#) where fans can more easily search and share the award recognition.

First awarded to LP recordings but expanded to a number of formats over time to include cassette tapes, CDs, digital tracks, digital albums, ringtones, and streams, nearly 30,000 certifications have been awarded by the RIAA during the last 58 years.

All certifications are calculated by the firm Gelfand, Rennert & Feldman, which has audited title sales for the RIAA for more than 30 years. Complete lists of all album, single, and other awards can be accessed at <http://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum/>.

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The Recording Industry Association of America® (RIAA) is the trade organization that supports and promotes the creative and financial vitality of the major music companies. Its members comprise the most vibrant record industry in the world, investing in great artists to help them reach their potential and connect to their fans. Nearly 85% of all legitimate recorded music produced and sold in the United States is created, manufactured or distributed by RIAA members.

In support of this mission, the RIAA works to protect the intellectual property and First Amendment rights of artists and music labels; conduct consumer, industry and technical research; and monitor and review state and federal laws, regulations and policies. RIAA also certifies Gold®, Platinum®, Multi-Platinum™, Diamond and Los Premios De Oro y Platino™ sales and streaming awards.