



April 15, 2021

Isedua Oribhabor  
U.S. Policy Analyst, Access Now  
463 Lincoln Place #241  
Brooklyn, New York 11238

Dear Ms. Oribhabor:

I want to thank you and the Access Now team for the important work you do, as well as for initiating today's conversation. Spotify takes the privacy and safety of our users very seriously and we welcome the opportunity to discuss these important issues with you today. We understand that you may not have had a point of contact at Spotify when you sent your original letter on April 2, 2021, but we want you to know that the lines of communication are now open, and we're looking forward to having a constructive dialogue.

I would like to start by sharing a bit of background about Spotify. Our company mission is to unlock the potential of human creativity—by giving a million creative artists the opportunity to live off their art and billions of fans the opportunity to enjoy and be inspired by it. Delivering this to users — especially artists and their fans — means continually improving the Spotify experience. We will continue to innovate in all things audio. This is what we have done since our founding and it is the key to our long-term success in a highly competitive market.

As bold as our ambition is, we also recognize that we have an obligation to innovate responsibly. At Spotify we think about issues at the intersection of technology, public policy, and ethics every day. We are committed to both innovation and transparency, and firmly believe that the two goals can coexist. We will continue to drive innovation and experimentation in the audio space and we believe we can do that in a responsible way.

With this as a backdrop, I'd like to address the speech-recognition patent you referenced in your letter: Spotify has never implemented the technology described in the patent in any of our products and we have no plans to do so. Our research and development teams are constantly envisioning and developing new technologies as part of our ongoing innovation cycle. Sometimes those innovations end up being implemented in our products and sometimes they don't. The decision to patent an invention does not always reflect the company's intent to implement the invention in a product, but is instead



influenced by a number of other considerations, including our responsibilities to our users and to society at large. I can assure you that any products Spotify develops both now and in the future will reflect our commitment to conducting business in a socially responsible manner and comply with applicable law.

As illustrated in our 2020 Sustainability, Equity and Impact Report, Spotify has a track record of holding ourselves to the highest ethical standards. By way of example, in our recent U.S. launches of a new voice-controlled experience called “Hey Spotify” and Car Thing, a new smart player for the car featuring a voice control option, we’ve highlighted the dedicated efforts we’ve made to ensure these versatile user experiences were made with privacy top-of-mind. Both of these offerings are completely optional and users have the ability to opt in or out of the voice experience at any time. Spotify also offers a user-friendly Privacy Center to make sure users have information about the rights and controls they have over their data.

We also recognize that as we continue to innovate and tackle difficult questions about technology and social responsibility, we won’t have all the answers. For this reason we will always remain open to constructive dialogue with organizations like yours.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "HG", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Horacio Gutierrez,  
Head of Global Affairs & Chief Legal Officer

cc Peter Micek, General Counsel, Access Now  
cc Jennifer Brody, US Advocacy Manager, Access Now  
cc Eric Null, US Advocacy Manager, Access Now  
cc Daniel Leufer, Europe Policy Analyst, Access Now