

**FREELANCERS MAKE THEATRE WORK
WEEKLY MEETING MINUTES
09:30-12:00, FRIDAY 3RD JULY**

Present: Neil Austin, Rachel Bagshaw, Bill Bankes-Jones, Paule Constable, Alistair Cope, Debbie Hannan, Sunita Hinduja, Hazel Holder, Jack Hudson, Matt Humphrey, Ola Ince, Susan Kempster, Peter Mckintosh, Prema Mehta, David Micklem, Vicki Mortimer, Chinoyerem Odimba, Arran Pallan, Beth Steel, Adele Thomas, Andrew Whyment

Intro from David Micklem from Culture Reset

Culture Reset is a programme aimed to support and stimulate cultural workers from across the arts industry to reset their own practices and, in turn, those of their community, whether that be geographical, organisational or creative discipline. The programme aims to harness a feeling from across arts sectors that we should not go back to how things were before the shut down and embrace a “bottom-up” approach to creating work and programmes that think more broadly about the people and communities it serves.

197 free places are available to UK residents (aged at least 18 years) involved in cultural production, including freelancers. Applications are open until 5pm on Thursday 9 July. The programme runs 20 July to 11 September 2020.

We will share the info and application details on our platform and considering submitting an application from one or more individuals within the group.

GDPR

We met with a data protection officer (DPO) to discuss GDPR issues and may appoint one on a permanent basis.

In the meantime, will continue to take steps to ensure the data we have already collected, as well as any future plans, comply with regulations.

The survey does not present any issues because the data is anonymised. If we use any qualitative data for testimonials we will ensure it does not contain identifiable information.

We need to finish registering as a company in order to implement policies and draft the appropriate documents.

Funding/staffing/budget & forming a company

Forming a company is ongoing after another useful consultation. We need to complete the process soon in order to receive funding and use money. We will need to agree to basic company articles and create a document stating how we intend to function, including financially. As previously discussed we would need to form a board (advised roughly 6-8 individuals), which would have a token role.

- Meet next week to finalise plan and appoint board, ensuring diversity.
- First draft of company's "Guiding Principles" shared for feedback.

We have been offered some funding, which we will need be able to accept and use once we've become a company.

The above meeting will also be used to determine roles required on a paid basis, including the current social media role, a potential administrative role and any external services such as a web developer, the legal secretaries and a data protection officer.

- Identify roles and costs, drawing up a complete budget.

Updates on projects from working groups:

Website and social media

- We are continuing to streamline content on the website, which is getting quite full.
- Share any content for the site or social media on the relevant Slack channels.
- Continue to send brief descriptions of meetings for the website diary.
- Twitter – 1.1m impressions; 1.5k clicks; 4.5m engagements with hashtag.
- Instagram – 85k impressions, 2.5k hashtags - 2.5m reach.
- Facebook – 7k reach.
- Continue to create quote cards for socials using facts and figures from Slack channel.

Email traffic

- We need to find a more effective way to manage and respond to emails.
- Please suggest responses to emails posted in Slack if you are able to.
- People have offered various services that we should take up, including:
 - well-known individuals offering campaigning support;
 - mental health services, which we might consider focussing a campaign on;
 - and financial support, which we need to determine how to handle.
- Several requests for industry data for MPs, we need to create a briefing document.
- We have declined to partake in an academic study as this is not really our focus.

Advocacy - letter to theatres, letter to DCMS, Build Back Better

- The letter to ADs has been redrafted with two key focusses: the lack of communication with freelancers and the systematic imbalance of discussions.
- It suggests three actions: communicate publicly with freelancers; vocalise support for them in public forums; give freelancers a seat at table of future plans.
- We need to decide when to send, considering sensitivity around redundancies.
- The data from the survey will provide the basis of the next proposed letter, which puts a time pressure on this one.

[NB it was later decided that the letter be shelved for now, in light of the immediate difficulties faced by theatres, their widely varying situations and the lack of governmental sup-

port for anyone, organisations and freelancers alike. The idea will be returned to when a clearer request emerges, which can be asked in a spirit of solidarity.]

Newsletter

- The next newsletter author was confirmed. We need volunteers for future letters.

Controlling access to shared documents

Individuals in the organisational group are currently being granted blanket access to shared documents.

- We need to move to a model of restricted access to specific files, limited to those that require it, in order to protect any sensitive data.

Organisational Team

We will conduct an internal audit of members of the organisational group in order to assess diversity of representation, and discuss in next week's meeting.

Future Projects

Mental health has been identified as a big issue for freelancers, who are struggling with the pressures of the pandemic, which in turn exacerbates the usual pressures such as deadlines and finding work. Possible projects include sessions open to freelancers, open zoom chats, 'coffee mornings', inviting practitioners to talk, a platform to connect individuals.

- We are uploading mental health resources to the website.
- We will continue to discuss ideas for a wider campaign or programme.

We are discussing possibilities for the next online campaign, including videos from audiences, images of TV/film crews with theatre freelancers removed, 'jigsaw puzzle' images of all of the freelancers it takes to create a show.

- We will continue to suggest ideas.

We need to campaign to put pressure on the government to release a timeline for returning to live performances.

We could ensure any campaigns also provide freelancers with a voice in rebuilding the theatre industry in better and more accessible ways.

Survey update from Lyndsey Turner

The results from the survey have been collected and the data has been collated into a useable format. It is a huge data set from 28 questions and 8k individuals respondents.

The data has been turned into a paper of information, to be submitted to DCMS and ACE, to highlight that more money than expected will be needed and to illustrate the shape of the problem, and therefore indicate how money should be distributed. This paper has been de-affiliated with any specific campaign groups.

The data will be made available to us soon. It is broad enough to support multiple areas of focus but we should identify problems and use it in a constructive and directed manor.

The data will also be made available to any bodies tasked with distributing financial aid, to ensure that it goes to those who need it most and not those who are able to shout loudest.

Immediate actions

- Finish writing and send letters to ADs
- Pursue conversations regarding GDPR, potentially with a DPO
- Meet to discuss company status and confirm required roles and costs
- Complete audit of individuals in the organising group
- Support an individual application to Culture Reset

Next meeting

Friday July 10th, 9.30 am. Chaired by Peter Mckintosh.
Working groups to coordinate meetings separately.