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INFORMATION SHEET

Expectations when working with organisations

For creative and cultural practitioners and freelancers

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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

artscouncil.org.uk

What's inside

This information sheet relates to Arts Council England's funding programmes. It can be used alongside guidance for applicants to support you to make your application.

See our [website](#) for information about our funds.

In this information sheet, we will talk about the following:

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This information is also available in audio, BSL, Easy Read and large print formats. If you require it in an alternative format, like Braille, please [get in touch](#).

Introduction

This information sheet aims to help you to consider your boundaries and expectations when working with organisations.

You may also want to read about the Arts Council's expectations of how organisations work with freelance practitioners, which can be found [here](#).

Fair pay

We expect that organisations, individuals and projects funded by us ensure that fees and working conditions for artists, creatives and specialists are in line with, or better than, recognised codes of practice and guidelines set by the relevant lead bodies.

Freelancers are responsible for their own tax and national insurance, pension, business expenses and insurance, holiday and sick pay, and training and development costs. Self-employed rates should therefore be higher than the equivalent PAYE rate to account for these additional costs.

We encourage you to consider rates that properly reflect your costs, skill and experience. You should set out those rates in grant applications and when responding to opportunities or commissions.

You may find it useful to refer to the union or sector body for your artform or discipline to help you set your pay rates. A list of useful contacts can be found in our [Equality and Fair Pay](#) information sheet.

Sometimes you may want to respond to commissions that offer a lower fee. In these instances, we would encourage you to consider if the opportunity is of sufficient interest to you and/or that will benefit your career, and that the fee is still an appropriate offer for the level of work required even if it is less than you would usually expect.

We expect organisations to make sure that the fees offered reflect the amount of work required. We encourage you to discuss with the organisation what that time commitment is expected to be, and what will happen if you have to work more than anticipated, and to agree this in writing.

Working with cultural organisations

We encourage organisations to make sure that you are able to deliver effectively by giving you an induction to the organisation and/or venue and making sure that you have the information you need to do your work. For example, if you are working with children and young people, you should be given the organisation's safeguarding policy, or if you need to use a piece of equipment, you should be given training on how to use it.

We also suggest that organisations and freelancers should consider including a 'cancellation clause' in the contract to protect both parties' interests should the contract need to be ended early. If this is not included in your contract or agreement, you can ask for one to be added.

We recommend you ask what you should do if you have an issue or concern to raise, and to follow that process if you need to. Issues can usually be resolved by the organisation; if they don't know of your concerns, they cannot help to address them, or take action to change things. If you feel you have experienced or observed behaviour or working practice that has made you uncomfortable or have caused distress to you or others, please do contact them so that they can take action and do something about it.

You can use our [Raising a Concern](#) process if the organisation or individual is a recipient of Arts Council funding, and if you feel they have not followed their own policies in dealing with your concern. You can also use our Raising a Concern process if you feel that your concerns have not been listened to, or if you are fearful of contacting the organisation or individual.

Supporting the cultural ecology

The cultural ecology is at its best when practitioners and organisations work together to achieve incredible creative and cultural experiences.

Creative and cultural practitioners bring independent vision and ideas, offer highly developed specialist skills, and often work closely in and with communities. Organisations set out their own vision and mission, can draw on more substantial financial and human resources, and build long-term, ongoing relationships with their audiences, visitors, participants, and local communities. Both practitioners and organisations are needed for our culture sector to thrive and grow.

We encourage organisations to think about how they can support and engage with practitioners beyond paid opportunities and projects, to help strengthen their local cultural ecology and to reach practitioners they not otherwise be able to reach. Many organisations already do this with great success, offering resources, access to equipment and space, and time to support practitioners' work. We encourage you to ask local organisations if they can support you or other practitioners. You can refer to our [Supporting Practitioners information sheet](#) to suggest ways organisations can do this.

Practitioners play their own significant part in supporting the cultural ecology by taking part in local and national networks, leading participatory and co-creation activities, collaborating with each other and with organisations, and offering their expertise to other practitioners. You could consider becoming a trustee or board member for local organisations, to share your knowledge, to offer insights from a freelance perspective, and to challenge and encourage better organisational practice. Voluntary opportunities like these can help your personal development and networking as well as helping the freelance sector to have a voice in decision making.

Other resources

Our dedicated [webpage for creative and cultural practitioners](#) sets out what the Arts Council can do for you, and signposts to other resources.

Our [Supporting Practitioners information sheet](#) sets out our expectations of cultural organisations when working with creative and cultural practitioners.

Our [Equality and Fair Pay information sheet](#) and [Project Grants and Fair Pay information sheet](#) give you more detail about our expectations around fair pay and working conditions, and signpost to relevant sector bodies to help you set your pay rates.

Our [Resource Hub](#) shares toolkits, perspectives from across the creative and cultural sector and more about how to ensure your creative practice is ambitious and high quality, inclusive and relevant, environmentally responsible and dynamic.

UK Theatre's Freelancers' [webpage](#) signposts to a variety of organisations, initiatives and resources created to support freelancers.

Contact us

We want to make sure that all individuals working in the creative and cultural sector are able to share their thoughts with us if they want to.

You can contact us directly with suggestions for how we can support individuals, share examples of good practice in the sector, and give us feedback on how we're doing so far, including on this information sheet.

[Get in touch >](#)

You can also reach us at the details below:

Telephone: 0161 934 4317
Email: enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk
Website: artscouncil.org.uk
Post: Arts Council England
The Hive, 49 Lever Street
Manchester
M1 1FN

You can also Livechat with our Customer Services team by clicking the icon on the Contact Us page on our website:: artscouncil.org.uk