

SCOTTISH YOUTH THEATRE

SCOTTISH YOUTH THEATRE'S COMMITMENT TO OUR FREELANCE WORKFORCE

Freelance practitioners are an important and integral part of Scottish Youth Theatre's workforce and community. We explicitly employ freelancers to deliver our programme to bring a diversity of approach to our creative work and to inspire the young artists we work with. We employ those who align with our values and are the best fit for each individual project. We know the precarity and demands of a freelance life and want to support the sector by offering opportunities that are rewarding, well supported and appropriately paid.

In our commitment to Fair Work, this statement is Scottish Youth Theatre's public commitment to continuous improvement and good practice in how we employ and collaborate with freelance contractors. This statement will be publicly available on our website and will be signposted in all freelance recruitment campaigns. It will also be provided to all freelance contractors as part of the contracting and induction process with the company.

Whilst exhilarating, the nature of theatre and working in a range of contexts is hard work and unpredictable. We recognise that we won't always get it right but aim to create an environment where challenges can comfortably be aired and solutions amicably agreed. Working with Scottish Youth Theatre, we want freelancers to have a positive and rewarding experience as collaborators in the artistic development of the young artists who participate in our programmes.

Scope: Our freelance workforce includes artists, production/technical specialists and producers. While our traineeships and internships may not be undertaken on a freelance basis, many of the principles laid out in this document also apply to their involvement with the company.

FAIR WORK PRINCIPLES & OUR FREELANCE WORKFORCE

EFFECTIVE VOICE

“Effective voice is much more than just having a channel of communication available within workplaces. Effective voice requires a safe environment where dialogue and challenge are dealt with constructively and where workers’ views are sought.”
Fair Work Convention, 2016

We are committed to:

Providing a positive working culture and a continual open dialogue during the period of engagement.

Paid structured time for induction and ongoing evaluation in all contracts, commensurate with the length of engagement.

Offering different channels of communication appropriate to the access needs of individuals

Positive engagement with unions when they raise a concern

Feeding back any measures or changes we have implemented in response to artists' views and reflections.

What this means in practice

- An identified main contact for freelancers at the start of a project
- Scheduling paid time for induction, planning, mid-point reviews and end evaluations
- Induction sessions to build relationships and share relevant policies that lay out reporting routes for more serious incidents and concerns
- Establishing strong and appropriate communication channels that invite reflection, questions and feedback
- Explicitly asking for reflections on the experience of working with the company

OPPORTUNITY

“Meeting legal obligations by ensuring equal access to work and equal opportunities in work sets a minimum floor for fair work... Fair opportunity, however, is more than the chance to access work. Attitudes, behaviours, policies and practices within organisations – and crucially, the outcomes these produce – signal and reflect the value placed on fair opportunity.”
Fair Work Convention, 2016

We are committed to:

Clear and transparent recruitment processes based on selecting the best artist for each job.

Scaling each application process to be commensurate with the size of the contract, recognising the unpaid labour of regularly having to secure work.

Reasonable adjustments and access support to improve the diversity of applicants.

Development of where we advertise opportunities and deploying positive action to improve the diversity of people who apply and who are employed.

What this means in practice

- Maintaining a mindset of continuous improvement in our recruitment practice
- Advertise work in line with our Recruitment Policy to ensure fair opportunity to apply
- Accepting applications in different formats
- Offering verbal feedback to unsuccessful applicants
- Sharing this commitment and relevant policies on our website and as part of induction processes
- Responding to feedback about the experience of applying for opportunities
- Undertaking research to expand our networks for advertising opportunities more widely

SECURITY

“Security of employment, work and income are important foundations of a successful life. Predictability of working time is often a component of secure working arrangements. While no one has complete security and stability of employment, income and work, security remains an important aspect of fair work.”

Fair Work Convention, 2016

We are committed to:

Maximising clarity and minimising uncertainty in our contracting of artists and management of projects.

Payment of fees in excess of or equal to minimum rates as recommended by Equity, ITC and BECTU.

Paying the full real living wage to trainees and interns to enable them to fully commit their time to the opportunity.

What this means in practice

- Payment in 5-10 working days on receipt of invoices
- Clear contracts that include payment schedules, payment for time required for planning, meetings, travel and evaluation
- Scheduling well in advance and consultation with artists if changes are required
- Clear terms in contracts on postponement, cancellation and artist absence
- Staying up to date with recommended rates of pay

FULFILMENT

“Workers benefit from engaging in fulfilling work in terms of using and developing their skills; having some control over their work and scope to make a difference; taking part in appropriately challenging work and taking up opportunities for personal growth and career advancement. Workers who are fulfilled in their jobs are more likely to be engaged, committed and healthy. Fulfilling work contributes to confidence and self-belief.”

Fair Work Convention, 2016

We are committed to:

Engaging artists as collaborators with young people in the creative space and with the SYT production team in planning and shaping delivery.

Placing trust in our freelance workforce to provide a high quality experience that supports and stretches participants.

Providing creative scope that makes the most of freelancers' skills and offers opportunity to test ideas and take creative risks.

Sharing our project outcomes to support artists in shaping activity and enable them to contribute to evaluation frameworks.

Offering places on appropriate team training opportunities and building training for freelancers into projects where relevant.

Recognising and celebrating freelancers' achievements as an integral and important part of our workforce.

What this means in practice

- A style of delivery that centres young people in the creative process
- Scheduling sufficient time for individual preparation and shared planning
- Full induction processes appropriate to the scale of the contract
- Ongoing dialogue to enable artistic exploration and maintain a positive experience for participants
- Offering feedback from participants and SYT at given points in a project
- Payment to attend training as part of a project and where budgets allow in non-project contexts
- Profiling freelance contractors as part of project communications and recognising their contribution in evaluation processes

RESPECT

“At its most basic, respect involves ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of others. Mutual respect is an important aspect of everyday social exchange and is a crucial element of relationships in the workplace where a significant proportion of life is spent. Crucially, mutual respect involves recognising the views, autonomy, status and contribution of others... Respect as a dimension of fair work includes ... dignified treatment, social support and the development of trusting relationships. It means being open, mutually accountable, transparent and responsive to the concerns of others.” **Fair Work Convention, 2016**

We are committed to:

Living our company values in building positive working relationships with artists.

Being respectful of different needs and viewpoints, providing clear channels for discussion and raising concerns.

Making provision for artists' access and wellbeing needs.

Good management practice, absorbing the practical logistics of projects to enable freelancers to concentrate on the creative task.

What this means in practice

- Use of access questionnaires to identify individuals' support needs and preferred styles of working
- Reasonable working hours and sufficient rest days
- Being conscious of contract creep and revisiting hours of work and/or fees according to available budget
- Agreeing work boundaries including appropriate level and means of communication with artists at the outset
- Embed discussion of personal time and space between individuals when away from home
- Sharing health and safety, safeguarding and equity and justice policies and procedures
- Managing communications with partner organisations and venues and keeping freelancers informed