

Creative Freelancers: Shaping London's Recovery

Call Out for Expressions of Interest from Partner Organisations

Deadline: 10am on 19 March 2021

About the programme

Creative freelancers, particularly those in the performing arts, have been hit hard by COVID-19. From the very start of restrictions, up to 60% of freelancers had lost all of their work, and it is estimated that at least 200,000 Londoners have been excluded from any Government support. The pandemic has also highlighted existing inequalities facing creative freelancers – including a lack of security at work, unequal access to freelance opportunities, and a lack of a basic safety net.

This new programme from the Mayor of London will enable a diverse group of freelancers in the culture sector to come together to explore and make recommendations on the future of freelancing. It will support the Mayor's ambitions to improve working conditions and training, as well as advocating for the statutory changes needed for freelancers.

Creative Freelancers: Shaping London's Recovery will amplify the voices of the self-employed in the culture sector, giving space for

freelancers to shape and demonstrate their role in the recovery of London's creative and cultural industries, as well as in wider civic spaces.

The programme brings together up to 50 diverse freelancers from across the performing arts, including performers, directors, writers and designers, with up to 50 leaders of cultural organisations, funders, councils and other key decision makers.

How will it work?

Each freelancer will receive a bursary, match funded by a cultural organisation, and collaborate on a six-month research project in targeted working groups, supported by a freelance facilitation team. They will feed into the Mayor of London's work to improve job creation and retention for freelancers, as well as skills and training, and take part in advocacy and lobbying.

The programme will be facilitated by a freelance team, enabled by Fuel, funded by LEAP, the London Economic Action Partnership, and co-designed by the Mayor of London. It builds on the first national Freelance Task Force initiated by Fuel as a pilot in April 2020, in which 150 organisations sponsored 169 freelancers across the country. It will build on the evaluation and

recommendations by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, which highlighted the positive impact of the pilot, its promising potential, and suggested that external funding would improve future work in this area.

Programme aims

This project will empower creative freelancers in the performing arts sector to make recommendations for London's recovery from COVID-19 in distinct areas:

- Improving job conditions, creation and retention for creative freelancers
- Advocating for an improved statutory position for creative freelancers
- Establishing skills and training opportunities for creative freelancers

This programme will support the civic role of creative freelancers in London's recovery from COVID-19, in policymaking and in delivery.

Partner Organisations

The national Freelance Task Force in 2020 was made possible by 150 organisations coming together in a commitment to pay a freelancer to join the FTF. Collectively, these organisations paid

£333,000 to freelancers in the performing arts, at a time when it was most needed. Each freelancer was sponsored by an organisation, giving the FTF a personal connection with 150 different organisations. This connectivity was crucial in the FTF's impact, which continues with the original 150 organisations meeting monthly to work on the legacy created by FTF members.

'I think the greatest success is the broad support and action to support and value freelance colleagues at a time of stress. It was both a challenge and a rallying cry to organisations to acknowledge that even though Covid was a moment of crisis our shoulders are still broader and we should be actively supporting freelancers now and taking care of them.'

Sponsor Organisation, Freelance Task Force 2020 Evaluation

'I have been struck by how much under-used potential there is both in the freelancer cohort - how if you do give people the money, time and space to think about things and come up with ideas, they really, really do. It's been an opportunity for me to see our freelancers as leaders and thinkers as well as performers.'

Sponsor Organisation, Freelance Task Force 2020 Evaluation

Creative Freelancers: Shaping London's Recovery has the GLA as its major funder. This responds to one of independent evaluator

MHM's recommendations for any future versions of a FTF: to match fund organisations' contributions with those of an independent funder. It also reduces the financial 'ask' of organisations, at a time when so many are facing very difficult financial decisions.

We are today issuing an Open Call out for Partner Organisations to submit a simple Expression of Interest to join and support this programme. Partner Organisations will be asked to make a financial contribution of £1,000 each, or £500 for those with a turnover of under £500,000. Each Partner Organisation will be paired with one member of the cohort, after a centralised recruitment process managed by the freelance facilitation team.

Partner Organisations must be based in Greater London, and their primary area of work should be the performing arts.

Partner Organisations will meet monthly through the process as a group, individually with their cohort member as required, and at regular intervals with the cohort as a whole or with working groups where relevant. This process will be facilitated by the freelance delivery team, engaged by Fuel. There will be opportunities both to contribute to and to learn from the process and the outcomes.

The final list of Partner Organisations will be selected by the programme's Advisory Group, who will be looking to ensure a wide-range of performing arts organisations from across the capital are represented.

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Expression of Interest Form

[Click here to complete your form.](#)

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