

PRESS RELEASE - 11am 14th July 2021
Creative Freelancers: Shaping London's Recovery

Fifty freelancers who will shape the future of creative employment in the capital announced

Fifty performing arts freelancers have been appointed to an initiative to improve conditions for Londoners working in the creative sector through a programme funded by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan.

They join Creative Freelancers: Shaping London's Recovery, a City Hall research project, supporting the future of freelancing in the capital. It will provide immediate employment for the cohort while they work with partner organisations to help remove the inequalities facing creative freelancers, who have been hugely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since March 2020, up to 60% of the city's freelancers have lost all their income. This loss affected a broad range of roles across the performing arts sector. The appointed freelancers represent this breadth and the diversity of London's workforce.

The cohort have been appointed following a call out in May and an extensive recruitment process. To further their research and foster links between the freelance community and London's leading creative and cultural organisations, each freelancer has been matched with a Partner Organisation. Together they will collaborate on how to improve working practices and opportunities.

Supported by the Mayor of London, the programme aims to feed into the work to improve job creation and retention for freelancers, including the development of a new Freelancers' Charter and take part in advocacy and lobbying.

Championing the programme, **Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries** said: "London is a world centre for culture and the creative industries and our success is powered by creative freelancers who make up nearly half of the workforce. We know that culture will drive our recovery, so it's more important than ever that we invest and support freelancers now. This programme places creatives in the driving seat as we all work to re-set how we value and support freelancers as the country reopens."

The freelancers and their organisations are:

Freelancer		Matched with Partner Organisation
Seifeldin	Abdel Salam	Battersea Arts Centre
Emily	Beecher	Theatre Centre
Shaniqua	Benjamin	Boundless Theatre
Laura	Caldow	Little Angel Theatre
Jessica	Carter	Vital Xposure
Emma	Clark	Actors Touring Company
Emily	Collins	Old Diorama Arts Centre
Rhys	Cook aka Oberon White	The Yard Theatre
Natasha	Davis	Barbican Centre
Stefano	Di Renzo	VAULT Festival
Sara	Doctors	WeMakeEvents
Eleesha	Drennan	The Place
Carole	Edrich	Paddington Development Trust
Ellese	Elliott	Raw Material Music and Media
Tanja	Erhart	Spare Tyre
Richard	Evans	Tamasha Theatre Company
Sarah	Farnsley	Siobhan Davies Dance
Alex	Fernandes	Headlong Theatre Limited
Jonathan	Glew	Camden People's Theatre
Fauzia	Habib	Serious
Ali	Hunter	The Old Vic
Tash	Hyman	National Theatre
Caroline	Jeyaratnam-Joyner	A New Direction
Chloe	Kennedy	Turtle Key Arts
Anne	Langford	Stratford Circus
Nathalie Alison	Layton-McIntosh	Roundhouse
Gaël	Le Cornec	LIFT
Del	Mak	Akademi
Sarah	Meadows	Parents and Carers in Performing Arts
Cole	Morrison	Sound and Music
Olivia	Munk	Turtle Key Arts
Aston	New	Talawa Theatre Company
Seeta	Patel	Royal Opera House
Mary	Paterson	Serpentine
Joanna	Pidcock	Headlong Theatre Limited
Sarah	Poekert	artsdepot Ltd
Megan	Prescott	Polka Theatre
Nancy May	Roberts	Rambert
Cory	Shipp	National Youth Theatre of Great Britain
Lauren	Silver	Young Vic Theatre
Kunal	Singhal	UK Music
Beth	Sitek	Fitzrovia Noir CIC
PJ	Stanley	Regent's Park Open Air Theatre
Hannah	Tookey	Lyric Hammersmith Theatre
Shamira	Turner	Bush Theatre
Eve	Veglio-White	Sadler's Wells
Krista	Vuori	Theatre Royal Stratford East
Beth	Watson	English Touring Opera
George	Williamson	Studio Wayne McGregor
Kyley	Winfield	tiata fahodzi

Responding to their appointment, freelance theatre maker, facilitator and clown Lauren Silver said “*I am thrilled to be a Cohort member and collaborate with Fuel, the Mayor of London and the team to support our creative community.*”

Referring to the ideas she outlined in her application, she added: *Due to the detrimental effects of Covid-19, there's never been a more crucial time to advance proactive and accessible Mental Health support for our creative freelancers, and I am passionate for our industry to be able to make space to focus on just that.*

The Organisations involved are similarly committed and enthused about the huge potential of the programme. Speaking on behalf of #WeMakeEvents, a partner organisation, Simon Prior who is himself a freelance technical director commented:

We're very excited to be working with such an extraordinary group of people to develop the role of freelance staff in so many aspects of the creative industries. Freelancers carry their skills and experience all around our business, providing fresh inspiration along the way, and they have been sadly neglected during the last eighteen months. It is good to know that the GLA understands their importance and is hoping to provide a more reassuring infrastructure for freelance talent.

Echoing these sentiments from a venue perspective, Head of Theatre and Dance at the Barbican, Toni Racklin added *At the Barbican we're committed to supporting artists and companies who challenge what theatre can be, so we're thrilled to be part of this important programme to reimagine the industry's working practices. We're looking forward to collaborating with our freelancer, seeing and hearing their ideas whilst sharing with them our unique arts centre perspective. We believe that through this new relationship we can positively contribute to the industry's support and development of our vital freelance ecology.*

The Freelance Cohort and Partner Organisations are supported by a freelance Facilitation Team – **Jessica Antwi-Boasiako** Facilitator, **Charlotte Mafham** Communication and Administration Coordinator, **Marie Wilson** Bookkeeper and **Miranda Yates** Access Manager - as well as an Advisory Group of industry experts **Jamie Beddard**, **Lily Einhorn**, **Lilli Geissendorfer**, **Ameena Hamid**, **James Hodgson**, **Tarek Iskander**, **Jeanfer Jean-Charles**, **Jennifer Jackson**, **Chi-chi Nwanoku** and **Jo Tyabji**.

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 Mayor of London programme will enable this 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.

How will it work?

The Freelance Cohort and their Partner Organisations will develop new plans to improve working conditions and job and training support for freelancers. They will collaborate in focused working groups during this six-month research project, supported by the Facilitation team. The cohort will feed into the work to improve job creation and retention for freelancers, including the development of a new Freelancers' Charter and take part in advocacy and lobbying.

The programme 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 builds on the evaluation and recommendations by independent evaluators 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 these 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.

Credits:

Enabled by Fuel.

Funded by LEAP, the London Economic Action Partnership, and supported by the Mayor of London. The LEAP brings entrepreneurs and businesses together with the Mayoralty and London Councils to identify strategic actions to support and lead economic growth and job creation in the capital.

For further information please contact Ben Chamberlain at Bread and Butter PR on either ben@breadandbutterpr.uk or 07931 723 988

Notes to Editors

About Fuel

[Fuel](#) leads the field in independent producing in the UK's live performance sector. Fuel works with brilliant artists to explore urgent questions, to shine light on how we relate to each other and the world around us, and to tell untold stories by under-represented voices. Fuel produces high quality new theatre that reaches diverse audiences through tours to venues in the UK and internationally, collaborating with outstanding theatre makers with fresh perspectives and approaches who produce shows, performances or experiences which have direct and playful relationships with their audiences. Fuel was founded in 2004 and is led by Kate McGrath. Fuel is supported by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, Fenton Arts Trust, the Garrick Trust, the Backstage Trust, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Garfield Weston Foundation, and the Wellcome Trust through Sustaining Excellence.

About LEAP

The [London Economic Action Partnership](#) (LEAP) is the local enterprise partnership for London. The LEAP brings entrepreneurs and business together with the [Mayoralty](#) and [London Councils](#) to identify strategic actions to support and lead economic growth and job creation in the capital.

Further information

[Comms pack available HERE](#)