

Wales Freelance Task Force

Project Round-up Blog Post

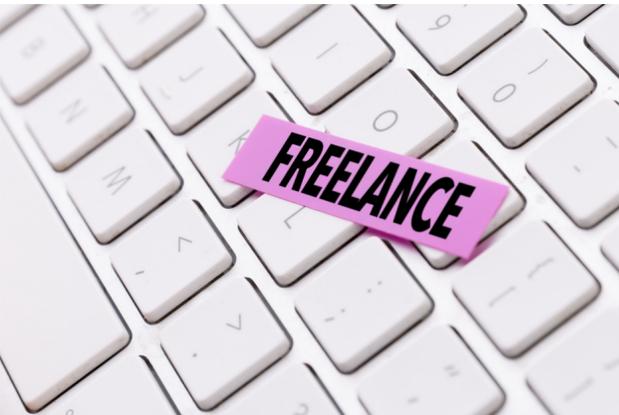
Easy read version

October 2020

Who we are



We are the **Wales Freelance Task Force**. A group of 14 freelancers who work in the **arts** in Wales.



A **freelancer** is someone who works for themselves, instead of working for an organisation.

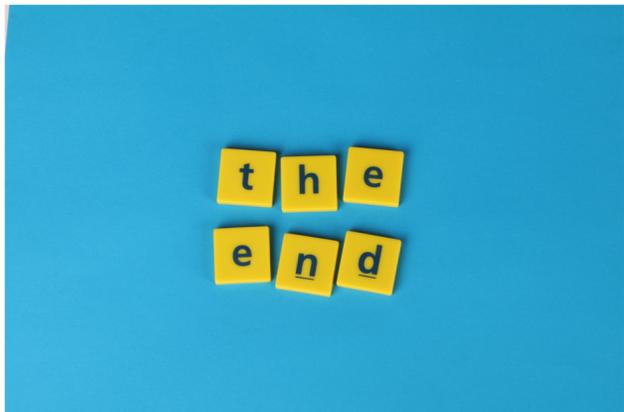


A **task force** is a group of people who are trying to solve the same problem.



The **arts** includes things like: theatre, dancing, acting, music, painting, books and films.

Intro



Our initial **13-week project** has now come to an end, but we **may continue** our work so we can:

- **Strengthen the voice** of theatre and performance freelancers in Wales.
- Build a **better**, more **stable** and **equitable** sector for freelancers.

If you would like to **get involved** in our future work please **send us an email**. We would love to hear from you!

What we did

Logistics and operations:



Set up **weekly meetings** with rotating chairperson and minute-taker.



Agreed **Accessibility** and **Welsh Language** Policy. Organised a translator.



Asked **Arts Portfolio Wales** companies to **donate** money to fund our work.



On **Twitter** we have over 700 followers and 200 tweets in 3 months. On **Facebook** we have 676 followers.

What we did

Advising and lobbying:



Spoke to the **Welsh Government, Arts Council Wales** and **arts organisations** in Wales.



Wrote to Arts Council Wales and Welsh Government. We asked for **25-30 percent** of **emergency arts funding** to be given to **freelancers**.



Encouraged **freelancers** in Wales to **write to their MPs** asking for emergency **support**.



Created a set of **recommendations** for Arts Council Wales which included: **lottery funding, funding models** and **responsibilities**.

What we did

Projects and policy initiatives:



We launched the **Wales Freelance Survey** to help us understand the needs of freelancers in Wales.



We did our **research** between June and September 2020 and spoke to **420 freelancers**. The freelancers who took part in our research are called **respondents**.



The **research** has been used in our meetings with **Arts Council Wales, Creative Wales**, and **Welsh Government**.



We made a fully accessible report called '**Rebalancing and Reimagining**' to share our research.

What we did

Projects and policy initiatives:



We launched a project called **Our Voice** to share the experiences of **Welsh and Wales-based Black Artists**.



We contributed to the **Freelance Taskforce UK** guide on **best practice** for organisations and freelancers.



We launched a **well-being project** for **Actors**.



We created a **proposal** for a **Basic Income** for arts and performance **freelancers in Wales**.

What we did.

Listening and consulting:



We hosted **meetings** and talked about particular **concerns, roles** or **protected characteristics** of freelancers:



- Stage Managers
- Lighting Designers
- Dancers



- Pregnant People
- Recent Graduates
- Facilitators
- Deaf and disabled freelancers



- Welsh Language freelancers
- Neurodivergent Actors
- Rhondda Cynon Taf freelancers

What we did.

Listening and consulting:



We did **interviews** with **BBC Radio, S4C News, Creative Cardiff Podcast, and Eisteddfod Amgen.**



We held **12 meetings** with organisations about their response to **Covid-19's impact** on freelancers.



We hosted a big meeting in the **UK** where **freelancers** could talk to **organisations.**



We went to **meetings** with: Equity Wales, What Next? Cardiff, Privilege Cage, Rural Touring Forum, Arts Council, Creu Cymru and UK Taskforce.

'Rebalancing and Reimagining'

What did our research tell us?



94 percent of respondents lost work due to Covid-19.



90 percent lost up to 20,000 pounds of earnings.



47 percent received no support from the government Self-Employment Income scheme.



27 percent do not have enough money to live on.

'Rebalancing and Reimagining'

What did our research tell us?



33 percent of respondents do not know if they will stay in or leave the arts industry.



79 percent said their well-being had been negatively affected.



70 percent do not feel included in planning for the future of the creative sector in Wales.



On average women are paid **25 percent less** than men.

'Rebalancing and Reimagining'

What can we do?



The theatre and performance sector in Wales needs to be more **balanced**. This would **empower** freelancers who have been **marginalised**.



Increase **representation** of people who are **marginalised** and those with **protected characteristics**. Develop more **Welsh language** work.



Make changes to the way arts **organisations** are governed and run. Make the **funding** application process more **inclusive** and **accessible**.



Arts Council Wales to support the long-term **development** and **upskilling** of freelancers. Provide more **support** to **Dance** sector and the arts in **North Wales**.

Deborah Light

Dance artist and choreographer



Deborah Light has collaborated with the **UK Freelance Task Force Dance Group**.

This group work includes:



- **5 Guiding Principles** - a fair trade model draft for freelancers.



- **IDEALL** - a working document that addresses anti-racism and inclusive practice in the dance sector.



- **Black Lives Matter (BLM) Dance subgroup** - connecting with other groups who focus on BLM in dance-movement.

Deborah Light

Dance artist and choreographer



- **Anti-Racism and Inclusion Index** - identifies cross-country initiatives, resources, and best-practice examples.



- **Pay Structures document** for movement and dance-related work.



- National Portfolio Individual/Artist **proposals** to pitch to **Arts Council England**.



You can find out more about this work by clicking [here](#).

A full report will soon be available [here](#).

Dance Sector

What did our research tell us?



76 percent of dance artists earn £15,000 a year or less.

71 percent of dance artists supplemented their income.



41 percent of dance artists do not know if they will keep working in the arts industry.



6 percent of Arts Portfolio Wales funding goes to dance-specific companies.



4 percent of lottery funding in 2019/20 went to 17 projects where more than 50% of the project was dance activity.

Dance Sector

What can we do?



Arts Council Wales to **talk** to and **work** with dance freelancers. Ask for their **input** and involve them in **decision making**.



Arts Council Wales to **increase funding** levels for dance, and ensure dance sector **knowledge is present**.



Arts Portfolio Wales dance companies to **share space** and **resources** with freelancers.



Venues to make sure they are **presenting dance** work and **engaging** freelancers as part of their activity.

Sarah Argent

Member of the Wales Freelance Task Force



Sarah **spoke** to **freelancers** who work in Theatre for Young Audiences and in the wider theatre and dance sectors.

Sarah asked:



- What do you need to do your **best work**?
- What makes you feel creatively **empowered** and **valued**?
- What have been the **hardest** and the most **rewarding** things?
- What are the **best responses** you have received from a **child** or **young person**, a **parent** or **carer**, or **teacher**?
- What are you most **proud** of in our sector, and what **changes** would you like to see?



Steffan Donnelly

Member of the Wales Freelance Task Force



Steffan Donnelly is an actor and theatre-maker based in North Wales and London.

Steffan is thinking about:



North Wales and freelancers feeling '**cut off**' from the arts sector which is '**Cardiff-centric**'.



The Welsh Language - arts organisations should make more work in Welsh, and increase support of Welsh-language theatre.



Ways Forward? Please see our report for recommendations. An accessible report can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

A statement from the Welsh Government:

“We have been working with a number of partners on the design of the application process for the freelancer fund, and have confirmed that local authorities will be the key delivery partners. We want as many of the freelancer community to be aware of and have the time to apply for this fund, with this in mind applications will go live on Monday 5th October. Guidance on how to apply will be provided before this date, and we expect to be making funding decisions through October in line with the funding via the Arts Council of Wales and support for organisations via Welsh Government.”

Find out if you are eligible for the cultural recovery fund by clicking **[here](#)**.

Links and opportunities:

Welsh Government reopening guidelines are now available [here](#).

Arts Council Wales are looking for Creative Agents. Click [here](#) for more information.

Arts Council Wales Sharing Together Fund is Re-opening soon. Click [here](#) for more information.

Future Labs is a series of panels featuring discussion, good practice and practical solutions.

Freelancers Make Theatre Work are looking for engaged freelancers to take part - this is a **PAID** opportunity.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Members of the Wales Freelance Task Force



- Connor Allen
- Shakeera Ahmun
- Sarah Argent
- Garrin Clarke
- Steffan Donnelly
- Jafar Iqbal
- Zosia Jo
- Angharad Lee
- Deborah Light
- Krystal Lowe
- Mathilde Lopez
- Anthony Matsena
- Hannah McPake
- Glesni Price-Jones

Other contributors:

- Chris Batsford
- Stephanie Back
- Lois Donnelly
- Ioan Gwyn
- Sofi Nowell
- Megan Pritchard

Organisations in Wales who sponsored a member of the Freelance Task Force are:



- Fio



- Hijinx Theatre



- National Theatre Wales



- National Dance Company Wales



- Rubicon Dance



- Taking Flight



- Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru



- Theatr Iolo



- Wales Millennium Centre

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WALES MILLENNIUM CENTRE

How to contact us

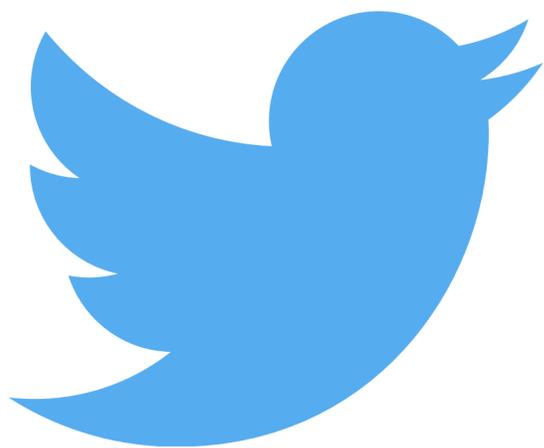


You can **send us an email** to:
walesfreelancetaskforce@gmail.com

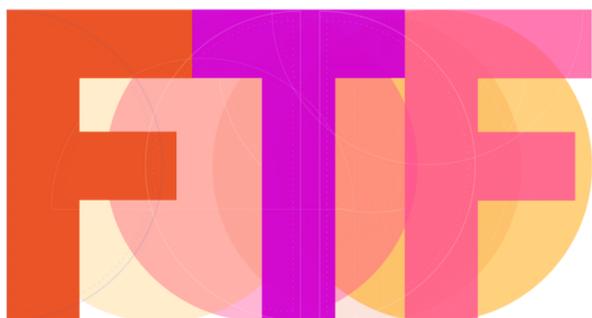
We would love to hear from you!



You can find us **online** at:
www.freelance.wales
www.llawrydd.cymru



Follow us on **Twitter**:
www.twitter.com/TaskForceCymru



You can find the **Freelance Task Force** at:
www.freelancetaskforce.co.uk
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