

# **Rebalancing and reimagining**

Ways to support arts and  
performance freelancers

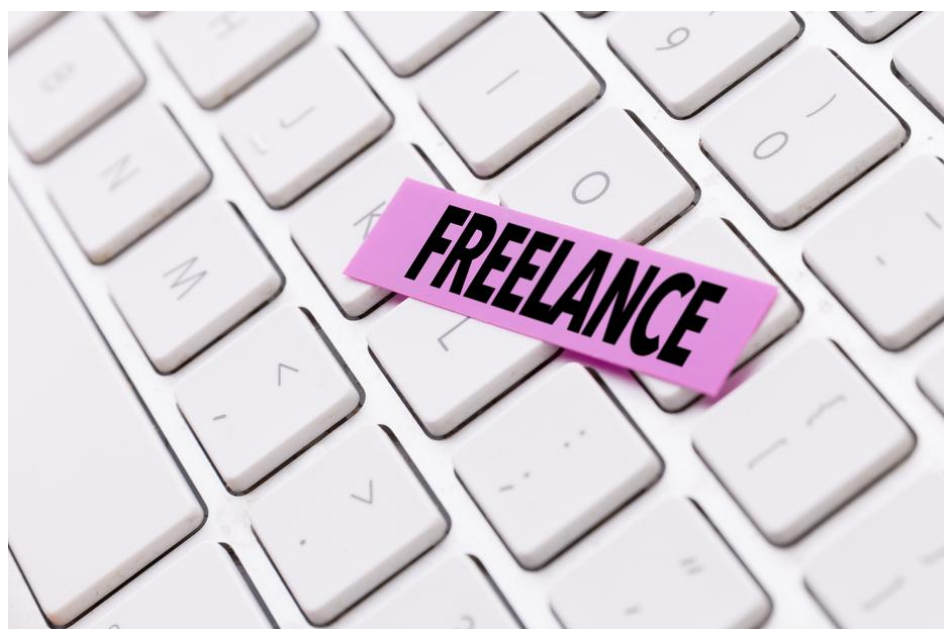
**Easy read version**

September 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.

# What we did



We started our research during the **Covid-19** crisis to **support** arts freelancers in Wales.



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



We did our **research** between June and September 2020 and spoke to **450 freelancers**. The freelancers who took part in our research are called **respondents**.



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



# What we did



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



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



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



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



# 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.



**33 percent** 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.



# What did our research tell us?

People most in need of support are:



**Deaf** and **disabled** people.



People who are **Black, Asian**, or of **mixed/multiple ethnicities**.



**Graduates** - people who have just finished **university**.



People who need to **care for other people**, such as family members.



People who are just **starting their careers**.



# What did our research tell us?

## Gender:



The respondents who are **women** were **paid 25 percent less** than men. They were also more likely to have **additional jobs** outside of the arts.



On average **women** respondents made **10,000-15,000** pounds each year.



**46 percent** of **non-male** respondents said they did **not** get **enough support** in the workplace.



**Barriers** in the workplace: **age**, being a **new mother**, and lack of **child care**.



# What can organisations do?

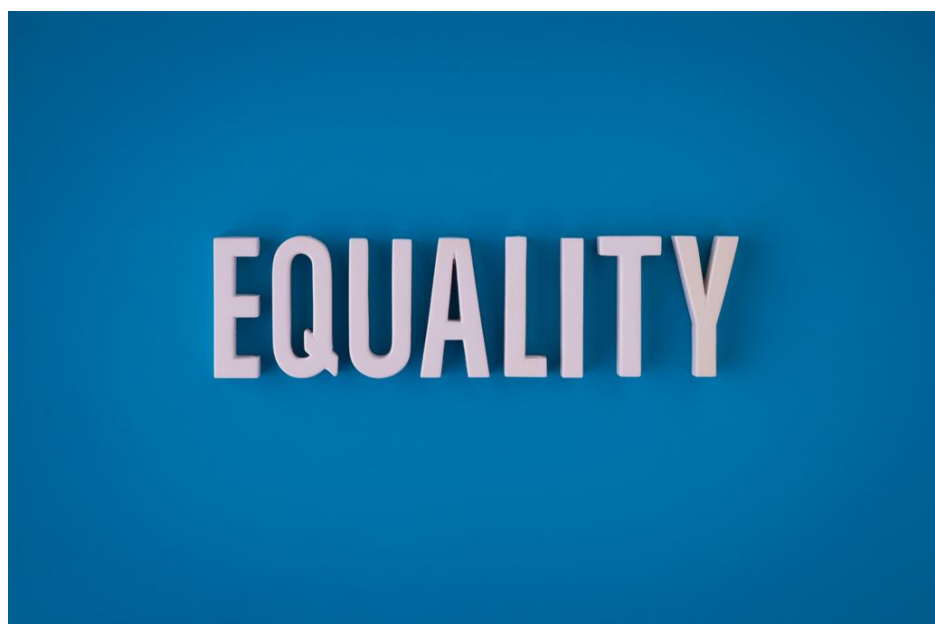
Gender:



**Report** yearly on **gender pay gaps**.



The **reports** should be **public** and **fully accessible**.



Provide **equal opportunities** for freelancers who identify as **women, non-binary** and **transgender**.



Support **new mothers** to re-enter the workplace by paying them for '**keeping in touch days**'.



# What did our research tell us?

## Caring:



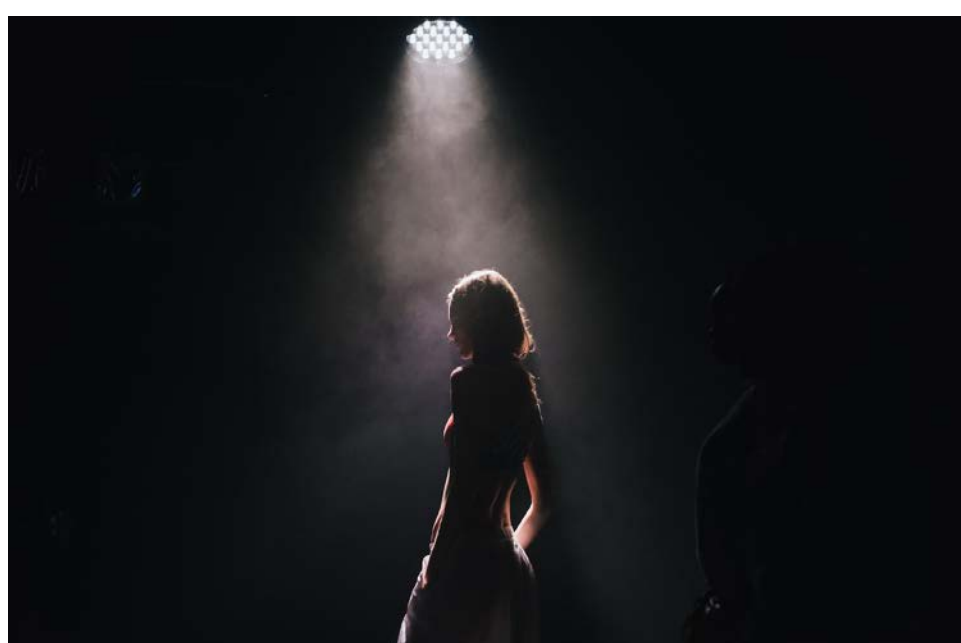
**23 percent** of respondents had **caring responsibilities**.



**76 percent** of these respondents did **not** get **enough support** in the workplace.



**78 percent** of respondents said their **caring duties** had **changed** due to **Covid-19**.



These **changes** had **affected** their **ability to work** creatively in the **arts**.



# What can organisations do?

## Caring:



Allow **working from home** when possible. Sign up to the **Parents in Performing Arts Charter**.



**Review employment.** Work with freelancers to create a '**back to work plan**'.



**Arts Council Wales** to include **childcare** as an **access need**. Create more **child-friendly spaces** in arts venues.



Provide **childcare** in the **workplace** or through **local childcare provider**.



# What did our research tell us?

## Ethnicity:



**53 percent** of respondents who are **Black, Asian** or of **mixed/multiple ethnicities** did not get enough **support** in the workplace.



**Poor representation** at work, especially in **technician** and **production** roles. Concerns about not getting regular work.



Respondents who are **Black, Asian** or of **mixed/multiple ethnicities lost** more **earnings** during Covid-19.



They were also **less likely** to have as many **career opportunities** as white freelancers.



# What can organisations do?

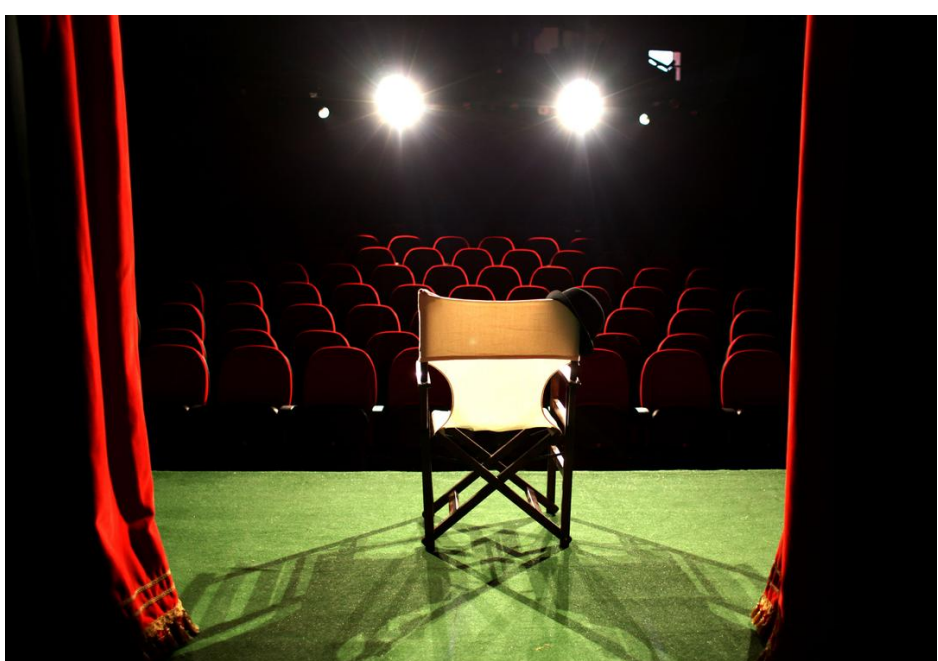
## Ethnicity:



**Talk** to and **work** with freelancers who are **Black, Asian,** or of **mixed/multiple ethnicities.** Ask for their **input** and **involve** them in **decision making.**



Make sure all **staff** have regular **Diversity** and **Inclusion** training, and **Anti-racism training.**



Offer **free** or **discounted spaces** for freelancers to **develop** and **test** their **ideas.** Offer free or discounted **theatre tickets.**



Make a **plan** of **action** for **Equality** in the workplace. **Report** yearly and make it **public.** Share data on **representation.**



# What did our research tell us?

## Deaf and disabled freelancers:



**43 percent** of **deaf and disabled** respondents did **not** get enough **support** in the workplace.



**Barriers** in the workplace: **poor understanding** and **accommodation** of **access needs**.



Respondents commented that regular **monitoring** and **assistance** in the workplace is important.



One respondent said: '**Access and inclusion** needs to be **backstage, onstage** and **in front of the stage** (the audience).'



# What can organisations do?

## Deaf and disabled freelancers:



**Talk to and work with deaf and disabled** freelancers. Ask for their **input** and **involve** them in **decision making**.



Make sure **access needs** are **built into work** from **early stages**, and not viewed as an **afterthought**.



Make more workspaces fully **accessible**. Provide staff with regular **inclusion training**. Report yearly on disability **pay gap**.



Allow **working from home** when possible. Consider **phased-return** to workplace and **job-share** options.



# What did our research tell us?

Boards, management and committees:



**Boards of management and committees** in Wales are **not diverse** enough. **Freelancers** should be **invited** to the **table**.



**2.6 percent** are **Black, Asian,** or of **mixed/multiple ethnicities**.



**3.2 percent** are **Lesbian, Gay** or **Bisexual**. Because the numbers are so low on Transgender people the data is withheld for confidentiality.



**4.8 percent** identify as **disabled**.



# What can organisations do?

Boards, management and committees:



Draw up a **plan** within the next 6 months to **diversify** boards by **August 2022**.



Consider **shorter terms** for board members.



Have at least **1 theatre** and **performance** freelancer on their **board** by **August 2022**.



Provide **training** and **support** for **current members** and **freelancers** who join the board.



# What did our research tell us?

## Arts Council Wales funding:



Not many respondents applied for **Arts Council Wales emergency funding**.



Respondents would like to see a **change** in the **current funding system**. The current one is too **restrictive**.



The **application process** is **difficult, time consuming** and is a **barrier** for many people.



**Especially** people who are **deaf or disabled**, have **caring responsibilities** or not much **support**.



# What can Arts Council Wales do?



Create **longer term funding** options (between 1-3 years) for freelancers. Encourage arts organisations to employ more freelancers in longer-term roles.



Offer **support** to freelancers who are applying for funding for the **first time**. Provide **feedback** to unsuccessful applicants.



Allow freelancers with **access needs** to apply for funding in formats such as **video, voice recordings** and **British Sign Language**.



Create a **mapped directory** to include technical and production freelancers, those with protected characteristics, Welsh-speakers, new parents and recent graduates.



# What did our research tell us?

## Welsh Language:



Respondents were **worried** that **not enough work** is being made in the **Welsh-language**.



**Almost 75 percent** of respondents can use at least some **Welsh language**.



**67 percent** of the projects respondents worked on used less than **20 percent Welsh**.



There is a lack of Welsh-language opportunities in **Welsh-speaking areas**.



# What can organisations do?

## Welsh Language:



**Develop** or **produce** at least **1 Welsh-language production** each year. This work should not always be small scale.



Work with **audiences** and Welsh-language organisations.



Give at least **20 percent** of **associate roles** to Welsh speakers. **Development** opportunities should be provided.



Ask what **role** the Welsh-language has to play in their **organisation** and **local community**.



# What did our research tell us?

## Dance in Wales:



There is a **lack of funding and support** for **dance** in **Wales**.



**76 percent** of respondents who are dancers make **15,000 pounds** a year or less.



**71 percent** of respondents who are dancers have **more than one job**.



**41 percent** of these respondents **do not know** if they will keep **working** in the **arts** post **Covid-19**.



# What can organisations do?

# Dance in Wales:



**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.



# What did our research tell us?

## North Wales:



**15 percent** of respondents live in **North Wales**.



**41 percent** of respondents **living** in **North Wales** do not know if they will keep **working** in the **arts** post **Covid-19**.



Many respondents felt **isolated** and '**cut off**' from the **arts**.



**Lack** of regular **opportunities** and **safe spaces** for respondents to experiment and make work.



# What can organisations do?

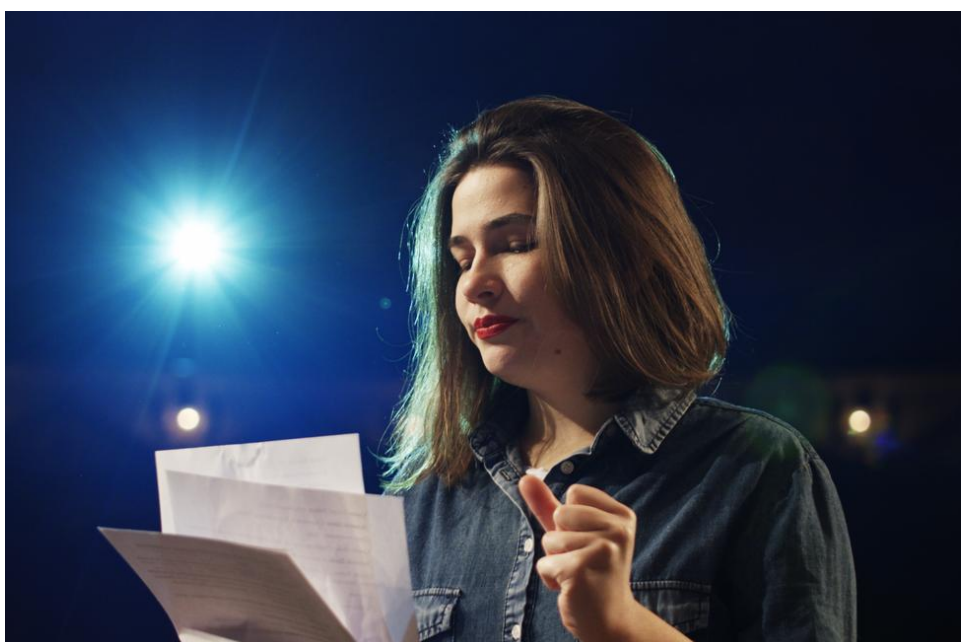
North Wales:



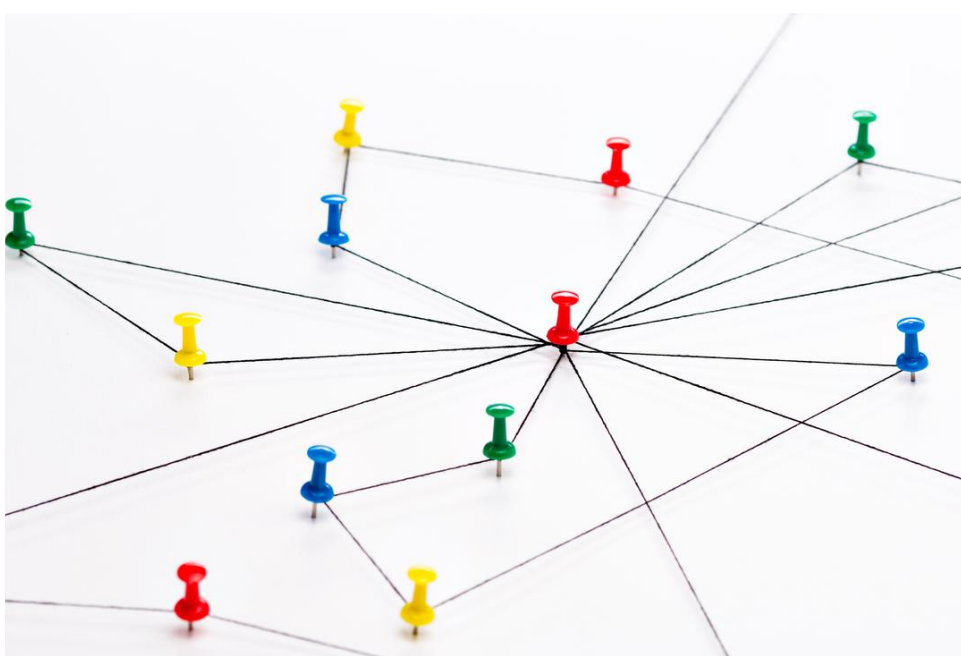
Arts Council Wales to **increase funding** levels for North Wales.

The word "TOUR" is written in white chalk on a blackboard, with a horizontal line underneath it.

Arts Portfolio Wales companies to **tour North Wales** more often, and perform at venues for **more than 1 night**.



Arts Portfolio Wales companies to hold **interviews** and **auditions** in North Wales.



Arts Council Wales to develop a system that **connects freelancers** with Arts Portfolio Wales companies.



# Comments from respondents



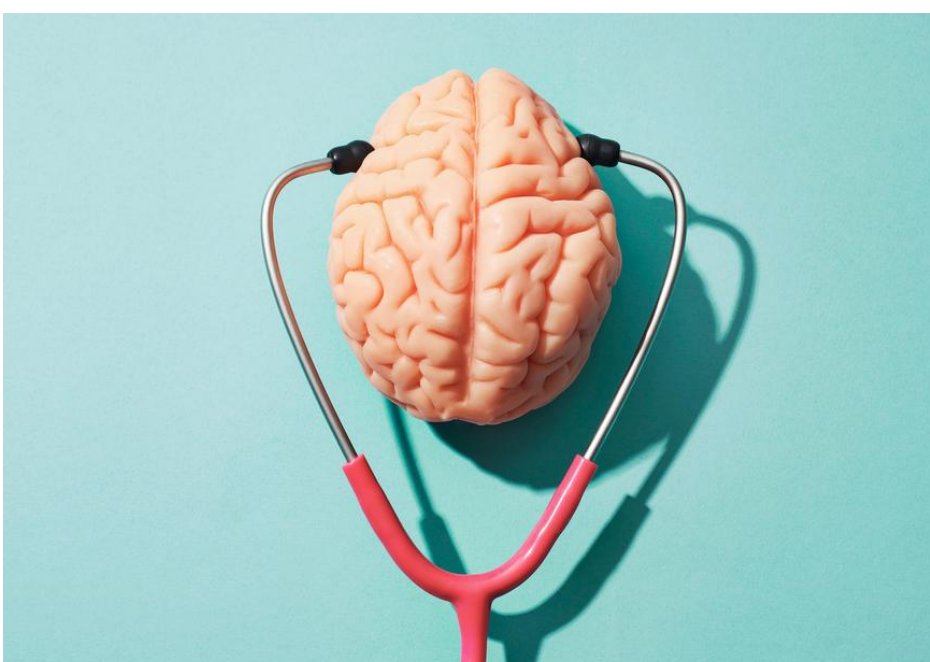
"I can **never apply** for Arts Council Wales grants - I never have time to fill in the huge forms."



"The cultural sector in Wales ... has systemic and **institutional barriers** towards the **inclusion of disabled people.**"



"**Racism** is a **recurring** subject"



"This has really **affected** my **mental health** and has made me question whether to **find** a **job outside** of the **industry.**"



# Comments from respondents



"Dim digon o **gyfleoedd** yn y **Gogledd**. Dim digon o '**safe spaces**' i drio pethau."



"**Mam** newydd - gwaith llawrydd yn y sector ddim yn hawdd i wneud gyda **babi** ifanc sy'n bwydo."



"Making sure freelancers have a **seat at the table** where **decisions** are made."



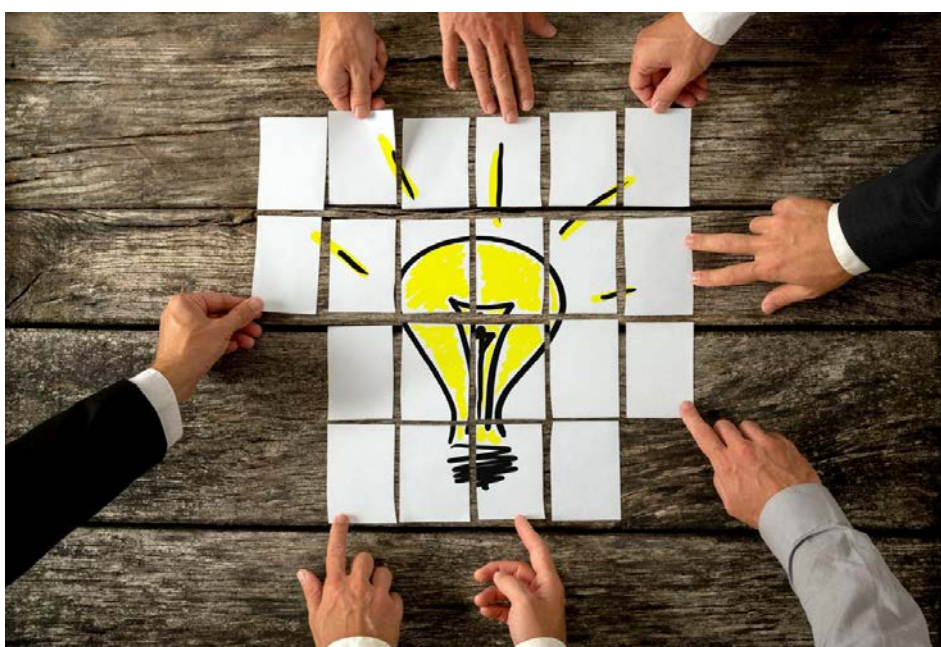
"**Working class** Welsh freelance **creatives**, do not have money behind them to carry them through these kind of times."



# Acknowledgements



This report was written by Steffan Donnelly - a member of the **Wales Freelance Taskforce**.



With input from Connor Allen, Garrin Clarke, Deborah Light, Krystal Lowe and Hannah McPake.



The information in this report was informed by the findings from our **Wales Freelance Survey**.



The full version of this Easy Read document is called **Rebalancing and Reimagining: Strategies to support artists and performance freelancers**.



# Members of the Wales Freelance Task Force



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- Deborah Light
- Krystal Lowe
- Mathilde Lopez
- Anthony Matsena
- Hannah McPake
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- 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



# How to contact us

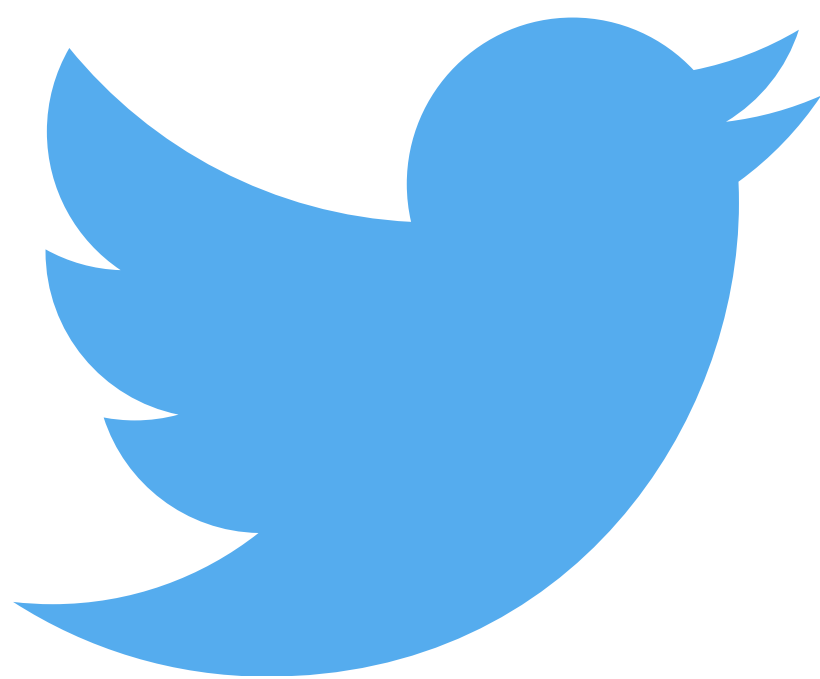


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We would love to hear from you!



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