

Policy for Working with Freelancers

1. Context

Yorkshire Dance recognises the key role freelance workers play in the arts and culture sector, and how these relationships are fundamental to the success of the sector. We are committed to understanding the unique challenges that freelance workers face, and to improving the way we work with and support freelance workers to provide employment on a more equitable basis. We specifically recognise that freelance artists are crucial to Yorkshire Dance and that we depend on them to be able to deliver our vision.

2. Policy

Alongside a core staff team of both part time and full-time employees, Yorkshire Dance often employs artists, practitioners and other creative staff on a freelance basis for work including, but not exclusive to; the delivery of dance workshops and classes, the leadership of choreographic projects, documentation of dance (including film and photography), design and marketing, project management and coordination. Lots of this work is part of longer-term contracts, but we also work with freelancers in more irregular contexts. This policy recognises the different relationships held by freelance workers engaging with Yorkshire Dance.

We are committed to treating freelancers fairly and respectfully. We recognise Yorkshire Dance's reliance on the output of freelance creative workers, and seek to establish a more balanced, symbiotic relationship.

This commitment is demonstrated by the following:

2.1 Supporting artists and freelancers

Applications, artist support and programming

- We aim to streamline application processes whilst constantly working to improve accessibility of opportunities. We will always advertise the timeline of deadlines, shortlisting, interviews and appointments. We will always offer different ways of applying beyond a written application form, such as via video or phone call. Staff will always be happy to answer questions concerning an application. Where possible we aim to offer feedback on applications.
- We want our processes to be as open as possible and we shall aim to regularly publish information on our website and social media pages about opportunities and how to contact us. We aim to reply to everyone who contacts us directly about opportunities, and to give clear information about the opportunities arising, what we are looking for, timeline for applications, projects and programmes and if appropriate, to share our artistic policy & priorities for further information.

Communication and administration

- When contracted on a freelance basis by Yorkshire Dance, freelancers will be provided with a clear brief and a main point of contact. We will discuss all relevant areas of delivery expected from both parties. Freelancers will also have access to other staff to support their work and practice.
- We value freelancers' time and will seek to streamline contact time and meetings and save travel time and costs by offering opportunities to talk by phone or meet online. We are working towards ensuring that freelancers are always paid for time spent in meetings and undertaking admin related to their work with Yorkshire Dance.
- We recognise the value of time for freelancers and shall aim to reduce time required in relation to necessary administrative tasks such as applications, contracts and information sharing to a minimum.
- Freelancers working with us regularly are considered part of the team and will be included in relevant organisation-wide communication.

Correspondence

We aim to reply to emails from artists and freelancers we are working with, as far as possible, within 7 working days. Wherever possible we will aim to respond to emails from freelancers and artists new to us within 10 working days, however occasionally it may take us longer to reply.

DBS

If we require freelancers to have an up-to-date DBS check to carry out their work with us, we will organise and pay for this.

Professional Development and Training

- If we can offer freelancers support and training relevant to their work and duties with us, we will always be clear about what that is, and when it will be available.
- Wherever possible, we will open up relevant training sessions available to salaried staff to freelancers who regularly work with us.
- Freelancers working with Yorkshire Dance as part of specific projects and programmes are offered an opportunity to observe an **Artist Advisory meeting**. This is part of our wider commitment to operate as transparently as possible, and equip more artists and freelancers with the knowledge and experience that might encourage them to apply to boards or advisory groups in the future.

Using the building

- If a freelancer is new to Yorkshire Dance, we will offer a guided tour of the building before they begin working with us. A named contact will be on hand for queries and questions.

- Where possible, we will make Yorkshire Dance’s resources available to freelancers in conjunction with the projects they are working on, including access to office space, printing facilities and equipment.
- We know the importance of feeling comfortable and welcome in the building so whilst working at Yorkshire Dance, freelancers will have access to a common space (kitchen) which is equipped with a fridge, kettle and microwave.

Access Requirements

When we begin working with a freelancer, we will ask if they have any access requirements relating to the project, or if there are any further ways we can offer support. We endeavour to meet the access requirements of all members of staff, including freelancers, and to fulfil access riders.

2.2 Other terms and conditions

Fees and Payments

- Yorkshire Dance prioritises paying freelancers as quickly as possible and aims to do so within 14 working days of receipt of invoice. We require an invoice with the following information to be provided:
 - Contact details including email and phone number
 - Invoice reference number
 - Date, nature of work undertaken and agreed fee
 - Bank or building society account details, to enable electronic payments
 - Written confirmation on each invoice that workers are responsible for their own NI and tax contributions.
- Freelance staff are responsible for their own tax and National Insurance. We ask that confirmation of this is included on invoices together with freelancers’ Unique Tax Reference (UTR) number.
- We always agree fees and payment schedules in advance and are honest and upfront about what we can afford as a charity. We expect freelancers to scale the activity to fit within the available fee, not to reduce the fee or work unpaid hours. We want freelancers to tell us if our expectations are bigger than the fee available.
- Fees will be benchmarked against industry recommended and regionally comparable rates before project delivery begins, and once funding is secured, we will not be able to exceed the amount available for a project. If the parameters of a project change in terms of direction and focus, we will aim to work with the freelancers concerned to reflect this in the fees.
- We acknowledge that freelancers make provision for their own sick pay, holiday pay, pension, training and development and other costs within their fees, so we expect hourly rates to be higher than the salaried equivalent.
- We do not expect freelancers to cash-flow Yorkshire Dance’s activity. Where appropriate to the project, we will arrange advance payment or part-payment and either pay directly or repay expenses within 14 working days.

Contracts

- We will always agree fees, arrangements, responsibilities, timescales and deadlines for activity in writing. This will usually be via a formal contract but may also take the form of a letter of agreement or email exchange. We may ask to be provided with a plan for the activity (where appropriate), to enable us to prepare for the delivery of the work.
- If delivery circumstances change, for Yorkshire Dance or for freelance staff, we will try and find alternative ways for freelancers to engage in contracted work and receive payment as planned, providing that alternatives (e.g. streaming, blended delivery, online) are appropriate, practical and possible for the purpose of the work.

Postponements and Cancellations

We will always agree in writing (via contract) and in advance what will happen regarding fees if the activity is postponed or cancelled.

Policies and Information

We will share our Safeguarding Policy, Grievance Procedure, Compliments and Complaints Procedure and Disciplinary Procedure with freelancers in advance of starting work, and arrange DBS checks where appropriate and necessary to the project.

When things go wrong

Sometimes things go wrong. We expect that our own systems will pick this up, but hope that by establishing honest relationships based on trust and clear communication channels, freelancers will be able to tell us if something goes wrong. The relationship with Yorkshire Dance will not be harmed should a complaint be raised by an artist. Any issues can be raised with freelancers' main point of contact or directly with Yorkshire Dance's Executive Director, Jo Hawkes or Creative Director, Hannah Robertshaw. We will always respond.

If anything in this document doesn't reflect your experience of working with us, please talk to us. We welcome your ongoing feedback.

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