



### Work with Trade Unions

#### Introduction

Visual artists are part of the gig economy, working precariously in an atomised way. This model of working can prohibit a voice in the workplace as the artist appears to be less valued and isolated. The artist is however part of a wider ecology and workforce. When this workforce is unionised the artist has a voice through the trade union. When employers work with trade unions and establish terms and conditions, issues such as inequality can be tackled; diversity in the workforce increased and productivity can be boosted.

#### Business commits to:

- Recognising artists have a voice through a trade union. ACAS suggests *“Employees will be able to perform at their best if they know their duties, obligations and rights and have an opportunity to make their views known to management on issues that affect them.”*
- Business commits to meeting and working with trade unions. Working closely with trade unions improves relations and exchange of information between members and business.

**Ensure artists' have an input in employment, commission or project and be part of the decision making process.** Where possible artists should be involved in early planning stages of employment in order to avoid under budgeting for artists time.

**Demonstrate clear routes of communication.** Employment policies and practices should ensure these are equitable and fair across the entire organisation, including freelance artists. Clear routes of communication should be relayed to artists when working with the organisation.

Useful links:

Collective bargaining is the best way to deliver better work:

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/blogs/oecd-says-collective-bargaining-best-way-deliver-better-work>

The Forgotten Workers Report:

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/business/research/research-centres/forgotten-workers/>

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS): Consulting with Staff

<https://archive.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4671>