Proposals submitted to Artists' Union England AGM March 2023

All motions below were discussed and approved by the AGM:

Proposal 1. - Rule change, at end of this document

Proposal 2. Artists' Pay

Submitter – Katriona Beales, NEC

This AGM instructs the executive to call on publicly funded arts organisations in the sector to stop paying lip service to paying artists and to put their words into action;

Call on Arts Council England to follow Arts Council of Wales's policy of refusing to fund applications paying below union rates;

Call all on Arts Council England to do a detailed audit all the organisations they support to find out how much they pay in artists' fees, and to make these findings public.

Proposal 3. Good Practice Charter

Submitter – GPC Group, NEC

Building on its earlier success this AGM calls on the new executive to give priority to a relaunch of the Good Practice Charter, to disseminate its objectives widely and to emphasise its principles in all negotiations with employers of artists.

Proposal 4. Combating misogyny, sexism, racism and other discrimination in the workplace

Submitter – Anthony Padgett, NW regional organiser

Following on from the work of the union in developing the Good Practice Charter, this AGM calls on the executive to put in place a structure for dealing with some of the key concerns that the Charter is designed to combat, particularly issues of misogyny and sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination in the workplace. This work should take the form of issuing guidelines on what discrimination is, levels of severity, and appropriate sanctions that can be applied when identified.

Proposal 5. Joint membership agreements with other unions

Submitter – NEC

Many of our artists have to work in other industries in order to make ends meet, often where other unions represent staff. AUE members will often struggle to pay subscriptions to two trade unions which might be partly offset through joint membership arrangements.

This AGM instructs the executive to explore the possibility of joint union memberships. In the first instance an approach should be made to UCU, the lecturers' union, who operate in workplaces where many AUE members are employed.

Proposal 6. Universal Basic Income (UBI), Universal Basic Services (UBS) and a basic income for artists

Submitter – Anthony Padgett NW regional organiser

This AGM instructs the executive to ensure that the TUC follows up on previous commitments to discuss Universal Basic Income, to add to their discussions the principles of non-discriminatory Universal Basic Services and alongside other cultural unions to argue for the trialling of a basic income for artists and other cultural workers.

Proposal 7. Pension provision for artists

Submitter: Anthony Padgett, NW regional organiser

This AGM instructs the executive to source appropriate advice and guidance for artists on pensions, and collaborate with other cultural sector unions to identify a suitable scheme for our members.

Proposal 8. Membership survey

Submitter: Katriona Beales

This AGM instructs the executive to survey the membership in order to understand the challenges facing us all more fully; to be able to represent the union better in strategic decision making; to be in touch with the wider membership's concerns and to highlight potential areas to campaign on. In order to encourage participation from as many members as possible offer one member a chance to win a £50 voucher by completing the survey.

Proposal 9. Social Media and Online Campaigns manager

Submitter: Katriona Beales

This AGM instructs the executive to consider funding a Social Media and Online Campaigns manager. When we first started we had an active social media presence and something like 30-40% of new membership came from social media. We've grown now and have a large enough membership to support more paid positions. It's not sustainable to ask someone to do this voluntarily and it would be an ideal time to recruit a freelance post 1

day a week to be active across our social media, to highlight issues and to develop online campaigns, responsible to the executive.

Proposal 10. Making Culture Ours – Reform the Arts Council

Submitter: Anthony Padgett NW regional organiser and NEC

This AGM calls on the executive to recognise that the Arts Council is an unelected quango which distorts the market-place and does not provide an equitable distribution of funds; that it only provides funding for a small number of artists and that through the National Lottery Projects Grants it actually removes money from poorer communities and uses it to fund arts activities for the affluent. AUE and other cultural unions identified various alternative public funding models in the document Making Culture Ours, and as a general election nears, the executive should work closely with these unions to ensure that a model that devolves both funding and decision-making regionally and democratically is argued for at the TUC and with a possible future government.

Making Culture Ours

Proposal 1. Rule change – AGM Quoracy

Submitter – NEC

19.3 The rules of the union shall be altered in accordance with any such proposition upon two-thirds of the members present voting in favour of the proposition

Our current rules, available on our website, require 5% of the AUE membership to make up a quorum for the AGM. As membership (currently around 1,000) continues to grow this becomes increasingly difficult to achieve, even using zoom or other remote meeting system.

In practice, with fewer than 5% present, the meeting can, with the agreement of those present, be declared an extraordinary meeting and business can proceed and proposals for the executive to follow formulated, discussed and agreed on.

In order to clarify this and ensure that decisions made in this way by the AGM are binding, this AGM instructs the executive to amend Rule 11.8 so that references to the quorum are removed and replaced by 'As long as the AGM or other member meeting has been publicised in good time and in an appropriate manner, business shall be transacted at a members' meeting by those present, whether in-person or remotely'

11.8 No business shall be transacted at any members' meeting unless a quorum of members is present at the time when the meeting proceeds to business