Performance trade union deal with Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture "a win for workers and audiences"

Trade unions Equity, Musician's Union, Bectu, and Artists Union England have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture, which will ensure creative workers engaged in the programme will receive decent pay and conditions.

The MOU is part of a body of work undertaken by the TUC Yorkshire and Humber's Creative and Leisure Industries Committee.

The agreement, which formalises working conditions already in place at Bradford 2025, guarantees that professional creative workers are engaged on terms in line with trade union collectively bargained agreements (where they exist). It's a win for the region's actors, performers, artists, creatives, musicians and technicians, with a packed programme of cultural events across the year. Workers' rights are also protected by clear recognition of the different status of volunteers and paid performers – ensuring professionals are paid professional rates.

As well as enshrining its commitment to fair terms, Bradford 2025 has pledged to engage diverse professional creative workers who are based in Bradford, supporting the long-term development of the city culturally and economically. In addition to this is a commitment to support fair and open employment routes into the creative sector for people of all backgrounds.

The Bradford 2025 programme includes the opening of Loading Bay, a brand-new pop arts venue in Bradford, as well as dance events at the Alhambra Theatre and variety events in Bradford City Park.

Bradford 2025 is helping to make Bradford one of the most welcoming places in the UK for artists, producers and creative entrepreneurs to flourish, through international exchanges, development programmes and investment in new cultural hubs. It will have a lifelong impact through its reshaping of the local curriculum, skills and training programmes, investment in existing and new creative spaces, and open-up opportunities for cultural participation.

Dan Bates, Chief Executive at Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture said *"This agreement is a milestone for Bradford 2025 and the region's creative sector. As we showcase everything that makes Bradford and the wider district special — from its rich history to its vibrant contemporary culture, it's vital that the creative professionals [or artists, performer and technicians] who bring this vision to life are treated fairly and paid properly for their work.*

By working closely with unions to set the right standards, we're making sure creative professionals can thrive, helping to put Bradford on the map as a place where creativity and talent are valued. By doing this, we not only elevate the quality of our programme but ensure that its impact endures, benefiting audiences and the region long after 2025."

Commenting **Dominic Bascombe, Equity's Regional Official for North East, Yorkshire and Humberside** said: *"The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Bradford 2025 is a win for the region, a win for workers and a win for audiences. It will ensure that our members are employed on agreed minimum terms, with training and development opportunities for younger creatives and respect for the intellectual property rights of our members. We look forward to working with Bradford 2025 to ensure a long-lasting legacy in which arts and culture continue to thrive in the region."*

Paul Reed, Musician's Union North of England Regional Organiser said:

"Musicians' Union are delighted to have worked with Bradford 2025 and fellow creative unions on the creation of this Memorandum of Understanding. It is an important framework, ensuring that musicians in the North of England and further afield will be engaged fairly and according to our minimum terms and rates. We warmly welcome this positive dialogue and commitment from Bradford 2025 and that the equitable treatment of musicians is at the heart of their vision".

Zita Holbourne, Joint National Chair, Artists' Union England states *"We at AUE are pleased to co-sign this memorandum. It is essential that all artists and workers in the creative and cultural sectors are treated with dignity and fairness and that they are valued as workers and receive fair and equal pay for their labour. When workers are treated well it benefits everyone."*

Douglas McGil, Bectu's regional official said: *"Bectu is thrilled to sign this Memorandum of Understanding which recognises how crucial cultural workers are in the production of important creative programmes such as UK City of Culture.*

"Our members are talented professionals who will be critical in delivering Bradford 2025's cultural programme, and it is right that they are employed on agreed minimum terms and their skills are properly recognised. It's fantastic to also have a commitment from UK City of Culture to ensuring diversity and equality when engaging creative professionals in the region and supporting fair and open employment routes for people from all backgrounds.

"This agreement really is a win-win for everyone – workers are fairly rewarded, diversity is championed, and long-term investment is secured for the region."

Ends

Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture (Bradford 2025) runs from January 2025 to December 2025 and is a celebration of Bradford city and district, taking place across its city, towns, villages and greenspaces. It will showcase the rich history of the area and spotlight its

dynamic contemporary culture in all forms; dance and theatre, music and film, visual arts and crafts, food and sport.

Bradford 2025 is created for, with and by the people of Bradford – and it has young people at its heart. With more than a quarter of its population aged under 20, Bradford is one of the UK's youngest cities. Bradford 2025 is proudly reflecting this youth across all aspects of its programme, from education, skills and training projects to new artistic commissions centred on the lives, concerns and ambitions of young people today.

The City of Culture designation has already brought significant investment to the region and been a catalyst for development. It is set to have a lifelong impact through its reshaping of the local curriculum, skills and training programmes, investment in existing and new creative spaces, and open up opportunities for cultural participation.

Pic credit:

 RISE, Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture © Ian Hodgson IHN01012.jpg