Artists' Union England AGM

20 September 2026

11am – 1pm

Minutes

Apologies

Zita Holbourne, Co-Chair and Maxi Smith, Secretary

Welcome

Housekeeping notes shared via the Zoom chat function.

Agenda

11:00 to 11:10 | Welcome

Welcome and opening remarks from Loraine Monk, Co-Chair.

11:10 to 11:15 | Introduction to the Executive Committee

Introduction to members of the Executive Committee and staff who were present.

11:15 to 11:25 | Chairs' Reports

Loraine Monk | 10 minutes

Loraine expressed gratitude for those who are members and those who have worked as part of the union. Loraine encouraged members to contact AUE to ask questions/observe a meeting before putting themselves up for elections next year/joining the Exec Committee. Suggested that we need more regional structures, and how the union had started in the North East of England and we need to have more regional representation.

Loraine thanked the AUE staff for their time and support, and acknowledged that they signify a real sense of growth for the union.

Loraine mentioned the AI consultation from central government - and how disgraceful it was they wanted people to accept AI taking their work. AUE added a section on data centres for TUC motions & it was passed. The call is now that we need to lobby TUC and government to take this action forward.

Loraine highlighted the work that AUE wants to do. AUE want to restart a studio campaign - looking at rents, conditions, who runs them etc. Plus the campaign around UBI needs taking forward again, and we would like to look at the cost of exhibitions entry for artists which also needs campaigning on.

Loraine put a call to our members to come back to us on anything they would like us to look at, support or campaign on.

Maddy spoke on the passing of the Palestine motion at TUC - we were approached by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to work with and move a motion. This was passed by conference after a huge amount of coordination from Zita and other members of the exec, and is a historic win for the union and most importantly is really significant in advancing the support of the labour movement committing the TUC to fully support Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions on Israel for the first time. Attendees of the AGM commented, "Congratulations on the Palestine and also the environmental motion. I was absolutely delighted to see what you had achieved and can't thank you

enough," "Mention motion came from member from Hastings Emily Johns," "Small and mighty! I will use that when I talk to people about AUE."

11:25 to 11:30 | Secretary's Report

Madeleine Pledge | 5 minutes

This has been a really important year of building and consolidation behind the scenes to get AUE in a position to expand and build the structures we need to become a union that mobilises and organises the membership.

For Maxi and I as secretaries, a major part of the work we have undertaken this year is an overhaul and redesign of our website and an upgrade of our internal systems. We are delighted to have worked with Common Knowledge on this, and to have launched our beautiful and more accessible website this week. Maxi and I have used the work we did on the inquiry on the AUE membership data 'From Hand to Mouth to "Bread and Roses"' to re-write a lot of the copy and make the argument for why artists should unionise. The website will continue to evolve as a resource for the membership, so do check back for more.

Alongside this long-running project, we led on reading and responding to Margaret Hodge's report on ACE. We raised AUE's concerns from a lack of direct no-strings attached support for artists, to further attempts to restrict artistic freedom around Palestine, and the encouraging of increased public private partnerships and philanthropic influence. We then met with ACE to continue to call on them to put artists at heart of their plans. Conversations with ACE are ongoing around this.

Over the year, we spoke and delivered workshops at The World Transformed, FACT in Liverpool through their StudioLab programme for artists, and delivered a session for students at the RCA.

In terms of the motions passed at our last AGM, we have made some important progress, and with our systems upgraded we can now build on this work. Martin has supplied some notes on the previous motions passed which were circulated in advance, but to briefly expand on these:

– The work on the website sets us in good stead to ramp up our work on mobilising the membership. We have a number of motions coming up in this AGM which will help us move forward on this.

– The union continues to stand up for trans rights in an increasingly hostile environment, and will continue to campaign and support.

– Heather has delivered some great practical sessions on artists rights as Caseworker this year, and we will continue to build on a programme of political education for members this year.
– Increasing staff members' hours this year has been really effective in being able to better support our members. The honorarium for exec members passed last year has also been crucial in keeping up exec members' morale and capacity to carry out the essential work of sustaining and building the union

11:30 to 11:35 | Finance Report

Abi Mitchell, Office & Finance Co-ordinator | 5 minutes

Abi commented on the growth of the union over the last year - we are ahead of where we projected we'd be in terms of member numbers which is really great news and shows the amount of work being put in behind the scenes and how needed the union is for artists.

Abi reports that the annual AR21 has been submitted and the subsequent members report will be published to new website shortly.

Emily Johnson (Social Media Coordinator) commented that we've also hit 10k followers on Instagram, so we're growing in all regards.

11:35 to 11:40 | Caseworker Report

Heather Mew, Caseworker | 5 minutes

Heather has been in post for a year now, working on Casework, resources and training.

Heather will be creating more resources to be added to website over the next few months.

Heather attended the recent 2026 Durham Miners Gala with AUE members which was a great day. The call out for members to organise placard & banner making events went out in the run up to gala to meet other members of the union in the area. We hope to do the same again next year.

11:40 to 11:50 | Speaker: Notes from Below

Callum Cant | 10 minutes

Callum could not attend and sent his apologies.

11:50 to 12:25 | Proposals: Discussion & Voting

Discussion and voting on this year's proposals | 35 minutes.

Minutes below.

12:25 to 12:35 | Speaker: Common Knowledge

Savena Surana | 10 minutes

Savena noted how Common Knowledge wanted to align with the morals of the union and highlight the stances we want to take on campaigns within the new website layout and usage. There were also internal admin issues that needed to be mended, so better support staff and members.

The website was a labour of love. Common Knowledge worked on the visual language of the union and expanded on it to align with the practices we support and the people we work with. We looked at how members engage with the website and changed the placement and layout of the site so that the most needed resources were the most accessible.

Common Knowledge wanted to make sure the Rates of Pay page was done justice as it's one of the most popular pages on our site. There was also a big focus on making the shift to ethical tools, for example we've moved away from Google and onto Proton.

The overall website now looks better and is more aligned with a visual arts union, as well as being easier to use for all our members and hopefully attracting new members to join.

12:35 to 12:55 | Questions & Answers

Questions to the Executive Committee | 20 minutes.

Sara Haq - asked about our connection to AN and whether we could cooperate on our Rates of Pay.

Katriona - spoke on the need to maintain independence from employers to artists. As this would threaten our legal status as a trade union. AN can endorse our rates of pay. But what we can't do is co-author with AN as they are not a representative body. It's not an independent body and receives a huge amount of money from the Arts Council. AUE need to maintain a positive relationship with AN, though AN have been notably silent on many of our campaigns e.g. Palestine and we have to maintain our freedom of politics. What we are trying to do, (long time) is a joint rate of pay with the Scottish Artist Union (SAU). We should work together but we'd not be able to do this with AN.

Maddy -– Julie from Artists Now has indicated that if we can get alignment between our Rates of Pay and Scottish Artists Union ROP, they will be able to endorse and fall in line with our rates. Maxi and I have re-organised our rates of pay to be more in line with Scottish Artists Union this year, bringing them level where this represents an increase in our rates. Where we have sections that bring our rates of pay higher, e.g. the Lead Artist category which SAU don't have, we have kept this in place. Historically AUE has also differentiated between different types of artistic labour and kept this in place for now. We have reached out to SAU to discuss how we can towards full alignment in the near future, and updated Artists Now on the steps we have taken towards this.

12:55 to 1:00 | Closing Comments

Chairs | 5 minutes

<u>Proposals submitted to Artists' Union England AGM Sept 2026</u>

The following proposals were considered to be in order by the Standing Orders Committee of the union:

Proposal 1: Expand AUE's work on the Environment and Climate Crisis

Submitted by – National Executive Committee (NEC)

Moved by Katriona Beales - Seconded by Theresa Easton

Result: Carried

The climate crisis is already having devastating effects. The May and June 2026 heatwaves contributed to 2877 excess deaths in the UK. Globally, we witness extreme weather events wildfires, droughts, and recently the glacial collapse and subsequent flood which destroyed parts of Nepal with nearly 4,000 people missing. Both here and in the rest of the world, the impacts of extreme weather disproportionately affect poorer communities. The climate crisis is an equalities and justice issue, one which will continue to redefine how we can live and work, as artists and as humans.

At Artists' Union England, we see through the history of the union movement how individuals acting together can create structural, social and environmental change.

We are committed to joining together with other unions and lobbying government, to campaign:

- Against data centre expansion and new fossil fuel extraction.
- For a continued commitment to net zero.
- For health and safety laws to be updated to include a maximum safe working temperature.
- For contractual clauses that include a kill fee over safe working conditions specifically around heat

This AGM instructs the NEC to:

Set up an Environmental sub-group, whose first task will be to develop an environmental column to update the Good Practice Charter guidelines.

(Note – this updates and builds on Proposal 1 agreed by the AUE AGM 2024 and Proposal 4 agreed by the AUE AGM 2025)

Proposal 2: Reconvene an AUE Board of Trustees

Submitted by – Member Pam Foley

Moved by Pam Foley, no seconder

Result: Falls

This AGM calls:

For the current membership of the Executive Committee to search for suitable candidates and reconvene a Board of Trustees in accordance with Section 10 of the AUE Rule Book (also mentioned in sections 6.9.1 and 9.3.5), “the Executive Committee shall convene a Board of Trustees”, and commit the necessary time to this good practice governing body, with a goal to have this Board in place by next year’s AGM.

AUE has had such a board in the past. Since then, as trustees resigned, there has been no apparent effort to rebuild this necessary oversight body to date. The time to rebuild an AUE Board of Trustees is now.

Proposal 3: Online voting

Submitted by – National Executive Committee

Moved by Martin Sundram - Seconded by Maddy Pledge

Result: Carried

This AGM instructs the NEC:

To enact this Rule change to take into account recent changes in legislation allowing unions to conduct statutory and other ballots electronically and will ensure that future elections can be conducted in an efficient and cost effective manner. The Rule clarifies that up to ten members of the executive are allowed and elections will be held if more than ten candidates come forward. The rule change also formalises the option of role sharing of Officer posts.

Rule 6.2 (as it currently stands):

The members of the Executive Committee shall be elected every two years via postal ballot in accordance with rule 16 but the first Executive Committee will comprise the persons whose names and addresses are set out in Part 1 of the Schedule who will act as the Executive Committee until the first Annual Meeting. The First Meeting shall appoint from amongst its member the Executive Committee the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer

Replace with 6.2 (amended)

The members of the Executive Committee shall be elected every two years by secret ballot of fully paid up ordinary members conducted in accordance with regulations agreed by the outgoing Executive but in such manner as to comply with any statutory requirements applicable, including the option of online secure voting. Up to 10 members may be elected to the Executive Committee at each election, and at their First Meeting following elections they shall appoint from their number the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, with role share of these officer posts possible.

16 Elections and ballots (current)

16.1 The following officers of the union shall be elected to the office to which they hold:

16.1.1 the Chair,

16.1.2 the Secretary,

16.1.3 The Treasurer,

16.1.4 2 to a maximum of 7 additional members of the Executive Committee.

Replace with 16 Elections and ballots (amended):

16.1 The Executive Committee shall be elected every two years by secret ballot (including online voting if allowed under relevant statute) and shall consist of the following officer posts to be chosen

by the new Executive Committee from among their number following elections.

16.1.1 the Chair,

16.1.2 the Secretary,

16.1.3 The Treasurer,

If ten or fewer candidates stand for election they will be deemed elected as the Executive Committee, otherwise a vote will be held and the candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be deemed elected until a total of 10 executive members is reached.

(Note – if the above Proposal is agreed then the following Proposal will fall as superseded.)

Proposal 4: Balloting AUE members for election to the AUE Executive Committee

Submitted by - Pam Foley

Result: Fell (as superseded by Proposal 3)

This AGM calls for:

The current membership of the Executive Committee to plan for and execute a balloted election of all AUE Executive Committee before the next executive committee election, and in accordance with Section 6.2 of the AUE Rule Book (elaborated in Section 16), "the Executive Committee shall be elected every two years via postal ballot", to set aside the necessary funds to comply with union balloting regulations, and ensure that all those candidates in contention for officer positions and members of the Executive Committee are fully paid up members of AUE

Proposal 5: Rule change – NEC Meetings (minimum commitment for NEC elected members)

Submitted by – National Executive Committee

Moved by Katriona Beales - Seconded by Sara Haq

Result: Carried

This AGM instructs the NEC:

To make the following Rule change to clarify the attendance requirements at NEC meetings. Our current rules state that a member of the National Executive Committee (NEC) shall vacate office if they are absent from three consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee without apology or special leave of absence.

In order to ensure a dedicated and consistent NEC, and to make our decision-making as democratic as possible by having the full cohort of the NEC present at as many meetings as possible, we suggest amending Rule 6.11.4.

The proposed change would ensure that NEC members demonstrate a consistent commitment to Executive Committee meetings by requiring them to attend at least two-thirds of Executive Committee meetings held during any rolling 12-month period.

They will cease to be considered members of the NEC if absent from two consecutive meetings without submitting a written apology or request for leave of absence.

This is intended to ensure a strong commitment by members of the NEC and support effective participation in the work of the Executive Committee.

Previous Rule 6.11.4 (as it currently stands):

A member of the Executive Committee shall vacate office:

6.11.4 if such member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee without apology or special leave of absence.

Replace with new Rule 6.11

A member of the Executive Committee shall vacate office:

d. *if such member is:*

1. *absent from two consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee without submitting an apology received by the Executive Committee; or*
2. *fails to attend at least two-thirds of Executive Committee meetings held during any rolling 12-month period.*

If a member does not meet the attendance requirements set out in 6.11.4(a) and 6.11.4(b), they shall vacate office unless they have been granted a special leave of absence.

Proposal 6: Promoting UBI

Submitted by – Bev Broadhead

Moved by Bev Broadhead - Seconded by Helen Carr

Result: Carried

This AGM instructs the AUE executive to:

Follow the example of the Scottish Artists Union (SAU) and actively promote Universal Basic Income (UBI) for artists.

So many artists are struggling to find solutions to precarious working conditions with little or no practical help from arts organisations and institutions. Competition for scarcity of funds between artists is a major problem, and an obstacle to sustainable collaboration, co working, and collective participation.

Considering the piloting of UBI in Ireland, the proposition is gaining greater support in being considered a reality for sustaining the professional artist in the United Kingdom

Proposal 7: Regional branches

Submitted by – Member Oliver Snelling

Not moved

Result: Withdrawn (Due to concerns with the wording it was decided not to let the proposal fall***)***

This AGM believes that the best way to grow the union is to campaign and organise in local branches, at the grassroots level.

This AGM recommends to the NEC that:

- AUE organises members into regions e.g. Yorkshire region, NW region etc.
- Plans are drawn up for forming such regions, defining regional boundaries along TUC lines.

To further organise this, once agreed:

- Members will be notified of their region and invited to meet.
- Members will be given guidance on how to elect their own committee (a minimum of three regional committee members - Chair, Secretary and Treasurer).

The aim for the new regions should be to work together to grow the union and recruit new members. AUE will also encourage local regions and nations to establish ties with local trade councils and

other working class groups to engage in wider campaigning to promote the role of the arts in working class community life.

Proposal 8: Establishing an experimental AUE organising hub through affiliation with the Lewisham Worker Centre

Submitted by – Members Maxima Smith and Madeleine Pledge

Moved by Maddy Pledge - Seconded by Katriona Beales

Result: Carried

This AGM notes that:

A coalition of trade union branches, campaign groups and community organisations – currently including Lewisham NEU, Now You See Us (formerly Open Book), Lewisham Commons, London Renters Union, IWGB, Notes from Below, and Goldsmiths SU – is working to establish a worker centre in Lewisham, which would provide drop-in advice, outreach and organising support to workers across the borough, with a particular focus on migrant, precarious and outsourced workers.

The proposed centre is modelled on established international examples such as the Immigrant Workers Centre in Montreal and the Casual Workers Advice Office in South Africa, and would combine a daily advice drop-in with outreach, rank-and-file organising committees and political education rooted in workers' inquiry.

Artists' Union England has an opportunity to build on Proposal 1: Mobilising the Membership passed in last years' AGM by engaging with the proposed Lewisham Worker Centre and establishing a local organising hub in affiliation with it.

Approximately a quarter of AUE's members live and work in London, and Lewisham has a high concentration of artists, with Goldsmiths and numerous studio providers operating in the borough. This organising project and its locality therefore offers an ideal organising context for members to test new ways of organising as artists in solidarity with other precarious workers.

Members and current joint-secretaries Maxima Smith and Madeleine Pledge live and work locally in Lewisham, and would be able to coordinate the initial process and engage the membership in building up our capacity to organise locally, for the benefit of the union on a national scale.

This AGM believes that:

AUE's role in representing and organising precarious artists commits us to solidarity with new infrastructure built to organise precarious workers of all kinds and organise towards good lives for all.

The crises we face as artists are collective and systemic, and as such cannot be met with sector specific organising alone. They require us to engage in cross-sector, grass roots, community-centred infrastructure and organising.

Engaging in the Worker Centre would offer the opportunity to develop forms of organising between often precariously employed artists, workers in the gig economy, and workers facing increasing casualisation and mass redundancy in higher education, recognising that many of AUE members move between these forms of work.

Establishing an experimental organising hub as part of the planned Worker Centre would provide a practical and political base for AUE members in which they can organise collectively, develop campaigns, and engage with other unions and grassroots organisations.

While locally based, this project would benefit AUE as whole – allowing members to develop new organising strategies between precarious workers, as well as structures which will strengthen the capacity of the union and can be extended across the country.

New understandings of the organising needs and capacities of our membership will be built out of these organising experiments, enabling members to build a collective working knowledge that will aid us in building a strong and effective branch structure across geographical areas and areas of practice.

This AGM therefore instructs the National Executive Committee to:

- support the development of an AUE organising hub as part of the proposed Lewisham Workers' Centre
- support the development of a formal local branch based at the Centre
- report back to members on the progress of the organising hub, positioning it as a pilot scheme to
- support and inform AUE's broader organising strategy and support the building of branches and other structures through which members can organise.
- Publicise the Workers' Centre, its drop-in service and any other initiatives and opportunities through union communications, encouraging members to get involved locally.

Proposal 9: Further expanding the AUE workforce

Submitted by - National Executive Committee

Moved by Katriona Beales - Seconded by Katriona Beales

Result: Carried

Last year, AUE appointed a new Office Co-ordinator and a Caseworker to work alongside our existing Office and Finance and Social Media Co-ordinator roles. This Proposal suggests a continuing expansion of the paid workforce as the membership of the union continues to increase.

This AGM instructs the NEC to

Prioritise employing a Union Development Officer, initially for up to 16 hours per week, to:

- Liaise between the National Executive Committee and existing workers
- To develop the internal structures of the union to support its workers and continue its democratic growth
- To focus on developing a strong branch structure to enable members to organise effectively.

This year, we have expanded the hours of our Office and Finance Co-ordinator, Office Co-ordinator and Caseworker to support our growing membership, now respectively working 10, 12 and 10 hours per week. The NEC will continue to increase the hours of existing freelance staff where appropriate

AUE's long-term aspiration is to become an employer rather than relying on freelance workers. The NEC will continue to develop a comprehensive plan to work towards this.

Proposal 10: Continuation of Honorarium for NEC officers/payment for project work

Submitted by – National Executive Committee

Moved by Maddy Pledge - seconded by Katriona Beales

Result: Carried

Following the adoption of Proposal 4 at the 2025 AGM, this year the executive trialled the introduction of an honorarium for members of the committee who would require financial support to maintain their time commitment to the union. This step was made in recognition of the need to remove barriers to participation for freelance artists who work precariously as well as those who support their practice through other (often intermittent or freelance) work.

The committee devised a trial to suit the current makeup of the EC, with 4 members in officer roles (joint chairs and joint secretaries) receiving £500 each per quarter to support the additional weekly workload currently required by their roles. £2000 for the year was made available to support one-off projects undertaken by other members if needed, but was not taken up. The financial recognition of a small part of the work undertaken by the EC was extremely positive in sustaining their capacities and enabling them to give greater priority to union work.

This year's AGM instructs the NEC to continue the exploration of ways to make sure the workload of paid workers and members of the NEC is sustainable as our union grows, and specifically work towards making a new appointment to further the organising capacity of the union by developing a fully democratic branch structure.

This AGM agrees:

To continue the honorarium system for the next year, ring fencing up to £12,000 to distribute as required.

APPENDIX 1: Proposals submitted to Artists' Union England AGM June 2025

All motions below were discussed and approved by the AGM 2025:

Proposal 1

Mobilising the Membership

Submitted by AUE NEC

As AUE grows, to develop our collective power as artists and workers, we will need to move from being a union that mainly offers a ‘service’ to our members and campaigns on their behalf, to one that is capable of mobilising and organising our members en masse, so we can act together and build a fighting union.

As way of progressing towards this, and informed by responses to the recent AUE membership survey—where members expressed a desire for educational workshops:

This AGM calls on the NEC to:

- Develop a regular programme of political education accessible to all members, spanning our working conditions and our material conditions as artists and workers (from housing and studios to pay and pensions), as well as union and social movement organising
- Begin the work of building a strong branch structure to engage more members in long term organising within AUE, developing the democratic structures of our union beyond the NEC.

We have not been able to establish a regular programme of education as yet but hope to take forward some forms of education both practical in relation to Members’ needs and union organisation as soon as practicable. We will make Members aware of free union training opportunities available through the General Federation of Trade Unions of whom AUE is an affiliated member.

We continue to work towards creating an effective branch structure as a priority in developing an organising strategy.

Proposal 2

Advancing progressive positions including solidarity with Palestine through membership of the TUC

Submitted by AUE NEC

Using AUE's position within the TUC to continue to advance progressive lines at TUC Congress, including support for Palestine and standing against Labour's support for Israel's escalations across the Middle East. As a small and agile union of artists, we have the unique opportunity to submit motions at TUC Congress that champion political positions often avoided by larger unions—particularly those representing members in industries like weapons manufacturing.

In 2019, AUE successfully submitted motion 'Motion 75 Palestine' that pushed the TUC to adopt a stronger position on Palestine than previously held, including a commitment to Palestinian rights to self-determination and return, opposition to any political solution not grounded in international law, and a call for increased pressure on arms companies and corporations complicit in Israel's occupation and settlement expansion.

Building on this precedent, and in response to the escalating genocide in Gaza, AUE urgently reaffirms its role as a principled voice within the trade union movement, advocating for international solidarity.

This AGM calls on the NEC to ensure that AUE harnesses its position in the TUC to pressure the Labour government to take immediate action by recognising the State of Palestine, a vital and overdue step toward upholding Palestinian rights and international law.

AUE welcomes the recent, overdue, recognition of the State of Palestine by the UK government and continues to campaign alongside other unions in support of the Palestinian people.

Proposal 3

Trans Solidarity in response to the UK Supreme Court ruling, and EHRC Guidance

In addition to its affiliation to the TUC, AUE is affiliated to the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU), an umbrella body for smaller trade unions.

This AGM joins the GFTU in noting that:

The Supreme Court judgement of 16th April (For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers) declared that 'sex' in the Equalities Act 2010 referred to 'biological sex', aterm which is undefined at law, and that organisations 'could' exclude trans and non-binary people from single-sex spaces;

- The Women and Equalities Minister Bridget Phillipson stated that people must use single-sex spaces on the basis of 'biological sex';
- The EHRC issued interim guidance in the same terms, seeking to extend the impact of the judgement of the Court through a duty to exclude trans and non-binarypeople from single-sex spaces;
- The Equalities Act 2010 has always allowed for exclusion from single-sex spaces if this is a proportionate means to a legitimate aim.

This AGM also notes that:

The Supreme Court ruling and the subsequent EHRC guidance as drafted is both discriminatory and flawed in that it seeks to impose the exclusion from all single sex spaces.

- This has been a devastating decision for the trans community in the UK.
- The push to roll back on trans rights in the UK is part of a global shift to far right politics that seeks to undermine feminism and LGBTQ+ rights, ramp up racism and nationalism, and enrich the millionaire and billionaire class at our expense. It endangers us all
- It is our duty as trade unionists to oppose the imposition of gender stereotypes and protect the dignity and safety of trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming, intersex and women workers
- Solidarity with trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people must be a matter of principle for the trade union movement, just as we oppose racism, sexism and ableism.

This AGM calls on the NEC to:

- Stand in solidarity with trans people through continuing statements of support, and encouraging members affected by the ruling to reach out for support.
- Continue to collectively organise against transphobia in the arts and cultural sector, and wider.
- Continue to use our voice within GFTU and TUC to support trans rights.
- Take further steps toward creating and sustaining a network for AUE LGBTQ+ members.
- Work towards creating workplace guidance for LGBTQ+ Artists in the UK.

Within available resources AUE continues to campaign in solidarity with trans people alongside others in the cultural sector wherever possible.

Proposal 4

Further expanding the AUE workforce (note - this updates and builds on Proposal 1 agreed by the AUE AGM 2024)

Following the appointment this year of an new Administrator and a Caseworker to work alongside out existing Office and Finance and Social Media Co-ordinators, this year's AGM instructs the NEC to continue to explore ways to make sure the work of the members of the NEC is sustainable as our union grows.

As noted in the previous proposal, members of the Executive (NEC) are currently unpaid, and each member undertakes a minimum of 2 hours of work per week to advance the aims of the union. As our union grows, the workload for NEC members is likely to increase. We urgently need to address barriers to members to participating fully in the democratic processes of the union.

Unpaid work can limit participation to those who can afford to volunteer their time, often excluding those with financial constraints. Unpaid volunteering for union work can be difficult for freelance artists who work precariously as well as those who support their practice through other work. Sacrificing time means sacrifices in earnings or creative practice, or both.

Last year's AGM agreed to the principle of remunerating members to take on some of the workload on a project basis as part of our long term drive towards greater staffing. This proposal asks the AGM to agree in principle to a review conducted by the NEC to consider equitable means to compensate members taking on elected roles, particularly those with low incomes, for the time they commit to the running of the union, with a view to removing barriers to participation .

This AGM calls on the NEC to:

- **Budget for compensation in the form of honoraria for elected members as we seek to build sustainable democratic structures.**
- **Consider models that are non-discriminatory, affordable and fair and develop workable criteria, for example an earnings ceiling, and trial this during the coming year.**
- **Agree a suggested maximum budget for the trial period of £10,000**
- **To continue to consider payment to members for specified project work in support of the union's objectives, where appropriate.**
- **To consider new appointments to expand our support team as growing needs are identified.**
- **AUE's long-term aspiration continues to become an employer rather than relying on freelance workers. The NEC will continue to work towards developing a comprehensive plan to work towards this.**

Honoraria were trialled for the Officers (Chairs, Secretaries) and agreed to be an effective way of compensating the time spent on NEC work, recommended to continue. Hopefully this will enable more members to be able to come forward to serve on the NEC.

Further appointments are envisaged with, as a priority, the recruitment of a part-time Union Development Officer (for which approval is sought by a Proposal to the 2026 AGM).

APPENDIX 2: Rule changes from previous AGMs

The following are proposals received and carried by recent AGMs requiring rule changes:

Proposals for the AGM 2023 re Rule 11.8

Proposal 1

Rule change – AGM Quoracy

Submitter – NEC

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'

Previous Rule 11.8:

No business shall be transacted at any members' meeting unless a quorum of members is pre-sent at the time when the meeting proceeds to business and:

11.8.1 save as otherwise provided in these rules 5% of the members shall be a quorum,

11.8.2 if within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is notpresent the meeting if convened upon the requisition of 5% of the membership shall be dissolved and in any other case shall stand adjourned to such other day time and place as the Executive Committee may determine and if at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting the members present shall be a quorum.

New Rule 11.8

11.8 Provided an AGM or other meeting is publicised to members in good time and in an appropriate manner, business shall be transacted at a members' meeting by those present, whether in-person or remotely, who shall be deemed a quorum.

CARRIED

Proposals for the AGM 2024/2025 re Rule 20

Proposal 1

Expanding the AUE workforce

Submitter – AUE National Executive Committee (EC)

This AGM instructs the EC to explore ways to make sure the work of the members of the EC is sustainable as our union grows. Currently, the members of the EC are unpaid, and each member undertakes a minimum of 2 hours of work per week to advance the aims of the union (alongside EC meetings every 6 weeks). As our union grows, the workload for EC members is likely to increase and could lead to burnout.

Unpaid work can limit participation to those who can afford to volunteer their time, often excluding those with financial constraints. Unpaid volunteering for union work can be difficult for freelance artists who work precariously.

To ensure the sustainability of our union going forward it is important that we look into the possibility of remunerating members to take on some of the workload on a project basis as part of our long term drive towards greater staffing.

This AGM calls on the EC to continue growth of the union's support team, with a focus on increasing the hours of the existing freelance team where appropriate and the creation of a new freelance role of a dedicated caseworker as a priority.

Where specific project work is commissioned by the EC and undertaken by AUE members the EC will assess whether payment is appropriate.

This AGM agrees:

- *EC will aim to increase the hours of existing freelance staff.*
- *EC will look to recruit a dedicated freelance caseworker to support the growing casework demands of the membership.*
- *EC will consider payment to members for specified project work in support of the union's objectives, where appropriate.*
- *AUE's long-term aspiration is to become an employer rather than relying on freelance workers. The EC will develop a comprehensive plan to work towards this.*

Proposals for the AGM 2025

Proposal 4 - Further expanding the AUE workforce (note - this updates and builds on Proposal 1 agreed by the AUE AGM 2024)

Following the appointment this year of an new Administrator and a Caseworker to work alongside out existing Office and Finance and Social Media Co-ordinators, this year's AGM instructs the NEC to continue to explore ways to make sure the work of the members of the NEC is sustainable as our union grows.

As noted in the previous proposal, members of the Executive (NEC) are currently unpaid, and each member undertakes a minimum of 2 hours of work per week to advance the aims of the union. As our union grows, the workload for NEC members is likely to increase. We urgently need to address barriers to members to participating fully in the democratic processes of the union.

Unpaid work can limit participation to those who can afford to volunteer their time, often excluding those with financial constraints. Unpaid volunteering for union work can be difficult for freelance artists who work precariously as well as those who support their practice through other work. Sacrificing time means sacrifices in earnings or creative practice, or both.

Last year's AGM agreed to the principle of remunerating members to take on some of the workload on a project basis as part of our long term drive towards greater staffing. This proposal asks the AGM to agree in principle to a review conducted by the NEC to consider equitable means to compensate members taking on elected roles, particularly those with low incomes, for the time they commit to the running of the union, with a view to removing barriers to participation .

This AGM calls on the NEC to:

- *Budget for compensation in the form of honoraria for elected members as we seek to build sustainable democratic structures.*
- *Consider models that are non-discriminatory, affordable and fair and develop workable criteria, for example an earnings ceiling, and trial this during the coming year.*
- *Agree a suggested maximum budget for the trial period of £10,000*
- *To continue to consider payment to members for specified project work in support of the union's objectives, where appropriate.*
- *To consider new appointments to expand our support team as growing needs are identified.*
- *AUE's long-term aspiration continues to become an employer rather than relying on freelance workers. The NEC will continue to work towards developing a comprehensive plan to work towards this.*

CARRIED

These two proposals amend Rule 20, currently:

20.1` Except as specifically provided for by these rules, or by agreement made, no person, whether an officer or member shall be entitled to any remuneration for any services rendered to or on behalf of the union provided always that the Executive Committee may make provision for members to be reimbursed reasonable expenses reasonably incurred on the behalf of the union.

Amended Rule 20:

20.1` The union will reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by members undertaking work on behalf of the union. The AGM or Executive Committee may additionally agree payment for commissioned project work and the trialling of Honoraria for the work undertaken by elected members with the aim of increasing participation in the democratic structures of the union from among its largely precariously employed membership. The union will continue to seek to employ staff directly and expand its workforce as appropriate.

Other Administrative Rule changes

The original rules of 2016 refer to adoption of the Rules by founder members, giving names and addresses of these. The subsequent update in 2020 gave names of the then NEC. As details of the current NEC are updated following each election on the website and elsewhere, these details do not properly belong in the Rules.

4.12 The founders and first members of the union shall be those persons whose names and addresses are set out in Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the Schedule and at their First Meeting they shall adopt these rules.

Rule 4.12 removed by NEC May 2026

As in 4.12 above, Rule 6.2 refers to the initial meeting of the union and is redundant. Details of elections to the Executive Committee are covered in Rule 16

6.2 The members of the Executive Committee shall be elected every two years via postal ballot in accordance with rule 16 but the first Executive Committee will comprise the persons whose names and addresses are set out in Part 1 of the Schedule who will act as the Executive Committee until the first Annual Meeting. The First Meeting shall appoint from amongst the Executive Committee the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.