

Policy for the Employment of Freelancers

Date created: April 2022

Date reviewed: July 2026. Updated to reflect change in RS staff structure – no paid Centre Manager in post.

1. Context

The Rising Sun Arts Centre (RSAC) recognise the vital role freelance workers play in the cultural sector, and how much we have to gain from these relationships. We believe it is important to acknowledge the challenges that freelancers face that are not shared by salaried staff, and to find ways of providing employment on a more equitable basis. This policy sets out our commitment.

2. Policy

RSAC occasionally employs artists, practitioners, and other creative staff on a freelance basis, primarily to deliver creative learning activity, develop artistic work with us or to work on productions in collaboration with our associated artists and our volunteers.

The RSAC are committed to treating freelancers fairly and respectfully, recognising that freelancers do not always benefit from the same terms and conditions as salaried staff. We recognise that we are dependent on the artistic output of freelance staff to maintain the centre's artistic offer, and seek to establish a more balanced, symbiotic relationship.

This commitment is demonstrated by the following undertakings

2.1 Supporting artists and freelancers

2.1.1 Applying to the arts centre

Aim to streamline application processes whilst ensuring they are accessible to all. The RSAC will always advertise the timeline of deadlines, shortlisting, interviews and appointments. Where possible we aim to offer feedback on applications.

2.1.2 Approaching the centre for development support, programming and commissions

RSAC want processes to be as transparent as possible and we publish information on our website and elsewhere about opportunities and how to contact us. RSAC aim to reply to everyone who contacts the centre directly about opportunities, and you can expect honesty about whether

- a) The work of a particular Freelancer is likely to fit our artistic policy priorities, or
- b) A freelancer's work fits in with the centre's timelines for planning and programming.

2.1.3 Contact and Communication

Freelancers will always have a named point of contact within the organisation, and access to other staff to support their work and practice.

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RSAC 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.

If RSAC are contracting on a freelance basis to deliver a programme of work on behalf of the centre the freelancer will be given a written brief and a line manager. All relevant areas of delivery expected from both sides will be discussed openly and clearly

Freelancers working regularly with RSAC become part of the fabric of who we are and will be included in relevant organisation-wide communication, invited to all-staff meetings and special events.

RSAC like to plan well in advance and for all activities to run smoothly and as stress free as possible for all involved. This means that freelancers should expect to be asked about the arrangements for activities in advance of delivery, to enable rooms, equipment, refreshments etc to be set up prior to the start of the activity.

For larger scale events and productions, it is possible RSAC may put a team together including technical, programming, front-of-house and event support. The centre will work with freelancers to ensure that the level of support RSAC can offer, and any associated costs, are clear and agreed in advance.

2.1.4 Correspondence

Most of RSAC correspondence takes place by email and the centre aims to reply to emails from artists and freelancers the centre is working with, wherever possible within 10 working days. RSAC aims to reply to emails from artists and freelancers new to the organisation within 20 working days.

2.1.5 Administration

The arts centre acknowledges how time-consuming administration is and will always look at ways to keep this to a minimum for freelancers in areas such as applications, contracts and information-based forms.

2.2 DBS Checking

It is likely freelancers will require an up-to-date DBS check to carry out your work with the arts centre because of the vulnerable nature of some of our users. The RSAC can make arrangements for this.

2.3 Professional Development and Training

If the centre offers freelancers support and training this will always be clear on what that is, and when it will be available.

Wherever possible, RSAC will open up training sessions available to salaried staff to freelancers who work regularly with the centre.

Freelancers working with RSAC may be offered an opportunity to observe a Board meeting. This is part of a wider commitment to operate as transparently as possible, reduce the mystique around

boards, and equip more artists and freelancers with the knowledge and experience that might encourage them to apply to boards in the future.

2.4 Resources

The centre will make resources available to freelancers, including access to office space and printing facilities, workspace and equipment if this is required. This includes access to all resources offered to permanently salaried staff.

2.5 Orientation

If a freelancer has not worked with RSAC previously paid staff, or a member of the team, will give them a guided tour of the building when they arrive to begin work. A named person will be on hand for queries and questions.

2.6 Access Requirements

We will ask if freelancers have any access requirements when they begin start working with the team. The RSAC will endeavour to meet the access requirements of all members of staff, including freelancers.

2.7 Other terms and conditions

2.7.1 Fees and Payments

RSAC prioritises paying freelancers as quickly as possible, and definitely within 14 days of receipt of invoice. The centre does not require freelancers to fill out supplier forms, but will make payments providing an invoice with the following information is provided at least seven days before payment is due:

- Contact details including email and phone number
- Date, nature of work undertaken and agreed fee
- Bank or building society account details, to enable electronic payments

The centre agrees fees and payment schedules in advance and are honest and upfront about what the centre can afford. Freelancers must scale the activity to fit within the available fee, not to reduce the fee or work unpaid hours. RSAC want freelancers to tell the organisation if the centre's expectations are bigger than the fee available.

RSAC is aware that freelancers have to make provision for their own sick pay, holiday pay, pension, training and development and other costs within fees, and expect rates to be higher than the salaried equivalent.

Freelance staff are responsible for their own tax and National Insurance. RSAC will ask all freelance staff to confirm this on their invoice together with a Unique Tax Reference (UTR) number.

RSAC will arrange advance payment or part-payment where appropriate and either pay directly or repay expenses as soon as possible.

2.7.2 Planning and Agreements

RSAC always agrees fees, arrangements, responsibilities, timescales, and deadlines for activity in writing. This will not always be a formal contract but may take the form of a letter of agreement or email exchange. The centre can provide more formal paperwork if requested.

If delivery circumstances change, for RSAC or for freelance staff, alternative ways for freelancers to engage in contracted work and receive payment as planned, will be sought providing alternatives (streaming, blended delivery, online) are appropriate, practical and possible for the purpose of the work.

2.7.3 Postponements and Cancellations

RSAC will always agree in writing and in advance what will happen in terms of fees if the activity is postponed or cancelled.

2.8 Policies and Information

RSAC are happy to share the centre's Safeguarding Policy with freelancers in advance of starting work and arrange safeguarding training and DBS checks when required.

2.9 When things go wrong

RSAC know that sometimes things go wrong. The centre's own systems will hopefully pick this up, or by establishing honest relationships based on trust, freelancers will be able to tell the centre, via paid staff, if something goes wrong. Any issues can be raised with the freelancer's main point of contact or directly with RSAC Board. The centre is always responsive.