

Cultural Manifesto – 2021

Introduction

Culture should belong to everyone. TUC Yorkshire and the Humber (TUC YH) seeks both public and political support for this fourth edition of our Cultural Manifesto, which has been drafted by the TUC YH Creative and Leisure Industries Committee (CLIC).

In this, our Cultural Manifesto for 2021, TUC YH puts forward distinct policies for increased public investment in the arts and decent pay and conditions for those working in the cultural sector. Covid-19 has led to the manifesto's policies becoming more relevant and necessary than ever. The manifesto also includes policies on equality, regional inequalities in arts funding, and Brexit.

Local and regional government

We seek endorsement of these policies by local authorities, elected mayors and city regions and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). We also call on all candidates standing for election to public office to support these policies.

■ **Defend and when possible increase local authority spending on libraries, arts, art display spaces, heritage and culture:** While local authority funding has been drastically reduced, public investment in the creative and leisure industries attracts at least twice as much private sector expenditure. In this region, levels of local authority investment in arts, museums and heritage vary hugely, so we call on all local authorities to work towards the goal of investing at least 50p per resident per week in the sector (<https://tinyurl.com/50p-for-culture>). Local authorities and LEPs should seek new and creative ways of supporting arts and culture e.g. through collaborative working, shared funding, specialised business and project support, innovation and experimentation.

■ **Maintain and regularly update a comprehensive arts, heritage and culture strategy for each authority:** This should actively support live performance including the night

Article 27 of the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights says, of culture:

- Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which they are the author.

time economy, live venues, festivals and street performers. Arts and culture must also be at the heart of regeneration. Evidence shows that Arts Council and Local Enterprise Partnership funding is more readily available in areas where there is local authority investment and a clear strategy for the sector. A comprehensive strategy is crucial to securing funding external to local authority resources. In the context of the Northern Powerhouse and devolution proposals, regional co-operation between local authorities in developing arts, heritage and culture strategies remains essential.

■ **Encourage good employment and engagement practices in arts, heritage and cultural organisations that receive public funding:** Local authorities should use their powers to help eradicate low pay, poor working conditions and discrimination from the creative and leisure industries sector, for employees and freelancers alike. Public funding must be contingent upon all client organisations becoming accredited Living Wage employers and formally recognising the appropriate trades unions, entering into collective bargaining in good faith, adhering to applicable trade union agreements, and fully complying with health and safety legislation. Funded arts and cultural projects should differentiate between amateur,

community and professional roles and ensure professionals are always properly remunerated.

■ **Ensure that wherever possible local public investment in the arts is spent locally, benefits local workers and local communities and provides for local needs and wants:** We call on local authorities to include grant conditions that promote regional casting and local rehearsals in live performance and recorded media. Local workers should be employed in the construction, development and maintenance of the cultural infrastructure and local artists should be employed in publicly funded theatres and concert halls.

■ **Equality and education:** We call on local authorities to support the creative industries' efforts to improve the diversity of the sector's workforce. Every child and young person should have access to a strong cultural education. We are concerned that the government's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) agenda and the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) have led to a

decline in the take up of arts subjects at GCSE and A level. We call on local authorities to support the education of the cultural workers of the future, and to recognise the importance of school students being able to study creative, artistic and technical subjects at GCSE when they have an aptitude or a passion for those subjects. Curricula need to be decolonialised.

■ **Lobby central government:** The government's approach to public investment in the arts is inconsistent if not contradictory. While maintaining that investment in arts, culture and heritage is important the Westminster government has threatened such investment through cuts to local authority funding and the implementation of the EBacc. We call on local authorities to lobby central government for increased public investment in a thriving regional creative and leisure industries sector, and to protect and enhance arts education. Lobbying should focus on investment and support for the creative and digital sectors across government departments.

Employment in the creative and leisure industries

Far too often, the creative and leisure industries are blighted by poor working conditions, pay levels less than government minima, harassment and bullying, and even an expectation that professional arts practitioners should work without pay. Such practices need to be eradicated.

Many workers in the sector are freelance or self-employed, with fewer legal rights than employees. Like employees however, such workers deserve decent pay and conditions and dignity and respect at work. Creative individuals should be free to choose and pursue freelance or staff career paths sure of equitable remuneration and employment rights.

Organisations and individuals employing or engaging creative individuals must:

■ **implement trade union agreements to provide adequate remuneration.** While government minima need to be rigorously enforced, Living Wage Foundation pay levels for all workers should be regarded as the minimum (<https://www.livingwage.org.uk>). Freelances should be paid equivalent fees.

TUC YH supports AUE's Good Practice Charter For Artists. (<https://tinyurl.com/aue-gpc>)

■ **recognise trades unions and encourage employees and workers to be union members.**

■ **maintain high health and safety at work standards** including clear policies opposing harassment, discrimination and bullying at work with effective procedures for reporting, investigating and resolving complaints in line with ILO Convention 190.

■ **uphold all employment legislation**, extend it to cover freelance and self-employed workers and strive to improve terms and conditions.

■ **support regional casting and rehearsals.** This will increase opportunities for local performers to be considered for and participate in work made in Yorkshire and the Humber. If casting or rehearsals take place outside the region, travel and subsistence expenses must be paid.

TUC YH expresses solidarity with the efforts of all unions campaigning to end low pay and no pay in the sector.

National and international issues

■ **Covid-19** has severely damaged the cultural sector and live performance in particular. Too many creative industries workers were not eligible for government help during 2020. Freelancers, whatever their trading status, would benefit from a guaranteed minimum income. TUC YH supports Equity's Four Pillars for Recovery covering workforce protection, safe opening, protecting cultural infrastructure and equality.

(<https://tinyurl.com/equity-4pillars>)

■ **Brexit:** Entertainment unions have pressed for the continuation of free movement of workers, protection of intellectual property rights, safeguarding workers' rights and the rights of EU citizens in the UK, and continued access to healthcare provision equivalent to the European Health Insurance Card. The Government must back plans for an EU-wide touring passport for creative workers and replace all lost EU creative industries funding at equivalent levels. TUC YH supports entertainment unions' campaigns to protect performers', musicians' and creators' rights.

(<https://tinyurl.com/brexit-mu>,
<https://tinyurl.com/brexit-equity>)

■ **Public Service Broadcasting (PSB):** while Channel 4's establishment of a national HQ in Leeds is hugely welcome, concerns remain about BBC funding in the light of substantial redundancies across the nations and regions. TV Licences for all over-75s should be funded from general taxation, not the licence fee. Any increase in the cost of TV Licence enforcement if decriminalisation takes place must not be at the expense of BBC programme budgets. Maintaining the PSB remit for impartial, regulated broadcast news services is

increasingly urgent. The viability of regional print and online news outlets remains threatened by internet giants, such as Google and Facebook. TUC YH supports the NUJ's News Recovery plan.

(<https://www.nuj.org.uk/news/nuj-launches-news-recovery-plan>)

■ **Public funding for arts and culture in the Yorkshire and the Humber region must be equitable:** When Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) direct funding to major 'national' cultural organisations is combined with Arts Council England funding, Londoners receive £69 per head compared with £4.58 per head elsewhere in England. This disparity must be redressed without cuts to London-based arts organisations. Arts provision in rural areas needs to be increased.

■ **Climate Emergency:** TUC YH calls on arts organisations to declare a Climate Emergency. The arts' positive role in facing up to climate change needs to be supported; the negative environmental impact of cultural activities must be minimised. (<https://www.culturedeclares.org>)

■ **#FixStreaming:** royalties for performers and creators from streaming are woefully inadequate. The government needs to work with the industry and trades unions to agree an equitable, sustainable and transparent model for royalty distribution in the streaming era. (<https://tinyurl.com/MU-fixstreaming>)

■ **All funding opportunities must be promoted to and accessible to grassroots organisations.**

■ **Business rates for arts organisations must remain affordable:** The Music Venue Trust's manifesto should be supported. (<https://tinyurl.com/mvenm>)

Culture belongs to everyone

Barriers to participation in culture on grounds of class, low income, age, disability, gender, race, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, caring responsibilities or other personal characteristics must be broken down:

■ **Equality of access:** For audiences and performers/creators, including
- public investment to make ticket prices to live

performances affordable;

- continued 'free' access to libraries and museums;

- affordable, convenient and reliable public transport to encourage participation.

■ **Equality of opportunity:** The growing economic exclusion of poor and middle-income

earners from the cultural industries and from participatory arts projects must be reversed.

■ **Discrimination = injustice** as has been powerfully highlighted by the Black Lives Matter and Me Too movements. Creators and the media should reflect a society where people do not face discrimination under any of the protected characteristics stated in the Equality Act 2010. More must be done to

encourage the broadest possible range of creative voices, venues and forms. TUC YH supports union initiatives such as BECTU's Theatre Diversity Action Plan, Equity's Play Fair campaign and the Stage Sight campaign. (<https://tinyurl.com/bectu-tdap>, <https://tinyurl.com/equity-play-fair>, <https://www.stagesight.org>)

The creative and leisure industries are IMPORTANT

■ TV, film, reading, music, cabaret, comedy, circus, digital arts and technology, journalism, creative writing, theatre, dance, visual arts, modelling, creative use of materials and more provide millions of livelihoods.

■ Arts and cultural education enhance job prospects in a fast-changing digital world.

■ Arts and culture entertain, educate, challenge and encourage creativity.

■ Arts and culture improve well-being, mental health and bring joy.

■ Arts participation enhances community cohesion and reduces social exclusion.

■ Arts and culture generate wealth.

■ Culture is a catalyst for regeneration.

■ Arts and culture bring positive change.

The sector is VIABLE and must be nurtured

■ Prior to Covid-19, the creative industries were the fastest growing sector of the UK economy. For 2018, the DCMS estimated the value of the sector to be £111.7bn - 5.8 per cent of Gross Value Added. Oxford Economics research suggests that the creative industries are facing a loss of £74 billion in turnover in 2020 as a result of Covid-19. 406,000 jobs are expected to be lost - 119,000 permanent employees, and 287,000 freelancers. (<https://tinyurl.com/oxecon-covid>)

■ According to UK Music's *Music By Numbers 2020* report, music tourism contributed £4.7 billion to the UK economy in 2019 - up 6% from 2018 (www.ukmusic.org). Historically, day visits and overnight trips involving arts, culture and entertainment activities generated spending of over £9.1 billion each year. Visit Britain has estimated the UK's cultural and heritage attractions generate £4.5 billion from overseas visitors annually.

About the TUC YH Creative and Leisure Industries Committee

The TUC YH CLIC encourages participation by all trades unions. Those involved so far include Artists' Union England, the BECTU sector of Prospect, Equity, the Musicians' Union (MU), NASUWT, National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and UNISON.

The CLIC welcomes comments on this manifesto and may be contacted by e-mail at yhregsec@tuc.org.uk. To join the CLIC's mailing list, please opt in at <http://eepurl.com/dvPQs9>.

