



PERFORMANCE FOR ALL

ARTS POLICY
2019

EQUITY'S MANIFESTO
FOR A BALANCED AND
SUSTAINABLE ARTS
& CULTURE INDUSTRY

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Summary

“Logic will take you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

IMAGINE a world without decent health provision and education, without efficient public transport or care for the old. This prospect is materialising before our eyes in this new age of austerity. Now imagine a world without television drama, film, concerts, recordings, art galleries or theatre, variety entertainment, opera and ballet. Just as the NHS, schools and all our public services are suffering, so our everyday world of cultural experience is being diminished and devalued. We need food, shelter and transport to survive. We need good health and education. Equally, we need the human experience and enlightenment, entertainment and sheer fun provided by imaginative and creative inspiration and expression.

Creativity and culture are not an add-on, a surplus luxury we can only afford when other needs of social life have been dealt with. We experience cultural life individually and collectively every minute of our work and leisure, whether through music, art and photography, dance, theatre, TV, film or video games. The arts run through our lives like a grain through wood characterising and strengthening us.

It is these experiences that give the arts a unique, vital and intrinsic value for us, something irreplaceable by anything else. More than this, they help us to get our bearings in the world and to understand and critique society in ways that factual information cannot because they address not just our intellectual understanding but our whole humanity, our emotions, aspirations, visions of a future, our collective human spirit, compassion and drive to make life better. Take this away and you diminish the whole of society and what's best in us.

We also see the value of cultural activities spread into other areas where they have an instrumental and powerful effect, as will be indicated throughout this document, for example:

- for social inclusion, enrichment of life quality and local regeneration →

- for physical and mental health
- for enhancing education and learning ability
- for the economy
- for tourism
- for engaging young people and creating confidence and motivation
- for skills creation and transferability and increasing employment chances
- for national reputation

Equity's arts policy aims to promote sustainable, optimistic and fulfilling careers for our members and other arts workers within a valued and equitable arts and entertainment industry that serves a wide and inclusive audience.

To achieve this, a radical overhaul of UK arts and culture is needed.

The aims we set out must inform future campaigning, both in the short and long-term. We recognise that many of our policies below will take time, effort, vision and determination and that we need to engage with organisations outside the union – other trades unions, political parties, local authorities and central government, arts organisations, audiences, theatre and media managements, and funders – in ongoing joint campaigning on a number of fronts.

We will promote:

- 1. Increased public funding and ownership by central and local government to ensure the expansion of the performing arts with greater employment on a living wage.**
- 2. Fully inclusive representation and access for all practitioners and audiences, widening the audience, and restoring and extending arts education.**
- 3. An equitable balance of funding, without cuts to established areas, through a restructured national, regional and local funding system, and the establishment of more inclusive artistically and socially based criteria for funding.**
- 4. Creative leadership, and accountability of funding bodies to practitioners, trades**

unions and audiences.

- 5. Recognition of Variety, circus and all entertainment disciplines as art forms, establishment of new venues and recruitment of young entertainers.**
- 6. Protection and enhancement of public service broadcasting and UK film production and the creation of a publicly owned and financed film producing sector.**

KEY CAMPAIGN POINTS

INCREASE FUNDING TO TRANSFORM THE PERFORMING ARTS

- Raise central arts funding as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product to at least the European average level to boost work opportunities and pay rates (on 2015 figures from the Creative Industries Federation, this would mean an increase from 0.3% to 0.5% of GDP).
- Restore local authority arts services, and make vital local arts funding statutory in England, and wherever else possible, with increases in line with inflation.
- Oppose all arts cuts and austerity measures.
- Establish Creative Enterprise Zones in all boroughs to promote performance and other arts events with open and inclusive access.
- Restore all funds lost from Europe through Brexit and protect arts practitioners' rights and freedom of movement.

FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE

- Raise Equity's mainstream minimum theatre wages to at least the level of the national average wage (£550, ONS, 2017) to reflect our worth, training, investments, living costs and periods of unemployment.
- Funded companies must pay at least the trade union minimum rates, or at least the NMW where agreed with the unions. Local authorities should insist on payment of such rates as a condition of granting licences to performance venues.

- Stop inferior buy-outs for Stage Management teams.
- Unionise more areas of work in the Independent and Community sector.
- A decent living wage in TV and film, with a fairer share of the digital economy for all cast members.
- Ensure all film schools pay an Equity minimum rate.
- Introduce new benefits payments that enable artists to better sustain their careers through periods of unemployment.

FULL REPRESENTATION FOR ALL

- Fully inclusive representation and equal opportunity for all as practitioners and audience.
- Resist stereotypical attitudes towards and discrimination against working class practitioners.
- Spread diversity and education on diversity among agents and casting directors.
- Provide seed money for young graduate projects.
- Extend monitoring of representation to individual programmes in television.
- Cut VAT on theatre tickets and reduce ticket prices.

MAKE FUNDING BALANCED AND FAIR

- Increase per capita spend outside London, to be achieved within increased overall funding and without cuts to London-based companies.
- Raise the share of funding to the Independent sector, an established and central part of theatre provision, and promote innovatory practitioners and independent companies of varying nature and size.
- Introduce longer-term grant allocations to enable secure planning across the whole range of companies.

DEMOCRATISE FUNDING CRITERIA AND ORGANISATION

- Establish a devolved and autonomous regional funding structure - each regional

- board to include practitioners and community representatives with commitment to the arts.
- Reject centralised and undemocratic decision-making on funding and provide local audiences and participants with the widest possible range of cultural provision: a model of socially beneficial provision rather than the current business model of Portfolio investment and general and abstract notions of 'excellence'.
- Assert the right to experiment and take risk.

ESTABLISH CREATIVE LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Set up local advisory boards of practitioners and local residents to advise funding bodies and local authority arts services.
- Transparency, honesty and equitability in the process of grant applications and creative job appointments.
- More creative production and less bureaucracy.
- Create new cultural facilities, performance spaces and cheap rehearsal spaces, with a performance company in every major town, extending public ownership to facilitate this.
- Increase the employment of local actors and other creative staff in production outside London.

EXPAND THE ENTERTAINMENT, VARIETY AND CIRCUS FIELD

- Recognise Variety, circus and entertainment disciplines as art forms.
- Gain recognition as the National Theatre of Variety for the Blackpool Grand in England and the Pavilion in Scotland.
- Public funding for performance in schools, libraries, youth clubs and other community venues.

EXTEND PUBLIC TV AND FILM

- Protect and expand public service broadcasting, restore lost funding to the BBC, and bring sold off facilities and more production back in house. →

- Diversify the workforce and audience and expand training in technical skills.
- Increase drama production on radio, and on television in regions outside London.
- Provide new and specific funding to the BBC, C4 and BFI to increase the number and range of films produced and create a national publicly owned and financed film sector.

INCREASE ARTS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- End tuition fees and audition fees and introduce grants for all students in further and higher education.
- Student grants to cover living expenses and special clothing and equipment costs.
- Improve the preparation of students for life in the industry, and create mentoring and support networks in schools.
- Funding for ongoing training for young and established professionals.
- Scrap EBacc and other constraints on arts subjects and increase arts education and theatre visits in junior and secondary schools.
- Restore and increase the Education Maintenance Allowance for students in England.

Raise respect – emphasise the value and importance of jobs in the arts and of creativity in society.

Performance for all

Equity's manifesto for a balanced and sustainable arts and culture industry

1. INTRODUCTION

1. As Roy Shaw, former Secretary-General of the Arts Council, said in the 1980s in *What shall we do about the arts?*, “they are undersubsidised, underpatronised, undervalued and, if I may coin a word, underdistributed”.
 - Now in 2019, despite the proven value of arts and culture, they are in a precarious state due to deep and wide cuts and a wildly inequitable distribution of public funding.
 - The considerable loss of European cultural funds due to Brexit adds to this insecurity.
 - Training courses increase in number but without the job opportunities to match them.
 - Funding is organised by highly centralised bodies lacking in transparency and accountability and the criteria for offering or refusing funding is perceived by many practitioners to be narrow and discriminatory, blighted by elitist notions, favouritism and bias.
 - There is often an over-emphasis on large buildings as opposed to smaller or itinerant organisations that may serve a wider community better.
 - Recent Conservative governments emphasise the role of philanthropy, aspiring to an inadequate US model of funding, but private funding has never been anything but a small proportion of funding overall in the UK.
 - We still experience a lack of inclusive representation among practitioners and audiences, and a sense of exclusion in many parts of the country and within society as a whole, particularly among the working class.
 - A low value is often placed on creative workers, both in terms of their remuneration and perceived value in society, creating a breeding ground for stress, bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination, and an environment where careers in the arts are not sustainable.
 - Many young people are increasingly

deprived of contact with arts and culture through poverty or the failure of the education system, and later, discrimination in the world of the professional arts.

2. Those of us who work in the arts and culture sector should not be seen as second-best and expect to have our work cut. Our work interlinks with the vast majority of people and with public services and industry: no one vital sector should be placed in competition with any other to justify cuts.
3. Equity is against austerity policies that punish our arts and public services. We need to embrace and extend the public funding, investment and ownership element in the industry, since this creates and stimulates the greater part of our work and only this offers the possibility of long-term stability and development.
4. It is the responsibility of Equity to support members and enhance employment, wages, conditions and well-being. Large-scale unemployment creates great pressure on our members and a competitiveness that exacerbates issues such as sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination, as well as manipulation by managements. We cannot divorce important issues such as childcare, bullying and sexual harassment, discrimination and mental health, from the fundamental problematic conditions we experience as employed and unemployed workers in the arts industry. To eradicate these specific problems, we need to promote a sea-change in our relations with employers and Government.

2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF FUNDING

1. The first Arts Council was set up in the early post-war period in 1945, arising from the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts of 1940. The dual aims were to develop and improve knowledge and practice of →

- the arts and increase public accessibility and participation.
2. These values underpinned Jennie Lee's White Paper of 1965, *A Policy for the Arts*, produced by Harold Wilson's Labour government, 1964-70. It emphasised participation, access and community provision, an evolution from earlier more patrician outlooks.
 3. In 1956-73, 12 regional arts authorities (RAAs) were established. Conflicts developed between the central Arts Council and the regions. Also, there was little connection between funding offices and artists themselves.
 4. Between 1972-9, the Association Of Community Theatres (TACT) and the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) were formed and eventually recognised by Equity. This led to the formation of the Fringe Committee, later the Independent Theatre Committee. ITC/TACT led an active campaign, "A Million pounds for the Fringe," lobbying the Arts Council, to increase the funding to Fringe Theatre. They won £500,000, a small but significant improvement. The Independent Theatre Contract was created and ITC recognised as the negotiating body.
 5. Funding increased up to the Thatcher/Major years, 1979-97. Thatcher, as in other areas of public spending and industry, began the era of cuts in real terms, and abolished the Metropolitan County Councils and rate-capping of Local Authorities (LAs). This resulted in a £34m loss for the arts. A quarter of regional theatres closed under her governments. There was also a pronounced attack on small-scale theatre touring companies, in particular those seen to put forward anti-establishment views. A process of 'divide and rule' occurred whereby the smallest companies were picked off and closed first, followed shortly afterwards by larger touring companies such as Belt and Braces and 7:84 England. By the end of the 1980s, grass roots political theatre was practically non-existent.
 6. Up to this time theatre had been seen as a cultural focus for the community, important for democracy, and bringing self-assurance for the individual, as is still the norm in a number of European countries, as our recent surveys show.
 7. In 1984, the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) produced *The Glory of the Garden* policy with an aim of bringing devolution to the regions, but due to Thatcher's cuts, cuts were also devolved.
 8. In 1990, Regional Arts Boards (RABs) replaced RAAs via the Wilding Report.
 9. In 1993, the government of John Major made a first actual cash cut of £5m.
 10. In 1994, the ACGB became Arts Council England (ACE) and Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland created their own central funding bodies.
 11. In 2001, RABs were abolished after 11 years, seen as unwieldy and bureaucratic by New Labour, and replaced with regional offices and councils in London, N, Midlands, E and SE.
 12. In 2002-04, Labour gave an extra £100m to the arts: theatre got £37m over 3 years, a significant and beneficial amount that increased theatre production in regional theatre.
 13. From 2005, Labour introduced a funding freeze, and then cuts in 2007 as the financial crisis of the Great Recession loomed.
 14. In 2009, the current 9 regional funding offices turned into 'business units' under 4 executive officers in 4 super regions: London, N, Midlands and E, and SE. The rejection of the 'false polarities of national versus regional' (Alan Davey of ACE) just led to wider regional imbalance in funding.
 15. In 2010-15, there were major cuts from central and local government, for example, 36% cuts to ACE.
 16. In 2015, campaigning by trades unions and others helped to persuade George Osborne, Tory Chancellor, that the arts were of huge economic value, and he stabilised funding: he saw cuts as a "false economy" and claimed that £1 billion pa in grants yields £250 billion to the economy.
 17. Nevertheless, his government slashed Revenue Support Grants to Local Authorities, having a devastating effect on public services and arts spending throughout the country.
- (Sources include: *The Glory of the Garden, English Regional Theatre and The Arts Council 1984-2009*, edited by Kate Dorney and Ros Merkin, 2010; Jennie Lee's *Policy for the Arts*, 1945; C. Frayling, *Arts Policy Special - Is Keynes's dream still alive?*, 2007).
- ### 3.1 NATIONAL ARTS PROVISION – A CULTURE FOR ALL
1. The creative industries contribute £101.5 billion to the economy, growing at twice the rate of the economy as a whole (DCMS, 2018). The performing arts alone contributed at least £5.4 billion (DCMS, 2016).
 2. According to a recent survey by Arts Council England, 79% of people see the arts as important (ACE – *The Conversation*, 2018). 70% participate in an arts activity (*Active Lives* survey, 2015-17). An Equity/National Campaign for the Arts/Stage newspaper survey revealed that 63% of people in the UK want to see their local council spend at least 50p per person every week on the arts, museums and heritage.
 3. Despite Osborne's stabilisation of government arts expenditure in 2015, central government cut the DCMS budget in half between 2012-15 (PCS – *An Alternative vision for the culture sector*). ACE has been cut by 36% in recent years, with substantial funding reductions to other UK nations, for example, a 30% cut to N. Ireland Arts Council, 2012-18.
 4. Due to Brexit, we now face a potential cultural loss of £10 billion from 64 EU creative and development funds (Equity, 2016).
 5. UK culture funding falls way behind European levels. Results of European Surveys undertaken by Equity on funding levels centrally and locally, funding distribution and criteria, accountability of funding bodies and arts philosophy reveal higher funding levels in Europe and greater value placed on the arts as necessary for the future of society as a whole.
 - In 2016, the DCMS allocation for libraries, museums and galleries, broadcasting, and what it specifically calls arts and culture, including theatre, concerts, opera and ballet, was £1.93 billion (DCMS figures).
 - In 2017-18, Local Authority (LA) arts spend, ultimately determined by central government Revenue Support Grant to councils, is now around £172m (Arts Development:UK, 2017).
 - This gives a combined culture spend of around £2.1 billion, as opposed to Germany's £10.6b (€11.9b) and France's £8.9b (€10 billion) (Equity surveys of European trades unions, 2018). This is, for example, despite the UK GDP being £1,985.20 billion and the French a similar £1,955.29 billion (tradingeconomics.com, 2019).
 - UK arts spend per head of population therefore comes to around £31, with Germany on £131 and France on £132 (2017 population figures).
 - As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), UK spend in 2015 was 0.3%. The European average was 0.5% (Creative Industries Federation survey, 2015). These figures are lower than they might have been due to the 2007-08 crisis.
 - 2018 figures (Eurostat Statistics Explained, 2018) reveal a higher percentage of GDP for spending on their wider category of 'recreation, culture and religion', but would still involve increasing UK expenditure by the same percentage, 66%, to bring it up →

to European levels of investment.

European Union: 1%

France: 1.2%

Holland: 1.3%

Finland: 1.4%

Hungary: 3.3%

Germany: 1.0%

And the UK with 0.6%

As a percentage of total government expenditure, arts spend is:

European Union: 2.2%

France: 2.2%

Holland: 3.1%

Finland: 1.4%

Hungary: 7.1%

Germany: 2.3%

And the UK: 1.5%

3.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

1. Commitment to fully funded, sustained public investment, as the only way to reverse austerity and guarantee development of the arts.
2. Increase central arts funding to at least the European percentage levels of GDP and total expenditure – which would mean doubling it by some comparisons - to spread and sustain professional work across the country and encourage creativity in every local community.

A 66% increase in funding (from 0.3% to 0.5% of GDP, using the purely arts spending figures from 2015) would bring the DCMS allocation of £1.932 billion up to £3.207 billion, a very small proportion of overall government spending in 2018 of £800 billion pa for an industry that creates 5.5% of the economic wealth of the UK.

3. Tax increases, for example, especially on big business and high earners, could cover this increase and general increases in public spending. According to Robert Neild of

Cambridge University (Royal Economic Society: *To tax or not to tax?*, 2018), a 5 per cent increase in UK 'tax take' from 35 to 40 percent of GDP, to make it equal to the German and EU average, would pay for an increase in public spending of no less than 14 percent.

4. Perhaps, too, we could consider extending the 25% tax relief for some theatres, orchestras and film production, currently raising an extra £251m – this, of course, would be extra to raised public funding and most tax relief should be earmarked for actual creative production.
5. The Labour Party pledge of a £1 billion Cultural Capital Fund to upgrade infrastructure is welcome, but although its focus on digital as a growth area is important, capital funding must also be made available to expand access to live performance by upgrading or establishing major arts facilities in every region. The urgent priority though should be an increase in money to expand the amount and range of creative work and improve practitioners' unacceptably low wages.
6. Increased funding to ensure the equitable development of the Independent Theatre sector across the whole of the UK. This sector has been a key part of the theatre and local community landscape for more than 50 years and an increasingly important source of employment, innovation, and audience building. It takes many forms, from performance, workshop and role play companies to a varied range of freelance individuals and participatory and educational companies, for example, in Forum Theatre and Theatre-in-Education. It works with groups facing difficulties in being heard, for example, homeless, migrants, refugees and the elderly. It includes Fringe venues and visiting companies who perform in them, small-scale opera and children's theatre companies. It works with all theatre forms from classical to experimental theatre. It creates and consolidates work with trades unions and community organisations.

However, programming is frequently insecure and short-term and based on uncertain project funding. Funders, nationally and locally, need to recognize the growing importance of this area and support it with a correspondingly higher and more secure level of funding.

7. The Government must guarantee replacement of the funds lost to the arts due to Brexit, and campaign to protect workers' rights and financial benefits achieved through the EU, and the right, so important for many of our dancer, singer, actor, Variety, circus and creative team members to live, work and study anywhere.
8. Private sponsorship deals must be clear about their conditions and length and not interfere with free artistic expression. Each organisation in receipt of private funding must make their own judgements over ethical issues but needs to be clear about the knock-on effects on public perception of receiving money from certain companies.

TOPPING UP THE NATIONAL PURSE - A VIEW FROM THE TUC

Central government has proven time and again that it can find money for wars or to restructure society in a way more favourable to corporate profits and less favourable to trade union members. But sustainable development of the arts can only take place if it is underpinned by sustainable public investment. Growth cannot be built on borrowing alone, as the financial crash reminded us.

Increasing progressive taxation on the wealthiest big businesses and individuals is one way of moving towards all paying a fairer share. However, in October 2018, the Financial Times reported that the "ultra-wealthy are moving assets out of the UK and some are preparing to leave," citing fears of "higher tax rates and potential capital controls." At the same time, bodies such as the IMF are warning of the real risk of a renewed global downturn. They cite multiple factors, including excessive and growing debt and an unstable finance sector, precisely the triggers for the

Great Recession.

The TUC congress in 2012 passed a resolution against the chaos of the banking sector, stating it "should be ended through full public ownership of the sector and the creation of a publicly owned banking service, democratically and accountably managed." Unions, including the FBU and RMT support this and assert how the huge resources of the banks could be put to good use in public services. Equity believes this would help create the stable financial framework needed to develop the arts.

Policies for a future:

- Fully funded, sustained public investment to reverse austerity and guarantee development of the arts.
- Increase progressive taxation on large corporate profits and personal wealth.
- Support TUC policy for full public ownership of the banking sector to prevent recurring financial crisis and provide substantial revenue for long-term public investment in public services and the arts.
- Threats to anti-austerity investment by removing production, assets or wealth should be met by extending public ownership to guarantee the related jobs and resources.

4.1 LOCAL ARTS PROVISION – A BROADER AND INTEGRATED SERVICE

1. Outside London, arts departments of local councils "are the biggest funder of arts and culture in England" (ACE, 2016, *Funding Arts and Culture in a Time of Austerity*). They spend £806 million on libraries, £450 million on museums, galleries, arts development and public entertainment, and are the major source of theatre funding (Local Government Association: *The Policy and Funding Landscape for the Arts*, 2015).
2. The close connection between central and local funding is revealed by the fact that →

since 2010, central government has slashed Revenue Support Grants to LAs, so that there is now a £5.8 billion budget gap: a 60% cut between 2010-20 (LGA, 2018). Councils such as Northants, Somerset and Norfolk are simply going bust through this Government's austerity measures.

- The Government has spent £2 billion on Brexit staff, but it's expected there will now be a further £1.3 billion cutback, a 36% reduction, in funding to LAs in 2019/20. A mid-range council would lose £50.7m, 2019-20. 168 councils could get no funding at all, resulting in further devastating cuts to social care, education and the arts, museums and libraries. LAs actually control only 1.6% of GDP, whereas in Germany they control 11% - another damning comparison.
- Despite the importance of LA funding, spend on arts, libraries and museums fell between 2010/11 and 2017/18 from £1.4 billion pa to £1 billion, a 33.8% reduction (County Councils Network, 2018)

143 LAs, 37% of them, have no arts departments anymore.

- Somerset Council cut all arts spending in 2010. Westminster followed suit.
- In 2015, Birmingham City Council made a 25% cut to its arts grants to organisations such as Birmingham Rep and Royal Ballet.
- Nottingham council cut Nottingham Playhouse by 100% in 2014.
- Newcastle's proposed 100% arts cut was fought by Equity members and reduced to 50%, with the Theatre Royal losing all LA funding.
- In N. Ireland cuts have reduced grants to companies such as Tinderbox and Kabosh by 45%.

- In 2014, Bristol City Council proposed a 10% cut of £100k to its arts budget, but an Equity campaign overturned it. However, for 2018-19, a 26% cut of £190k has been announced, with a further £190k cut for 2021-22.
- In 2018, Bath and NE Somerset Council announced a phased closure of its arts department by February, 2019.

(Sources include: Equity submission to the Countries of Culture inquiry).

The Local Government Association predict an end to local arts funding by 2020.

At the same time, private sponsorships for LAs have dropped 20% on 2016 (AD:UK, 2017-18).

- Many theatres, libraries and museums have closed with the loss of over 8000 jobs (Show Culture Some Love response to the DCMS *Inquiry on the social impact of participation in culture and sport*).
- Organisations face insecurity due to cuts, short-term and inadequate funding, e.g. at Bristol Old Vic theatre. Jobs, conditions and wages are under constant threat.

OVERCOMING THE POLICIES OF AUSTERITY

Equity opposes austerity. Overall public spending per capita has plummeted by a fifth since 2010 (Institute for Fiscal Studies) – and the private sector has been incapable of filling the gap. As we have already noted, the main funding sources of the arts have faced disproportionate and direct attack. In addition, there is the broader impact on the time and income artists need to produce new work and on audience ability to participate in culture.

The union has responded to attacks on funding by local councils, for example, in Newcastle and Bristol. But the experience of these campaigns, and

the wider economic and cultural context of general devastation, show clearly that without a broad trade union strategy to reverse austerity now, more cuts and closures are inevitable.

There are two key spheres - local councils and the national public purse - where we need real answers to produce the additional resources so desperately needed.

Avoiding cuts

The union has so far produced some practical council-level policies, the recent election pledges; but when present statutory provision faces swingeing cuts from local authorities, it is clear that only substantially increased funding will defend the arts, let alone expand them.

The law requires that council budgets be balanced. For some time, many local politicians have insisted there is no choice but to pass on the cuts demanded by central government. This has led councils to make deep cuts and sell off assets while trying to attract more business investors and rate payers in order to make up in part for the loss of government grant.

However, a model where every local council is clamouring for investment from a fixed pool of investors is obviously short-sighted. This is particularly the case with low economic growth, investment and a looming second downturn.

An alternative model proposed within the trade union movement is a 'legal no-cuts budget'. The three main local government unions, Unison, Unite and the GMB, as well as the Wales TUC, have all adopted this as policy.

Most local councils still have substantial reserves, and they all have what are called 'prudential borrowing' powers to take out loans against council assets. In March 2017, Labour-run councils alone controlled combined budgets of £74.8 billion, with £9.2 billion in general fund reserves and £1.7 billion in housing revenue account and capital receipts reserves. Their combined spending power was greater than the GDP of nine EU member states

(How much reserves have they got?, 2017).

In Southampton in 2013, and Hull and Leicester in 2015, anti-austerity councillors presented no-cuts motions to council budget-setting meetings offering an alternative budget that would have balanced the books using reserves and prudential borrowing. These were found 'legally compliant' by finance officers but did not find support from the political leaderships of those councils (Preparing a no-cuts people's budget, 2016).

Reserves cannot be drawn on indefinitely, but the destruction of council services, including arts funding, is an emergency. LA campaigning to demonstrate in practice what an anti-austerity approach means – building council homes, creating jobs, raising wages, expanding frontline services, funding the arts – could win mass support for concrete anti-cuts action.

Greater support for the arts in local communities would not only increase provision but create more job opportunities for our highly-skilled membership and other trained practitioners, who currently have little hope of work and historically have been poorly funded locally.

The legal powers of the central state to move against local councillors are also weaker than they have been in the past. For example, the Local Government Act 2000 abolished the power to surcharge councillors, except in cases of personal gain. Restrictions on dismissing senior officers for obstructing the council's democratic decisions have also been repealed. In any case, it is perfectly legal to set a balanced, no-cuts budget.

We are being told by the government that "austerity is over." Councils and the trade union movement should press Westminster to make good on that with funds.

Warnings against 'illegal' budgets, which no union is calling for, are a distraction that perhaps reflects an attempt to avoid political conflict between the different wings of the Labour Party. →

Equity therefore calls for the policies below.

4.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

1. Stop the cuts! LAs should not pass on cuts to the arts and public services and should consider legal no-cuts budgets where appropriate, drawing on reserves and borrowing powers. An incoming government should underwrite the cost of no-cuts budgets and restore all council funding lost due to austerity cuts.
2. LA arts departments must be defended from impending collapse and arts spending should become a statutory requirement along with health and education in England, and wherever else possible, increasing in line with inflation: every £1 of local investment generates £4 to the local economy (LGA, 2013).
3. Money for cultural organisations and events should also come from multiple departments' budgets, showing the role the arts play in strategic local objectives such as education, regeneration, parks, libraries and public health.
4. Open up Creative Enterprise Zones in all boroughs to promote performance and other arts events with open and inclusive access for all workers and audiences irrespective of their background.

For example, the Hackney Wick and Fish Island CEZ includes plans for the build of a new theatre. London is set to lose 30 per cent of its artist spaces over the next five years, so plans have been announced to create artist zones by helping artists buy workspaces, and two underused Council buildings will become temporary studios.

5. LAs should create new publicly-owned cultural centres, rehearsal and performance spaces and

galleries, for example, by taking over unused buildings, and also encourage local businesses to provide spaces within their own properties. These should be offered to artists, variety and circus entertainers, music and theatre performers free or at cheap, affordable rents.

6. Regeneration of areas involving creative spaces should not take place at the expense of the local population, nor should artists become the victims of 'gentrification' and be forced out by rising rents and corporate development, which has happened to numbers of visual artists. Greater protection should be applied in planning procedures with cultural venues designated as 'Assets of Community Value'.
7. Practitioners, especially those in community-oriented work situations, could be encouraged and supported by business rates relief and local grants for living and materials costs. The Arts and Humanities Research Council report, *Understanding the value of arts and culture* (2016), points to the dangers of gentrification and the value of "small-scale cultural assets – studios, live-music venues, small galleries and so on – in supporting healthier and more balanced communities."
8. Integrate the local infrastructure of roads, transport, workspaces, parking and services to facilitate and encourage the working of the cultural sector; and use the planning process and community infrastructure levy in consultation with local creative practitioners.
9. By such initiatives above, we want to see wider access and participation of all sections of the community, both as audience and creators, and to create greater opportunities for working class practitioners, who often face exclusion in mainstream arts.
10. Establish meetings specifically for people working in the creative industries in each borough, chaired by the relevant Council cabinet member/committee chair; and

encourage chambers of commerce to hold meetings on cultural development for local employers and institutions and to which practitioners would be invited to contribute.

5.1 A LIVING WAGE

1. 91% of creative workers have worked for nothing (Warwick Commission, 2015). In some areas of Fringe theatre, low budget television and film, music videos, dance, music and modelling, professional workers are regularly regarded as cheap labour, not doing a 'proper job', to be offered low or no fees. Many young people are expected to work for nothing to 'gain experience'. Equity, the MU, Writers' Guild and BECTU have resisted this with campaigns for professional payment and enforcement of National Minimum Wage legislation.
2. The national average wage is now £550 pw (ONS, 2017). Equity's lowest theatre minimum wage for performers is in Commercial Theatre: £360pw (2019). The highest is in W. End theatre: £694.67pw (2019).
3. According to Equity surveys, 47% of members earn less than £5000 pa and 67% earn under £10,000. 45% of members only do around 10 weeks professional work pa. Stage Directors UK believe half their members earn below £5000 pa. Theatre contracts are usually short, often 9 weeks or less.
4. Managements know that most performers may only be getting one or two contracts on low wages every year. At the same time, the cost of living, especially housing costs, are soaring. Arts workers simply cannot make a living as things stand. Rare low-paid jobs cannot sustain members and hugely discriminate against working class arts workers who cannot rely on

financial support from families or friends. They also make it almost impossible for mothers with babies and young children to work, so women in particular are hit.

5.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

1. A living wage! Equity's policy is to work for minimum wage and fee increases that reach towards the level of the national average wage, currently £550 pw, and to raise other rates by similar percentages.
2. Professional practitioners are workers in an arts and culture sector and industry, most of us have trained at considerable cost and effort, and we serve communities like other public sector workers. We have to say no to low pay and no pay and demand wages that cover our everyday living expenses, exorbitant housing costs, necessary professional expenses, and periods of no work.
3. We also believe it is the job of the industry to create a more understanding, flexible and stable framework so that we are supported by wages that help us to sustain careers. This would increase public understanding of the industry and our nature as creative workers rather than 'lurvies': if we only accept wages that the well-off can afford we expose ourselves to attack. So, we now assert the need for a compensatory element in future wage increases to mitigate against the precarious nature of the industry.
4. The going industry trade union minimum rates must be paid for each area of work and skill. Where organisations have central or local public funding for stage work, that funding must be sufficient for them to pay the trade union rate. Where budgets are very low, for example, in Fringe theatre, at least the NMW must be paid and legal action taken against dodging employers. Employment Tribunals should admit cases from TUs, not just →

individuals.

Local councils should insist that TU rates or the NMW be paid as a condition of granting licences.

5. End zero-hours contracts, unpaid internships, and expenses-only/ low pay/ no pay work. Equity has already done much successful work on this. Equity respects the choice of members to work on joint venture 'profit-shares' where there is a genuine co-operative arrangement. Any management/worker arrangement in Fringe must pay the NMW at least.
6. Ensure training institutions pay an agreed TU wage to employed practitioners, e.g. actors and directors employed by film schools.
7. No buy-outs for stage management where the Union can prove they would be less beneficial than standard and overtime rates.
8. A decent living wage in TV and film, with a fairer share of the digital economy for all cast members and crew.
9. Unionise well-established areas of work, for example, workshops, community engagement and role play, and negotiate or offer model contracts, such as the Fringe Theatre contract, where existing competition law allows. This would enhance recognition of the wide range of Independent Theatre practices as central to theatre work and the careers of our members.
10. It is a growing practice on the part of certain leading companies, for example, the RSC with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, to cast members of local communities in professional shows. Another company has used non-paid drama students. We are not against amateurs taking small 'supernumerary' roles in productions, or making links with communities, in fact, we favour this, as should be clear from the rest of this document, but the relevant trades unions

must be notified well in advance of any such plans to use non-union performers so that professional jobs may be protected, terms negotiated and the local participants defended from exploitation. An agreed financial remuneration should be paid to all taking part.

11. Reform the benefits system so that cultural workers can apply for extra allowances (such as the old Enterprise Allowance) to help sustain careers during periods of unemployment.
12. Living benefits for all - scrap universal credit, unrealistic housing benefit limits, and all adverse welfare reforms brought in since 2010.

6.1 FULL REPRESENTATION FOR ALL - INCREASED DIVERSITY AND ARTS EDUCATION

1. The FEU unions have campaigned hard and achieved much to advance diversity and more equal representation among practitioners in the performing arts. However, despite the BAME community constituting 13% of the UK population, only 5.4% of workers in the media industry are from BAME backgrounds, even though the industry is concentrated in the SE where the ethnic minority population is more than 40% (Kate Oakley, Leeds University); and half of large-scale theatres employ less than 5% from BAME backgrounds (ACE report). Ethnic minorities are rarely seen behind the camera, teaching in drama schools, as directors, producers or casting directors. Forty years since the publication of Naseem Khan's seminal report on diversity, *The Arts Britain Ignores*, she says it's extraordinary that the issues around diversity and the arts remain as "sharp, troubling and vibrant as ever" (Khan, 2016).
2. Women are 51% of the population but men outnumber women 2:1 in acting roles on our screens and 3:1 in children's TV. These ratios become higher as women get older. As performers, whether young, middle-aged or

older, women experience various forms of discrimination and stereotyping, and although progress has been made in the amount and nature of representation of women on TV as a result of sustained campaigning from Equity and others, there is still a long way to go before we see equal representation across the whole field of performance and other jobs in the media.

3. A recent survey by Sphinx theatre revealed that only a fifth of English theatres were led by women, who control a mere 13% of ACE's theatre budget. There has never been a female Artistic Director of the National Theatre or RSC. Sir Nicholas Hytner, former director at the NT, never directed a play by a woman in his 12 year tenure.
4. Women are only 36% of the media workforce and concentrated in lower status jobs, figuring rarely in writing and directing roles (Kate Oakley, Leeds University). The BBC commissioned 32 men and 8 women to write drama in 2017 and 4 of the 8 women were working on adaptations. Channel 4 has transmitted only 2 prime-time original drama series created by a woman since 2004. In 2017 no Comedy programming on ITV was written or directed by a woman. Less than 10% of feature films are made by women (Equal Representation for Actresses, ERA 50:50, which Equity supports). "The vast majority of actresses working in television, film and theatre struggle with lack of opportunity. Compared to men, many women find it impossible to sustain meaningful and economically viable careers into their forties and beyond and find themselves faced with an early retirement and uncertain future. The business squanders talent and their rich CVs" (ERA 50:50).
5. Practitioners with impairments are particularly under-represented in our industry. These aberrations, and the discrimination against LGBT+ practitioners and the extent of sexual harassment and bullying are all being

challenged by numerous campaigns such as Equity's Play Fair and Safe Spaces initiatives.

6. A major area of discrimination only recently receiving some attention is of practitioners from working-class backgrounds. According to Dave O'Brien from Edinburgh University, only 18% of creative industry employees come from the working class, whereas 70% come from upper middle-class and privileged backgrounds (interview for Equity, 2018). Census figures since 1971 reveal a decline in social mobility. According to *The Acting Class* film (dir. Mike Wayne and Deirdre O'Neill) 67% of Oscar winners have been privately educated. There is also a pay gap of around £10,000 pa between those from senior professional and managerial backgrounds and those from the working class (Dave O'Brien, *The Class Problem in British Acting*, 2015).
7. The sheer costs of training (over £9,000pa), audition fees (£30-80 each), headshots (up to £300), directory fees (£154pa for Spotlight), agency fees (10-20% of earnings) can make a career in acting prohibitive for many, and those who do start out may not be able to take the unpaid or low-paid jobs that provide a 'showcase'. In addition, working class actors may not have had equal access to many cultural resources when young, and later to certain drama schools, agents and jobs. Stereotyping is also a major problem for the ethnic minority and working-class actor.
8. We can conclude from all this that employment in the media and performing arts does not reflect the composition of society as a whole.
9. The problems for the young, who along with older people are the most vulnerable, begin with the educational system. Students have a dearth of advice on careers in performance and the media. EBacc is bringing a savage decline in arts subjects. There are 1700 fewer drama teachers than in 2010, and 15% fewer drama teaching hours. School plays, and visits to →

the theatre and by theatre companies are the first items to go in the current cutbacks (Labour Party's *Acting Up* report, 2017).

10. GCSE arts entries overall since 2016 are down by 46,000, 8%. Drama GCSE exam entries are down by 15.9%, music by 8.3% and arts and design by 1.6%. The STEM (Science, Technology, English, Maths) subjects grew in 2015-16 by 105,000 (Ofqual stats). This is despite the fact that low-income students taking part in arts activities are three times more likely to get a degree than those who don't.
11. The *Arts on Prescription* survey revealed that arts engagement brings better mental well-being, a decrease in anxiety and depression, more community cohesion, and improved cognitive abilities. The arts, whether you take a career in them or not, also set you up for life, increasing confidence, creativity and communicative abilities, and adaptability, transferability of skills and range of employability.
12. The lack of fully inclusive representation in employment and training is mirrored by the lack of access for many in our communities who feel alienated as audiences by mainstream culture and buildings. Every person, whatever their age, ethnicity, gender or sexuality, class, ability or impairment, should feel able to engage with our art and culture at all levels, as practitioners or audience.

6.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

Diversity:

1. Fully inclusive representation and access for all practitioners and audiences, with 50:50 representation for women in all areas of the industry.
2. Diversity monitoring, to include class, across all areas of the industry, and to cover individual

cast and crew breakdowns for programmes in TV.

3. This should also focus on diversity among directors, producers, commissioners, writers and casting directors, who also need to be encouraged to embrace the full and rich potential of the composition of the country and realise their responsibility in reflecting that.
4. Commitment to fully inclusive representation should be a requirement of public funding.
5. Within the Independent Theatre field there are already companies and individuals specialising in and representing diversity in its many and developing contexts and forms. It is potentially a major source of employment and creative involvement for our diverse membership and communities but is under-funded and requires commitment and support for development.
6. Part-time tutors, as well as full-timers, must be given clear and adequate instruction on a school or college's policies on equal opportunities, sexual harassment, bullying, health and safety, safeguarding of young people and children, etc.

Education policy:

7. End tuition fees and audition fees – free education for all with adequate maintenance grants to cover living and high housing expenses, and specialist clothing and equipment needed for training, to be covered by public funds.
8. Restore and increase the Education Maintenance Allowance for students in England.
9. Training in drama, dance and music schools and academic arts education in universities must be done with the aim of a job at the end, rather than the expectation of unemployment and low/no wages. The previous policies suggested in this document would vastly

increase the range of creative work and jobs available. Everybody should have the right to choose to study and train for what they want in life, including in N.Ireland where a drama school needs to be established.

10. Fully prepare students for the industry through talks on the professions, how to start a theatre or dance company or band, deal with accounts, getting an agent, organising publicity, etc.
11. Create mentoring and support networks in all creative educational establishments for students and graduates. Create student forums at which students can discuss and challenge their training or education. Some drama schools, for example, already have these practices.
12. Funding for ongoing training for young and established cultural workers, and seed money for young graduate projects.
13. Scrap EBacc and other constraining policies on curriculum such as Progress 8. This evaluates students on the basis of prioritising English and Maths and marginalising creative subjects. We are for a broad and varied curriculum which gives equal priority to academic, vocational and creative subjects and prizes the fulfilment of individual human potential.
14. Promote theatre, gallery, concert, and museum visits for students, and arts practitioner visits to schools – these should be seen as learning experiences in their own right, not as optional expenses or adjuncts to the priorities of exams.
15. Careers advice in schools on the creative industries and performing arts – many schools act as if they don't exist.
16. End the appointments of the privileged by the privileged – introduce local democracy and representative appointments to arts boards and advisory bodies, as in section 7 below.

Widening creative engagement:

17. Castings and other job interviews should be local as well as in London, where 80% presently take place – and every effort should be made to increase the employment of local practitioners. Travel expenses to and from interviews should always be paid.
18. Due to the exorbitant expense of companies such as Spotlight, many members have expressed a need for a free or low-cost practitioners' directory, with control by registered clients over policy on, for example, advertising of interviews and auditions.
19. Free or reduced ticket prices for performance professionals, and low prices for all in certain designated periods (McMaster Report, 2008). End VAT on tickets.
20. Support the establishment of a central, collectively owned ticket agency to replace the various box office groups, secondary agencies and touts who contribute to making ticket prices unaffordable for many.
21. Some creative organisations and individuals already connect strongly with local communities – this engagement can be increased through contact with Trades Councils, and specifically the Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEU) at local and regional level, and with community and immigrant organisations, for example. Variety, music, dance, theatre and circus entertainers should receive local public funding to reach out to wider audiences.
22. Local theatres, community and cultural centres can bring different artists together to offer a wider cultural experience; organise education and outreach projects, talks and discussions; community workshops and courses in visual art, drama and music financed by local or central government.
23. Raise respect for the value and importance →

of jobs in the arts, and for creativity in all people in society regardless of who they are and where they come from.

7.1 DEMOCRATISING FUNDING AND DECISION-MAKING

“... it will not be possible to do as much as we want to do as quickly as we want to do it. But that is no excuse for not doing as much as we can and more than has hitherto been attempted”

Jennie Lee's *A Policy for the Arts: The First Steps*, 1965.

1. Although 40% of audiences are outside London (Warwick Commission, 2015), we have seen arts funding favour London over other regions by a ratio of as much as 15:1. The arts in London receive £65.18 per head of population as opposed to £4.91 for arts in regions outside. Since the start of the Lottery as additional funding, 82% of its funding has gone to London, four times the amount received by the rest of England (*The Next Steps*, GPS Culture, 2016).
2. ACE has been pressed by numerous surveys, including from the DCMS parliamentary committee, to commit to a fairer distribution of taxpayer and lottery money, and has embarked on the Creative People and Places scheme to address wide disparity in arts involvement across the country: for example, 88.1% of people in Richmond upon Thames are engaged in arts activity, whereas only 44% had attended arts events in Blackburn with Darwen. ACE is now committed to offer 56% of its budget and 75% of Lottery money to regions outside London (2017-18), although these figures have been challenged (GPS research).
3. English Regional Arts Boards, which had some degree of autonomy in regional distribution of funding, were wound up in 2001 by New Labour to be replaced by local offices, essentially business units, of the central funding body, ACE.

4. Funding decisions by UK bodies have been besmirched by lack of transparency and accountability, when peoples' creative work, livelihoods and careers are at stake. There is plentiful anecdotal evidence of bias, favouritism, backstairs dealings and lack of real consideration for the community and practitioners. This doesn't just relate to ACE. Applicants to Creative Scotland have found the application process to be opaque, bureaucratic, time-wasting and full of business-speak. Administrators are criticised for being obstructive, rigid, out-of-touch and uncaring.

Here's one applicant describing people they had contact with in the grant application process:

“... uncommunicative, apathetic, inflexible and unhelpful... showing little concern for how their processes and behaviour affect the lives of the very artists they are being paid to support.”

5. The core characteristic in all this is a business model of funding dating from the Thatcher period, as opposed to one of socially beneficial provision and accountability to each community. A National Portfolio of Organisations is invested in: ACE offers £622m pa, 2018-22, to 831 NPOs, grants for arts and culture and strategic funds. Although boxes have to be ticked relating to scope of touring and community connection, we perceive the key criteria for judging funding worthiness to be business efficiency and 'excellence'. This sets up a business-style competition and hierarchy of value, defined by undisclosed and arbitrary establishment values. This delegitimizes what is not perceived as 'excellent' and can constantly move the goal posts of judgement to justify cuts and changes of policy, creating insecurity and lack of continuity with poor accountability – all elements of which were present in the ACE swathe of cuts over ten years ago and challenged by Equity at the famous Young Vic meeting in 2008.

6. Another disparity is in funding of large and small-scale organisations.
 - 84 organisations receiving £1m or more per annum get 81% of the national budget.
 - The top 16 NPOs receive 35.4% of total funding, which leaves the remaining 815 NPOs in receipt of 64.6% of the total (based on ACE figures, 2018).
 - Large London-based organisations receiving over £1m pa take 32% of the total.
 - Funding of smaller organisations receiving under £100,000 pa has halved since 2007-08 (*Rebalancing Our Cultural Capital*, GPS report, 2014), and most are on short-term project grants.
 - In opera, for example, there is now no money available for the smaller opera companies. ACE gives the lion's share to the Royal Opera House and its two companies, the Royal Ballet and the Royal Opera, and to ENO. This just reinforces the idea of opera and ballet as elitist, when in fact, you can get a ROH ticket for much less than the average football match ticket. But even here with the ROH there is a large disparity between the UK and Germany and France, for example. The ROH receives 22% of its revenue from ACE, whereas in Europe 60-85% of opera revenue comes from public funding (ACE figures, 2018).

7. We believe in a rebalancing of funding within a much-increased pot of funding: an alternative model of distribution and funding criteria that is more inclusive of all participants – practitioners, peer groups and audiences – and relates to the interests and needs of communities across the country; to enhancement of the amount, quality and range of work produced; and to various qualities of judgement that actually identify work of value.

8. We are not suggesting that London and large national organisations like the ROH and National Theatre should be robbed of funds – in fact, we disagree with the recent 3% cut imposed on them by ACE in order to spread more funding into the regions outside London. We also acknowledge the importance of London as a major cultural centre for national and international institutions. However, there are major towns, villages, cultural centres and networks, as well as European Cities of Culture, festivals, theatres, dance and opera companies north of Watford, and a rebalancing of our culture and infrastructure and greater attention to all nations and regions north, south, east and west needs to take place if the UK is to be a culturally equitable nation. Equally, the Independent sector and small and middle-scale organisations need to benefit from equitable funding according to their social and artistic contexts and needs. We are not seeking to dictate what and how work is produced artistically, but to increase the opportunities for wide-ranging, accessible, inventive and unpredictable work of quality.

7.2. POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

Autonomous, equitable and accountable regional funding and creative leadership:

1. We want to see an expanded, fairly-balanced, socially responsive, democratic cultural provision.
2. Without cutbacks to London arts organisations, and through rebalancing funding within a substantially increased arts allocation as above, we believe per capita spending should be raised in the regions outside London, to London levels in the long-term, and Lottery spending immediately equalised, so that a major new cultural investment programme is begun across the country to reach all those areas currently under-resourced. The GPS report *The Next Steps*, 2016, suggests that an equal per capita Lottery allocation →

of £4.74 would bring in around £30.9m for London and £26.7m for the NW. The GPS report, *A new destination for the arts*, 2015, further suggests that ever-increasing Lottery grants mean that lowering the per capita allocation in London and raising it in the regions outside can be done without reducing the overall cash going to London and damaging its 'world status as a cultural centre'. However, the Lottery is 'additional' funding and should never be relied upon for provision of adequate overall funding.

3. An autonomous regional funding structure, able to make funding allocations independent of a national arts council. A new version of the old regional arts boards – Regional Culture Councils perhaps? – should be revived but in democratic form: to include local practitioners and community representatives with knowledge of and commitment to expansion of local cultural opportunities. These councils would liaise with LAs about specific areas of funding in each locality.
4. Advisory bodies to these regional councils should be established consisting of trades unionists and practitioners drawn from all levels and areas of skill (not just prominent figureheads), and other local residents and workers - including from the voluntary and private sectors, and higher and further education.
5. These would be consulted by venues, regional funders and LA arts services on criteria for funding, priorities and perceived value, and be able to make recommendations on possible local cultural programming.
6. The Labour Party is suggesting that workers have one third of all seats on company boards. We suggest that representatives of creative workers have the right to sit on all private and publicly owned arts organisations, but should commit to oppose cuts, urge an expansion of creative work and be subject to recall.
7. End corporate cronyism in appointments to

funding boards, of which there are some recent notorious examples.

8. Develop a vision of what arts provision is needed across the country through debate and feedback in the regions, rather than pursuing the current top-down policy determined from the centre. Consultation should occur with local arts organisations, professional and community-based, to determine their potential needs before grants, management, marketing structures, etc. are put in place. Lack of consultation leads to inadequate distribution of arts provision.
9. As a consequence of these suggestions, the central UK arts councils themselves need to be reconstituted with different structures, a facilitating rather than controlling role, memberships more representative of the population - and maybe different names to complete the transformation! National Culture Councils perhaps?

Expand regional production:

10. New cultural centres offering creative spaces, including unconventional spaces, for rehearsal, performance, workshops, music, dance and art in every urban and rural area, extending public ownership to facilitate this.
11. The Independent sector, often innovative and community-oriented, should be further developed and seen for what it is, an established and key part of cultural provision and source of employment.
12. Introduce longer-term grants to enable secure planning. Equity believes that individual practitioners and companies of proven worth and vision, in whatever area of performance, and of whatever size and nature, should be guaranteed long-term funding of up to 10 years.
13. Creative production should predominate over bureaucracy: in theatres, for example, there

has been much evidence of administrations increasing in size out of proportion to the number of creative practitioners who actually create the productions visited by the audience. Audiences come to see creative work, not a marketing department's demographic pie charts. Set minimum levels for the proportion of grants spent on in-house productions and other creative activity, and maximum levels for what's spent on administration and marketing (*Manifesto for Theatre*, Equity, 2013).

The workforce, like funding, needs to be rebalanced towards creative practitioners, but as new creative spaces develop with the increased funding suggested above, there need be no cuts to the amount of administrative jobs available.

14. More opportunities for local workforces, with local castings and interviews for all practitioners and performers. Too often the interview process takes place only in London.
15. Move from the recent trend of regional theatre venues receiving productions, and of joint productions by a number of companies, to increasing the amount of in-house productions.
16. Open regional theatres to small-scale touring companies, including Theatre-in-Education companies, and create work from engagement with local communities – this as an integral part of a theatre's focus so that main house work and studio or itinerant pieces complement and enhance each other.

Representative and transparent funding criteria:

17. The process of application for arts grants needs to be made transparent, with clearer language in application forms, full explanation of decisions, and support for the future development of organisations and individuals that fail to receive grants.
18. Replace the general criterion of 'excellence' with a wide range of specific criteria that could

be used to analyse any performance work and determine funding. ACE's own unfortunately titled 'Quality Metrics' and 'Consumer Insight Toolkit' surveys offered a possible way forward (although they have been limited to helping organisations understand their audiences better and are in need of substantial renaming and rethinking).

There have been objections by some arts organisations to the very notion that we can apply specific qualities of judgement to any creative work. This to us is as elitist as the notion of 'excellence' itself and leaves a handful of administrators in funding bodies free to continue applying this model.

19. We suggest that a variety of criteria could be more fairly and productively applied, for example, ones relating to a creation's concept and skill in presentation, the diversity of representation among practitioners and audience, its distinctiveness and current relevance, its rigour and challenging quality, the local impact and value to an audience and wider community, etc. These criteria could be adapted flexibly according to the type of organisation and local community being served. The judgements on which funding would be based must come from a tripartite combination of the audience, practitioner peer groups, and the organisation itself, wherever feasible, and the process should apply to all organisations seeking funding, not just selected NPOs. The process should be offered free, and care must be taken not to favour the already favoured. Opportunities must be offered for new organisations and people starting out in the industry. In other words, a more democratic and flexible process for determining funding decisions.

8.1 ENTERTAINMENT, VARIETY AND CIRCUS - EXPANDING THE FIELD

1. Variety artists formed an association in the late nineteenth century under the leadership →

of Marie Lloyd. Its aim was to protect young dancers from exploitation by unscrupulous employers. By 1906 this had become a trade union, Variety Artistes Federation (VAF), affiliated to the TUC. In 1967 the VAF merged with Equity. However, Variety has never been able to set minimum rates for performers as there is no overall industrial body with which to make collective agreements.

2. Variety is often seen as a British creation but it is actually present in many other countries. However, while it has national and local funding in some countries none has ever been provided in the UK. ACE appears to have considered this possibility some years ago when it agreed to acknowledge Variety as an art form and for there to be a National Theatre of Variety. In 2007, in England, the Blackpool Grand accepted this title but ACE has made no formal recognition of the theatre's status.
3. 50% of entertainers are not Equity members. Clearly more needs to be done to unionise the field.
4. Many older venues have closed and there are very few traditional theatre variety bills remaining. Variety found a good home in working-men's and other clubs but these also are becoming fewer. Equity has contracts for cruise ship performers, circus artists and singers, and new venues are opening, for example, in wine bars. New Variety and alternative comedy brought a different breed of entertainer and a new, and often, large audience. Entertainers also work in peoples' homes and in community venues.

8.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

1. Variety, circus and other entertainment areas to be recognised as an art form and supported with public funding via the national arts councils and LAs.

2. Enforce legal obligation of agents and employers to pay on time.
3. The National Theatres of Variety in England and Scotland (Blackpool Grand and the Pavilion) to be a focus for the profession in promoting the interests of Variety artists.
4. Promote new performance spaces open to all types of performance including Variety, as in the earlier section on Local Arts provision.
5. Focus on unionising young entertainers, for example, from the comedy circuit, and widen the view of Variety.
6. Campaign for funding of performance in schools, community centres, libraries, youth clubs and street festivals where entertainers also perform, reaching wider sectors of society.

9.1 TELEVISION, RADIO AND DEFENCE OF PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING

1. Television in the UK has come from a long tradition of dominance by quality publicly owned broadcasting. It has also been far from immune to decades of pressure to cut and privatise, intensified since the 2007-08 crash. This has meant reduced job security and opportunities for all practitioners. It has also contributed to the rising trend of reality TV where participants are frequently paid far less than professionals in unionised, quality scripted drama and comedy.
2. As the Murdochs seek to ever expand their commercial empire, the BBC, with a much bigger audience share than Sky, has been under collusive political attack. The government froze the licence fee from 2011 to 2017 while adding £340m of new responsibilities to the corporation, including the funding of the World Service and S4C. There has been a cut to resources in real terms of 16%: 2000 jobs have gone, leading to cuts in news and investigative

journalism, to the Asian network, local radio, coverage in Wales and Scotland, and to radio drama and original drama on BBC 4.

3. The BBC has now been required by government to cover the cost of the licences of the over-75s. This will rise from £250m in 2018 to £750m in 2020. In return, the government has agreed to allow the licence fee form of funding, linked to inflation, to run till 2020 – but for how long will this be secure? The BBC already cut another 1000 jobs in 2015 due to a shortfall of £150m – this as a result of declining licence fee payments and TV watching (Guardian, 2015).
4. There are pressures to extend privatisation within the BBC. Most drama and comedy shown on the BBC is currently made by independent Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television (Pact) companies, whereas in-house productions will be continuing drama Series such as Eastenders and returning drama such as Casualty and Holby City, which remain on BBC in-house contractual terms. The BBC management want to increase independent commissioning of programmes. Further, BBC Studios, an independent company within the BBC, also produces drama and comedy both for the BBC and commercial companies. BBC Resources, Technology and Broadcast have already been sold off to the private sector. (Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEU): *BBC Cuts: The Alternative White Paper*).

The rigorous training of technical talent by the BBC, for so long the cornerstone of public service broadcasting, has now all but disappeared. The private independent companies have gained producers, directors, camera operators, lighting, hair and make-up technicians arguably as a result of this long-term investment in staff training. The profits made by the independent companies no longer finance future programme-making as was the case under PSB, nor do they noticeably benefit the cast and crews of successful TV programmes, being hived off as investor profits

and dividends.

5. Channel 4, our other public service broadcaster, is faced with privatisation, although its current relocation and restructuring may be an attempt to prevent this happening.
6. Tony Hall, the BBC's Director-General, has pointed to an uneven playing field between the traditional broadcasters and the new companies like Netflix and Amazon: *"In so many ways – prominence, competition rules, advertising, taxation, content regulation, terms of trade, production quotas – one set of rules applies to UK companies, and barely any apply to the new giants"* (Guardian, Sep. 2018). He urges that their video streaming services be regulated to the same extent as are the UK's traditional broadcasters. Also, Netflix paid nothing in corporation tax last year but got a €199,000 tax rebate. It made £500 million in streaming services and a UK pre-tax profit of €1.2m, whilst the BBC is having to jump through numerous hoops. (Guardian, June 2018)
7. At the same time, the question of funding has been limited to a narrow debate. While recent polls have revealed majority support for keeping the licence fee, also supported by Equity and the FEU, it is under constant threat from government. The only alternative choices offered are advertiser funding and subscription funding; but licence and subscription fees can be viewed as regressive taxes that hit the majority of Equity members and the wider viewing public disproportionately hard. Advertising carries the risk of distorting content in line with the profitable interests of advertisers, as well as degrading the viewing experience. Nowhere is general taxation via the public purse discussed as an option that could avoid all of these pitfalls and keep at bay private empire-builders such as Sky.



9.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

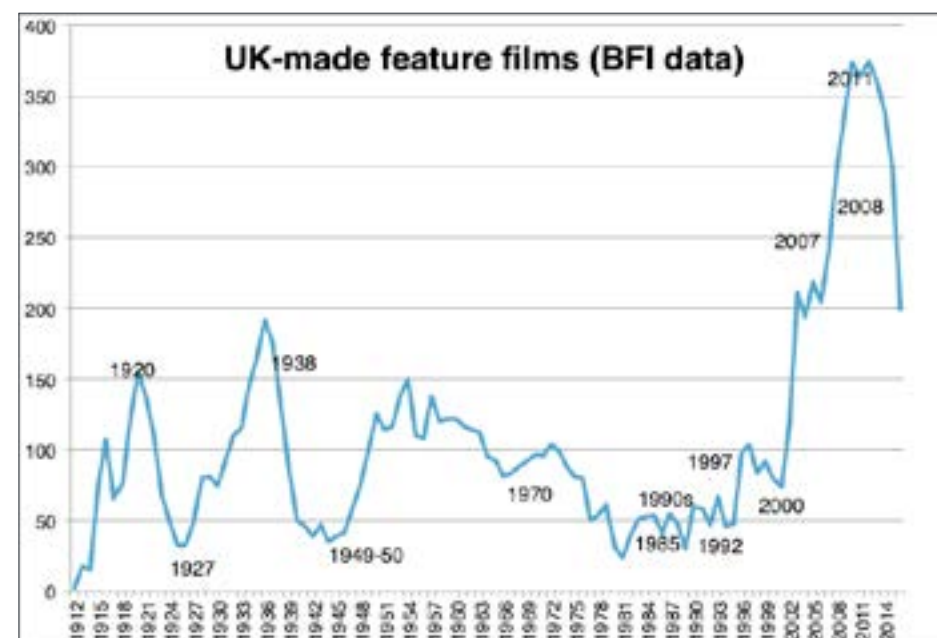
1. Stop all further moves to privatise our public service broadcasting in C4, S4C and the BBC.
2. Remove the burden on the BBC of effectively paying for the licences of the over 75s.
3. BBC Worldwide should remain within BBC ownership, sold-off facilities be brought back in-house, and commissioning to independent companies reduced not expanded. Further commercial commissioning would deprive regions outside London, where most of the commissioned companies are based, lead to cuts in training, and threaten all programme production with privatisation. In-house production must be protected and expanded but on fees that match Pact fees.
4. In negotiations with BBC Studios specifically, Equity wants to maximise benefits to members by negotiating a mix of terms from the BBC in-house agreement and terms similar to those we have with Pact, and the in-house terms need to be raised to the level of the Pact terms.
5. Independents must be members of Pact and observe the agreements made with the FEU unions.
6. Expand digital services to make historic BBC programming available through iPlayer, while challenging the dominance of the new media platforms such as Netflix, Amazon and Apple.
7. New media platforms must be brought under union agreements so that members can receive a greater share of their huge profits. The same rigorous rules on production and taxation that apply to UK broadcasters need to be applied to these companies. Tax incentives benefiting them should be made available to public service broadcasters.
8. Training and development across all skills and paid apprenticeships, with guaranteed jobs at

the end, to widen the opportunities in media employment.

9. A platform for emerging artists across all performing and visual arts. Reinstate BBC3 and fund facilities and airtime for new talent across all BBC and C4 channels.
10. Inclusive representation across all jobs in front of and behind the camera.
11. Project Diamond, investigating equality and diversity, must extend to monitoring cast and crew breakdowns of individual programmes.
12. Increased drama production on radio.
13. Protect regional TV production, for example, in Birmingham where facilities have closed.
14. The BBC's governing body should include diverse and elected representatives from viewers, practitioners' unions, and staff.
15. Defend the BBC's funding and restore funds lost in cuts since 2010 – and open discussion on a choice between the licence fee and a ring-fenced public broadcasting fund, paid from general taxation and state revenues and available only to publicly owned networks.

10.1 FILM: EXPANDING PRODUCTION AND PUBLIC FUNDING

1. The UK historically has tested four major strategies to support film making: quotas for homemade film exhibition, specialist film funding and development institutions, a levy on cinema tickets, and tax breaks (Stephen Follows, *Film Data and Education*). The turning points these policies brought about in feature film production are illustrated in the graph right.
2. In 1927, after seven years of decline caused by competition from Hollywood, the government introduced quotas for UK cinemas. 7.5% of



films exhibited were to be UK-made, rising to 20% in 1935. This prompted a steep increase in the number of features produced: see the 1938 peak.

3. During the reforms of the postwar period, the UK, like a number of other European countries, put government money directly into film production. The National Film Finance Corporation (NFFC), set up in 1949 under Attlee's post-war Labour government financed independent films and offered an alternative to the domination of the industry by Rank and the Associated British Picture Corporation. We see a substantial growth in production as a result. The NFFC was partly funded by the Eady Levy on cinema tickets from 1950, which also paid for the establishment of the National Film and Television School in 1971.
4. In 1948, there were 25 functioning film studios. By 1972, the number was 14, with losses, for example, of Denham, Isleworth and MGM

Elstree studios. Nevertheless, between 1971-73, over 250 films were made, an average of 83 a year.

In 2018, we have around 7 major studios, producing far fewer films.

The Thatcher administration finally abolished the NFFC and the Eady Levy in 1985.

5. The 1990s saw a small boost from the 'Cool Britannia' cultural wave, but the major policy changes were tax breaks for private film investors. The impact of these on the number of films produced was relatively small.
6. In contrast to the period of tax breaks alone, the establishment of the UK Film Council (UKFC) in 2000 brought an increase in film production.
7. From 2008, British Film Institute (BFI) stats start to include 'microbudget' films under £500,000, which accounts for part of the continued spike on the graph. →

8. By 2009, New Labour was already cutting UKFC's budget by 15% over five years, blaming the cost of the London Olympics. There was already an inconsistency between the welcome £6.5m spent on training and the lack of openings for practitioners due to insufficient finance for production. The effects of these cuts did not reduce the number of feature films immediately, until the UKFC was wound up by another Conservative-led government in 2011. However, it had invested £160m of Lottery money in 900 films over 11 years, an average of 81 a year.
9. Its functions passed to the BFI, which itself faced a 15% budget cut in 2012. Nevertheless, between 2011 and 2015, the BFI put £129m into film production, festivals and funds. 75% of these projects were actual films, of which around 32 were major feature films such as *High Rise* and *Pride* (Stephen Follows, 2015). The BBC and C4 have also financed many feature films.
10. Although films are often referred to as 'British', this usually means they were initiated and arranged by a registered British company, but actually financed and made by US companies. American companies have historically dominated production, distribution and exhibition in the 'British' industry. This is borne out by a recent boom in outside finance: an increase from £389m in 1998 to £1.9 billion in 2017, creating films such as *Mission Impossible Fallout* and *Phantom Thread*. This amounted to 89% of the money spent on film production here, and 71% of this money came from the 6 leading US studios (Stephen Follows, 2018). The UK's film trade surplus grew almost tenfold between 2006 and 2015, peaking in 2010 at £1.6bn, with the US accounting for 47% of exports (BFI Yearbook 2017).
11. On one hand, this meant a growth in employment and the gross value added to the UK's GDP in wages, interest and profits rose from £3.6bn in 2006 to £5.2bn in 2015, a 45%

increase. But this didn't mean a qualitative improvement in wages and conditions or reinvestment in filmmaking and practitioners in the UK. Flashpoints such as the Picturehouse strikes led by BECTU suggest stagnation in wages and conditions in exhibition, as does the experience of Equity members and other practitioners in production.

12. Also, relying on private overseas investors has not prevented the steep collapse in UK film production following the scrapping of UKFC and cuts to the BFI. Recent and historic data point clearly to the beneficial impact of publicly owned and funded film institutions on film production.
13. The UK film industry has often been good at the artistic side of things, with accomplished directors, crews and actors creating popular and artistically rated films. But the weakness has been sustainability. A report commissioned by the UKFC in 2009 revealed a bleak instability for British companies: little bank finance and inadequate public backing, a decline in co-productions and an inability to survive for long; for example, successful companies like Goldcrest, which made *Ghandi*, regularly collapsed.
14. Although the current level of production in the UK compares with European countries such as Sweden and Russia, France is way ahead. The public bodies Film France/Centre National du Cinema gave €799m to 258 films in 2014. 300 predominantly French films were made with public money in 2015 alone. This points the way forward for an independent UK industry.

10.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

1. Increase public funding for film production at the BBC, C4, S4C and BFI.
2. Raise production to at least French levels.
3. Commit to training and expansion of film jobs across all skills, and inclusive representation at all levels of skill and management.
4. Create a publicly owned and financed film producing sector with a long-term vision for production, distribution and exhibition of UK films, funded by general taxation.

11.1 GAMES - BETTER TREATMENT FOR OUR MEMBERS

1. The Games industry is an increasingly important area for our employment and its role in the national economy. The UK is now the world's fifth biggest video game market, and in 2017, it was valued at £5.11 billion. The government offers tax relief to the sector and for every £1 invested an additional £4 was generated for the UK economy.
2. Many games are produced in the UK, but many are also collaborative ventures with European and other companies. There are over 2,000 games companies in the UK, the majority in London but others in major towns such as Manchester, Cambridge, Bristol, Sheffield and Glasgow.
3. The industry does not have a central negotiating body such as Pact, but UK Interactive Entertainment (UKIE) is a trade association that lobbies on behalf of the industry, and Equity is in discussion on a range of issues including harassment, disability, and model terms for the engagement of artists for voice over and performance capture.
4. Members have a positive and optimistic

attitude towards the industry and the opportunities it offers, but there is a need for greater clarity and professionalism in the way we are treated and how we are paid.

5. There are a number of issues of key concern in the field:
 - Perpetuation of stereotypes around race, gender, ethnicity.
 - Low fees and buyouts, and companies reneging on agreed fees.
 - Inadequate information on the content of work on offer: whether there are scenes involving sex, violence, nudity, bad language, how many characters are required, etc.
 - Often members have damaged their vocal folds through having to shout and scream excessively; they have been required to do stunts outside their remit, and sex scenes in front of a whole studio.
 - Who is the actual management? – games companies outsource audio and performance/motion capture work to a lot of intermediary companies, and don't take overall responsibility for how members are treated.

11.2 POLICIES FOR A FUTURE

1. Increase fees, and especially for AAA games titles with big budgets.
2. Full information on the nature of the work offered: the company, budget, project title, fee, number of characters, the platforms, sex/violence scenes, etc.
3. Companies must stick to agreed terms of employment and not throw in extras on the set.
4. Employing companies must take responsibility for the work of intermediary companies and make sure members are treated well.
5. Increase knowledge of the field among both →

companies and performers and their agents.

6. Make fully inclusive representation a requirement for BAFTA games awards.

7. On the job:

- Clear hours of work
- Shorter sessions for strenuous work
- Adequate breaks
- Closed set for sex scenes
- Clear credits

Arts Policy and Campaign Working Party

9th January 2019

Members of the Arts Policy and Campaign Working Party

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