

## **Aberdeen Performing Arts - Fair Work First Commitment Statement**

At Aberdeen Performing Arts we are committed to creating a positive, inclusive, and fair working environment. We recognise that fair work provides benefits for everyone and improves the impact we can make as an employer and as an organisation in the communities we serve. We aspire that all our team are engaged in our work, feel respected and valued, and can say, in their own way, “I love my job, and I feel respected and welcome here”.

We aim to deliver good quality and fair work and will do this through the application of The APA Way, our story of how we do business, and our values, Curiosity, Optimism, Teamwork, Loyalty and Resilience, recognising that we must always focus on listening to our people, gathering feedback and making continuous improvements. We believe that fair work practices are essential to fostering creativity, innovation, and well-being among our workforce. Our Fair Work Statement sets out where we are now, what we will do next, and will be a live statement that will be in continuous review. Our approach to Fair Work First is rooted in the following key areas:

### **Effective Voice**

We actively encourage open communication and enable structured channels for staff to raise their ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Whether through regular team meetings, individual check-ins, creative focus sessions, and engagement with our trade union, as well as informal and formal collaboration via our Leadership open-door policy, ‘Bright Ideas’ suggestion scheme, cross-company working groups, and bi-yearly ‘Soundcheck Live’ briefings, we ensure that all voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes. Our aim is to foster a culture of collaboration and mutual respect across all levels of the organisation.

Additionally, APA’s employee forum is a platform being specifically designed and led by staff to ensure everyone in our organisation has a voice. This forum exists to give each of our employees an opportunity to actively shape and influence how our workplace operates, cultivating an inclusive environment where every idea and concern can be addressed. An Employee Director will also be appointed to the Board of Directors to bring an independent voice at Board level.

### **Investment in Workforce Development**

We are dedicated to nurturing the growth and development of our people. Sessions to enhance performance and career growth for current and future jobs are in progress. Steps are being taken to boost the onboarding of our people combined with an emphasis on coaching and mentoring.

We will help our team enhance their skills and progress in their roles, with the provision of transparent opportunities for career progression and personal development both within and outside of the organisation. We support and encourage participation in external workshops, conferences and artist residencies to build skills and expertise and inspire new ways of working for our Creative Engagement team.

We understand that workers who are fulfilled at work are more likely to be engaged, committed and healthy. To support this, we aim to build job satisfaction into all roles and create a culture where staff can “create a SPARK”, whatever their role, in achieving our mission as an organisation. We aim to create an environment which ensures and supports the physical and mental health and wellbeing of employees is paramount. This is enabled through our policies relating to health and wellbeing, our suite of organisational benefits, our enhanced sickness and wellbeing time off policies, our wellbeing information campaigns and activities, and our health and wellbeing champions, which include first aiders, mental health first aiders and people who have a particular interest in championing wellbeing across our teams.

We encourage everyone to get involved and engaged in what we do, further than the tasks of a job. Our working groups such as our Green Team, Health & Safety working group, or our Wellbeing & Social group, are accessible to all staff, to provide input into how we do things. Our people are given opportunities to attend and experience our programme for free or at discounted rates so that they feel connected to our organisation and our events.

#### **No Inappropriate Use of Zero-Hours Contracts**

We recognise the challenges posed by insecure work and are committed to minimising the use of zero-hours contracts. Where such contracts are used, we ensure they provide fair and predictable terms. We prioritise offering secure contracts with set hours and clear working conditions to all employees and freelancers, recognising their need for stability and consistency. We have also increased the use of fixed-term and seasonal contracts rather than casual contracts and we are committed to continuing the journey of offering more guaranteed hours contracts across the organisation.

#### **Tackling the Gender Pay Gap and Inequality**

We actively work to promote equality and diversity within our workforce. By conducting audits of pay, recruitment, and promotion practices, we ensure that gender, race, disability, age, or any other protected characteristic is not a barrier to opportunity or fair pay. We are committed to reducing the gender pay gap and addressing all forms of workplace inequality, nurturing an environment where everyone can thrive.

#### **Payment of the Real Living Wage**

Being an accredited Real Living Wage employer and applying the Real Living Wage further than accreditation requires, means all our team members regardless of age are paid at least the Real Living Wage. We believe that if someone is doing the job, they should be paid the same for the work, regardless of age or contractual status. We are proud to be a Real Living Wage employer, this commitment supports fair remuneration for the vital contributions our team makes to the success of our organisation and the creative sector as a whole. Further information can be found via <https://scottishlivingwage.org/>.

### **Flexible and Family-Friendly Working Practices**

Recognising the diverse needs of our workforce, we offer flexible working arrangements wherever possible. Whether through part-time work, flexible hours, remote working options, or other family-friendly practices, we support a healthy work-life balance. We understand the importance of accommodating caregiving responsibilities and personal needs, and we strive to create a flexible working culture that enhances well-being and productivity. We challenge the status quo – always asking ourselves “how could this be done differently to what we’ve done before”, offering flexibility of options and contractual status where possible, recognising that a variety of options will be best suited to different people and their lifestyles.

### **Opposition to Fire and Rehire Practices**

We are firmly opposed to the use of fire and rehire practices. In the event of necessary restructuring or changes to contracts, we are committed to engaging in meaningful consultation with our employees and unions, finding fair solutions that respect the rights and dignity of all workers. Our approach prioritises stability, transparency, and mutual trust.

By adhering to these principles, we aim to create an equitable, sustainable, and inspiring working environment for all those involved in our creative work. We believe that by embedding fair work practices at APA, we not only support the well-being of our team but also contribute to a thriving and resilient arts sector in Scotland.

Signed on behalf of the Aberdeen Performing Arts Leadership Team:



Suzanne Noble, Head of People and Culture

17 October 2024

Signed on behalf of the workforce:



Tom O'Neill, Duty Manager and Box Office Assistant

17 October 2024