

D'Art question 6: Remuneration policies for the arts

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BACKGROUND:

The Performing Arts Network of South Africa (PANSAs) is a national association of performing arts practitioners, creative artists working in the performing arts, technical and stage workers, designers, administrators, educators, organisations and institutions. One of the objectives of PANSAs is to promote and defend the interests of performing arts practitioners and to this end, the Association serves as a united front to lobby government, the private sector, and other relevant agencies on matters related to the performing arts sector.

CONTEXT:

Presently in South Africa there are very few tangible guidelines for acceptable remuneration rates for performing artists (dancers, actors, musicians, singers etc.) and PANSAs has undertaken to research and make recommendations to the performing arts industry, including the National Department of Arts and Culture, about recommended remuneration rates; to set out clearly defined and acceptable rates of pay in the performing arts industry.

PANSAs is therefore conducting research into the following:

- The rate of pay performing artists are currently being paid during rehearsal periods (daily rate? weekly rate? monthly rate?)
- The rate of pay performing artists are currently being paid during performance (total run of performance including extended periods)
- The different rates of pay according to experience and "star" appeal
- What benefits are included?
- What tax rates are levied?
- Current performing artists' contracts. The gathering of these documents is important to evaluate and recommend standard terms and conditions.

PANSAs, in association with relevant labour unions, intends making its recommendations about rates of remuneration as a result of its members' input and from national and international research.

QUESTIONS:

PANSAs is seeking input from Arts Councils that have or promote policies that suggest standardised rates of pay for performing artists, as well as creative artists associated with performance (for example directors, choreographers, conductors). Such standards we would imagine are used to guide entities employing performing artists on a permanent or contract (ad hoc) basis. These entities would be:

- Commercial theatre managements
- Subsidised / funded theatre managements (such as State subsidised)
- Community theatre managements (such as NGO's)
- Corporate performance assignments

We are particularly seeking responses from arts funding agencies in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Brazil, Turkey and Councils elsewhere in Africa.

We are seeking information on:

- How are the remuneration rates recommended? Are they structured as awards or standards negotiated by labour unions or as recommendations of collectives such as our own PANSA (artist's guilds)?
- How have the remuneration rates been structured - do they include only rates of pay or are there recommendations about benefits and tax guidelines?
- Do Arts Councils undertake research to re-assess and update policies for remuneration? If yes, what research is undertaken?
- How do Arts Councils benchmark (nationally or internationally) their rates of pay? How often does this benchmarking exercise take place?
- Are policy documents about rates of pay (recommended remuneration rates) available for review? If so, please provide details.
- Are the rates of pay policies of Arts Councils used to inform or standardise the rates of pay for private, commercial, subsidised / funded, community or amateur arts organisations?
- How are rates of pay monitored?
- Do Arts Councils have bargaining powers on behalf of the performers?
- Are there different rates of pay for different disciplines (for example dance, music and theatre)? How does this come about? What are the criteria?
- If Arts Councils have an annual budget, how do they distribute the budget amongst the different disciplines? How do they benchmark this distribution?

CONCLUSION

Any assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated. Specific assistance might be by providing:

- 1) copies of artist remuneration policies, or links/references to policies;
- 2) references to reports or analyses of remuneration policies, including academic articles (full references please and web links where possible please); and/or
- 3) contact details for anyone who would be willing to assist or liaise with PANSA on this topic.

END