

**Touring Exhibitions Group
Meeting of the Executive and Advisory Boards**



**25 November 2020
Meeting held online
MINUTES**

Present:

Nicola Coleby (Chair) – NC
Roz Bonnet – RB
Janine Parrish – JP
Alice Lobb – AL
Sonja Kielty – SK
Alanna Davidson – AD
Natalie Patel – NP
Dana Andrew – DA

Ann Barnes – AB
Charlie Alexander – CA
Andrew Deathe – AJD
Aaron Rossi – AR
Emma Daker – ED
Sandy Wood – SW
Felicity Sylvester – FS

1. Apologies and Welcome

Apologies received from: Elena Saggars – ES; Karen Lewis - KL

The meeting began with a welcome to Felicity Sylvester, a newly co-opted member of the Advisory Board. Felicity is Exhibition Partnerships Manager at the Natural History Museum in London and has a wide range of experience with touring exhibitions, both in the UK and overseas. As a co-opted member of the Board, Felicity will vote with everyone to show an opinion but her vote will not be considered as decisive.

2. Review of Action Plan from 2nd October meeting

It was agreed that all activities to be completed in October will be deemed to be completed, unless specifically raised during the Committee member responsible for the action.

1.1.1.1a NC confirmed that Charlotte Dew had now resigned from her position as Professional Development Manager. DA was in discussion with NC about taking over the role and a new contract will be agreed when an appointment is confirmed. NC said that Charlotte had agreed to stay on the register of potential trainers for future activities and wanted to stay in contact with TEG. NC will arrange for a gift and card to be sent to Charlotte on behalf of TEG. All committee members were asked to forward messages to include in the card to NC

1.1.1.8 The Privacy Policy will now be updated to remove people and organisations from the records 18 months after their membership has lapsed to take into account the difficulties some may be facing during the current pandemic. Currently we only have a PDF copy of the policy, which can't be edited. AL said that she had been unable to update the document as it is a PDF and would have to speak to Catherine Livesey to update it. NC asked if AL could ask KL to look at editing the document instead, to save money.

1.1.7 Discussions with Arts Council England re future funding now with NC.

1.2 CA has followed up the web links from heritage and arts organisations to ensure they correctly link to TEG. She will now do the same with corporate suppliers.

2 DA asked how much money was thought to be outstanding from Art Fund's previous 'Preparing to Borrow' grant and whether it might still be available to us. AJD said he would look up the information and copy it to DA and NC for them to further investigate.

2 NC, JP and AJD have been looking at re-aligning the budget in light of current predicted incomes and expenditure and will continue to do so, informing the rest of the Committee when a new budget is agreed.

3 NC and NP are still to discuss cover of Secretariat and Executive positions in case of Covid-19 issues. This will move to the next Action Register.

4 Investigating methods of online donations, via external websites and our own, is still ongoing, with various options being looked at by CA, SK and DA.

3. Coronavirus risk Assessment and recovery plan

NP circulated the Risk Assessment and Recovery Plan, last updated on 10th November. After this meeting there will be further updates on the future Marketplace booking and the Professional Development manager role.

DA asked if the Risk Assessment covers what will happen if contractors are unable to work due to Covid restrictions. NP said she will discuss the matter with NC and report back.

The Recovery Plan had been updated and NC led us through the changes:

Outstanding job description reviews are for Prof Dev Manager and Marketing Manager. The former will be discussed by NC and DA and the latter will go on the backburner for now.

The Website Manager will be reissued with increased hours to bring them back up to the level of previous contracts.

In the New Year we should look at recruiting a new Committee member when RB steps down. Everyone asked for suggestions of nominees.

DA has set up a shared marketing calendar on Trello. A working group is required for checking that calendar. NC will follow up with KL and asked for volunteers.

DA is considering taking on the Prof Dev Manager role, in light of Charlotte Dew's resignation. Continuing discussion with NC.

TESS (not Constantine, as mentioned in the document) have paid their promised sponsorship of £2,000 for Prof Dev in 2019/20 and this will contribute to the Art Fund Project total expenditure.

4. Website

CA reported that engagement with the website was highest in the middle of the week (Tuesdays to Thursdays). The posts about lockdown experiences were well engaged with.

Ben Uri Museum have asked for access to Google Analytics data on their pages. CA said it was possible to provide and this might be something we are asked for more often in the future. Is this something which TEG wishes to provide to members? NC asked if CA could provide the information for a small fee. The Museum does do this on all the other sites it uses. AB said that she thought as a one off it is fine but if it is a longer-term practice then organisations may use it to excuse ending their membership. RB said that she was uncomfortable with the idea as it is giving away powerful business intelligence, and if we do it for one member, we need to be prepared to do it for all who ask. FS asked if the data could be exported to them rather than giving them access to the whole site. CA said they would only get access to their data. ED asked if we could review what other organisations do. AD said that Vastari allow people listing exhibitions to see how many viewers have seen the listing but that is a far more commercial and expensive service. AB was concerned that our service was much smaller than that of Vastari and TEO and that we would look poor in comparison if the data was given out without context. RB pointed out that the context of the current year should be taken into account. DA said we could tell people that they could reach up to X number of people per year through our website, rather than exact numbers for individuals, and that we give that information to all members. Everyone was asked to email CA, RB and AB with their opinion. CA was asked to email Ben Uri Museum to tell them we are considering the matter.

Surface Impression have said that they can add a donation button to the website. It would take four hours of their time. CA asked if we want to go ahead with that and where it should go on the site. NP suggested on the home page, near 'News'. NC and RB said that we should be encouraging people to join alongside the donation. SK and ED both had experience of donation buttons with mixed results. Both volunteered to follow it up to inform our decision. DA asked about registering with Stripe for payments and donations, AB and AJD are in the process of setting up Stripe but need to resolve some of the bank account issues before we can fully subscribe to that system. The issues may take some time to address but the process has been started.

CA reported that TsoHost have said that we can't access our own website error logs and they are only kept for a few days. NC and DA both mentioned that TsoHost have been problematic recently and that it may be worth investigating working with other hosts instead.

CA reported that Surface Impression are charging us for repairs to issues that have always been there since the website was set up and issues which are not our fault. NC said that she would contact the CEO of Surface Impression, Peter Pavement, to ask for his advice.

CA asked if we wanted to host documents produced by external bodies, such as the information on travel in the Covid age that she was sent. NC and RB both thought it was a commercial promotion and NP, and others, also agreed that it wasn't something that sat comfortably with them. NC said that CA should go back to the originator and say that we would take it as a paid advert only.

CA will remove Charlotte Dew's details from the website but retain her listed as a trainer if there is a list of those people already on the site. AB suggested we offer Charlotte honorary membership and the motion was passed.

CA asked if anyone wanted anything in particular covered by her reports, to make them shorter in future. NC asked everyone to email CA if they had suggestions.

5. Membership

AB reported that some members had been in contact saying they were very happy with the service from TEG. She was talking to KL about scheduling Twitter and LinkedIn posts to encourage more membership. ED asked how many members were listing their venues as potential hosts for touring exhibitions. AB said it was currently very poor and difficult to encourage members to sign up, even though they do take in touring exhibitions.

NC mentioned that JP, AJD and herself had been looking at projected membership income for the current financial year and this was revised to around £18,000, from £21,000, based on current income levels. A Trustees meeting to consider revising the budget is planned for 14 December.

The committee voted in favour of installing Stripe on the website in this financial year. CA said that the time required by Surface Impression to install the app will come from support time we have already purchased.

RB looked at the questions that her and AB had put in the papers they sent for the meeting (5b. Membership Structure Review Questions for Trustees and Board Nov 2020 meeting). RB thanked everyone for their contributions and answers but said there were still some outstanding issues to address, to enable a transition to a new membership structure in the new financial year. In January, Committee will be asked to vote on acceptance of the new membership categories, fee structure and implementation, but to get that point consensus is required on the following:

It is agreed that there is a membership category for Education and Supporters. It is proposed that there is a cap of 3-5 years for belonging to this category before the member must move on to the Individual or Organisation membership. RB asked if TEG Trustees and Committee members should be allowed to subscribe in this category, or could they receive a discount on other categories? **Although the consensus from the discussion was that a discount should be applied, at a level for AB and RB to discuss, research by NP after the meeting flagged up that discounts would be illegal under Charitable Incorporated Organisation status, whereby trustees cannot receive benefits from working for CIO.**

Discussion took place over how the newly agreed three tiers of Organisational membership should be defined – by visitor numbers, budget or another system, such as number of staff. ED raised that some members are not open to the public in such a way that they could count visitor numbers. AL said that staff numbers would be the easiest way for members to assess their tier. SW pointed out that his organisation is very small in terms of staff numbers and budget but has a huge visitor count as they are based within a much larger organisation. AB also pointed out that the current pandemic has effectively removed visitor numbers as a standard measure with which to compare organisations. The agreement was that staff levels would be the measure and AB and RB would assess where those levels would be set and email everyone for an ‘accept’ or ‘reject’ response. AB asked everyone on the Committee to let her know the staff levels at their organisation to provide a baseline on which to create tiers.

NC raised whether the increase for some organisations from £78 to £115 for annual membership would be too much of a jump in one year, and could organisations ask for an exception for one year.

The majority agreed to increase the fee for the Corporate Membership category but RB asked if we could make a decision on what the fee should be. DA pointed out that the commercial sector had been hit as hard as the public sector and asked if they could take any increase at all. AB said that we could phase in the fee changes, introducing the Education and Supporters category from April but changing the fee structures for other categories a year later. NC agreed. RB suggested mapping the Corporate increase to the Organisational membership so that the percentage rise was the same. JP warned that any increase could provide members with a reason to not renew their membership and that she was nervous of

any increase at the moment. NC said that TEG is struggling like our members and that a small increase would be palatable to most of them.

RB said this moved on to the next point, which was to offer a discount if members paid for two years of membership at once. This idea was unanimously agreed to by the Committee and RB asked at what level the discount should be and should it be a percentage or a fixed amount. AL asked if such a scheme would save us staff time and therefore costs. DA asked if renewing for two years could make the rate per year the same as it currently stands (i.e. £78 per year for ordinary membership). She also asked if two-year memberships would cause problems with cashflow when we are budgeting for the year. NC suggested that we could 'reserve' 50% of the fees to carry them into the second year. She also wondered if this could be offered as a one-off discount opportunity, rather than an ongoing arrangement.

RB said that she would work with AB to produce a final list of questions that requiring voting on and that would be sent to Committee for the January meeting. AJD will add this to the January agenda.

6. Marketing

KL was not present at the meeting but sent a report soon after.

AJD asked on KL's behalf, should TEG send a Christmas card and newsletter in mid-December and should it have a new design by Catherine Livesey. AJD said that the design budget was already spent for the financial year and perhaps we could re-use a previous design. NC agreed to take the latter route. DA pointed out that the newsletter needs to go early in the month to promote the next online training webinar and AB said that it was scheduled for 5th December. AJD said he would pass that information to KL.

7. Minutes of the last meeting

KL to be asked again about moving from Tweetdeck to Hootsuite.

AJD to amend last paragraph of section 6 (Marketplace) as AB had spoken to TESS about sponsorship, not NC.

AJD to post minutes to the website.

8. AOB

Marketplace 2021: AB asked for a Committee vote on cancelling the physical event for 2021 and that we ask People's History Museum to move the deposit to 2022, when we will hold the event. ED said that we would be better to concentrate on an online event. Vote passed unanimously. AB will contact Momart and Constantine to see if they will sponsor an online event.

9. Date and Location of next meeting

This will be in early-ish January, AJD will send the usual Doodle Poll.