

Live Art Development Agency Ethical Funding Policy

Introduction

The Agency's Ethical Funding Policy is designed as a checking tool to ensure that the needs of the organisation are balanced against its principles. The Policy broadly defines a set of principles that can be used to evaluate how to respond to challenging funding opportunities. As time goes on, a body of precedents may grow up around each principle.

This Policy has been challenging to develop, reflecting the difficulties involved in identifying the sources and uses of finance, and recognising that the Agency works with a broad range of partners within a complex economic ecosystem. These challenges and complexities have also informed the decision to focus on broad definitions in this Policy.

The Agency will periodically evaluate its activities and check they are in line with the Policy, and it is everyone's role to observe and implement it on a continuous basis. These periodic reviews may necessitate the Policy being updated.

Funding

The Agency will not knowingly apply to, or accept funding from, companies, organisations or individuals who are directly involved in activities that run contrary to our overall aims. These include companies, organisations or individuals who directly block or actively work against social justice; whose activities directly harm the environment; or who directly block or work against community empowerment. In such circumstances, and when appropriate, the Agency will share this Policy with the relevant companies, organisations or individuals.

It is challenging to identify all of the activities that the Agency would consider to be contrary to our aims. However, companies, organisations or individuals who are directly involved in these areas would usually be seen as working against our aims: animal testing; the fur trade; oil and petroleum; human rights abuses; manufacture of hazardous products or chemicals; military contracts; ozone depleting chemical production; tobacco. The Agency acknowledges that this list includes broad definitions, and issues of direct and indirect ownership and/or control can be complex to identify and understand; the Agency will therefore use its best efforts to appropriately assess each situation it faces on a case-by-case basis.

The Agency is likely to receive funding from statutory bodies or charitable trusts. We accept this funding because it is intended to promote work that contributes to our aims and because it is necessary for the Agency's operations. We do recognise, however, that those statutory bodies are not necessarily ethical just by virtue of being statutory bodies. In recognition of this, we attempt to promote good practice by disseminating our methods and where appropriate we will ask for ethical policies from the bodies we are involved with.

We recognise that occasionally trusts are set up with the express purpose of making an otherwise unethical company seem more ethical and responsible through positive advertising: the greenwash effect. Under such circumstances, the guiding principle of this policy prevails: in general, the Agency would not knowingly accept money from a charitable trust whose activities run contrary to our aims. An exception to this might be

a trust that the Agency considered to be making a genuine effort to re-adjust its operations in line with the principles outlined in this Policy.

The Agency will actively pursue funding and support from organisations that make a positive social, cultural or environmental impact.

Partnerships

The Agency aims to be in partnership with individuals and organisations that are working towards the same or similar aims. It also aims to work with individuals and organisations who may have not considered the issues raised in this document, but who are willing to listen and possibly change their practices through dialogue with the Agency.

The Agency will not work in partnership with any individual or organisation, either company, statutory, voluntary or community-based, whose activities are directly contrary to our aims. In this context, partnership means any work that the Agency does whereby the responsibility for the end result of that work is jointly owned between the Agency and another individual or group.

The Agency recognizes that its Partners (including arts and higher education organisations, and individual artists) may receive funding from organisations or individuals whose activities run contrary to our aims. In such circumstances, the Agency will share this Policy with its Partner and strive to ensure that the partnership is not directly related to, or publicly associated with, the Partner's funded activities. The Agency will not directly or indirectly publicize, credit or endorse the funder.

Implementing this Policy

The Agency's Co-Directors will use their best efforts to effectively implement this Policy as they direct and coordinate the Agency's activities. In exceptional circumstances, any issues of concern, confusion or contention may be referred to the Agency's Board of Directors.

The list of areas above is in no way exhaustive and it is clear that more questions may arise in the course of the Agency's development than have been covered within this Policy. The above statements of principle are meant as a working guide to assist in making decisions about these unforeseen situations.

Notes

The Agency's Funding Policy was informed by The Kindling Trust and by the excellent work of PLATFORM London:

<http://www.kindling.org.uk/ethical-fund-raising-policy>

<http://platformlondon.org/>

The Agency commissioned Jane Trowell of Platform to write a Study Room Guide on these issues: *Take the money and run? Some positions on ethics, business sponsorship and making art.*