

# Interpreting the results of a survey on the establishment of the International Arts and Homelessness Movement, 2016

Key observations and recommendations are in bold

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## 1. Introduction

1.1. This paper interprets and reflects on the results of a survey conducted by Streetwise Opera, as part of its consultation on the establishment of an international arts and homelessness movement. The results themselves were collated by Streetwise Opera.

Invitations to take part in the survey were sent to approximately 100 organisations and 25 individuals in 10 countries. Most respondents used English and the answers of those writing in other languages were translated. Most questions used a Likert-type scale, requiring respondents to select an answer on a scale (e.g. 'very important/important/neutral/not important/don't know' or 'strongly agree/agree/neutral/disagree/don't know') but there were also opportunities to express opinions or share ideas in their own words.

(Please note that any percentages reported below have been rounded up to the nearest 0.5%. For example, 25.5% is reported as 26% and 25.4% is reported as 25%.)

## 2. The respondents

2.1. 87 responses were received.

2.2. The responses came predominantly from England and within England from London. 57% of all respondents were based in the UK, all but two of whom were in England and 38% of all respondents were in London. The only other British location generating more than two responses was Manchester, with eight. There were two respondents in Scotland but none from Wales or Northern Ireland.

2.3. The other countries represented were, in order of the number of responses received, Canada (11), the USA (8), Australia (3), Japan (3), Bolivia (2), New Zealand (2) and one from each of the following: Brazil, Finland, Ireland, Slovenia, South Africa and Spain. The low number of responses from Brazil may be because the individuals and organisations with whom Streetwise has an established connection feel they have already expressed their support for the idea of an international movement.

**2.4. The results of the survey reflect an English - and within that a London - perspective, with a significant input from North America (22% of all responses). The survey is not time sensitive, so if there are opportunities for Streetwise to invite further responses from individuals or organisations, as and when they meet people from countries other than England, this would be of value.**

## 3. The need for an international arts and homelessness movement

3.1. 92% of respondents agree (33%) or strongly agree (59%) that there is a need for 'a global arts and homelessness movement' (Q1). **There is no need for further endorsements from England, Canada or the USA, but the broader the international**

**base of the movement, at the outset, the better. This can be achieved through the continued distribution of survey forms when the opportunity arises, as suggested at 2.4.**

3.2. Just over 73% of respondents are interested in becoming a member of the network and all but two of the remainder might be interested. (Q8). The survey has provided new country-by-country contacts who may be interested in the movement (Q14) and ideas about organisations, networks and individuals that might promote it to others (Q15).

3.3. The naming of the movement has not been resolved by the survey (Q11). While most respondents like With One Voice, the smallest number of objections to any of the five names suggested, was to International Arts and Homelessness Movement. **One option would be to register the organisation as With One Voice: The International Arts and Homelessness Movement but to shorten the name to With One Voice in daily use.** 25 respondents suggested alternative names (Q12)

#### **4. The proposed aims**

4.1. There is solid support for the five provisional aims included in the survey (Q2). At an evaluation meeting at Streetwise Opera on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016, the wording of aims 1, 2, 4 and 5 was refined and aim 3 (which is better expressed as an output) was deleted. It is unlikely that respondents would object to the revised wording, which is as follows:

- i. to strengthen existing arts and homelessness activity
- ii. to inspire new arts and homelessness activity
- iii. to increase awareness of the importance of the arts for people with experience of homelessness around the world
- iv. to influence policy in relation to homelessness and the arts

4.2. Additional aims suggested by respondents (Q3) are either covered by the four above or by the outputs now being developed by Matt Peacock, Ellie Raymont and colleagues. **Future feedback from countries other than Britain and North America may reveal different national and cultural priorities. The emerging movement will need to remain alert to these, but at this stage the aims are uncontroversial.**

#### **5. What the movement should 'do practically'**

5.1. There is solid support for the proposed 'practical activities' of the movement (Q4), with six of the seven proposed seen as important or very important by between 86% and 97% of respondents and even the least popular scoring 74%.

5.2. Considering the 'very important' scores only, the activity rated most highly is 'the creation of a strong evidence base that demonstrates the need for arts and homelessness activity'; followed by 'the provision of funding for activities arising out of events and exchanges' and 'the facilitation of annual exchanges of arts and homelessness'.

5.3. If the 'important' 43% and 'very important' 53% scores are combined, the 'creation of a website that promotes projects/organisations working in this field, provides resources and connects projects' comes a close second to the creation of a strong evidence base. **This**

reinforces the message that respondents are interested in resources they can use to increase their capacity to achieve their objectives and ideally, at little cost to themselves. While international exchanges are clearly recognised as interesting and useful, they require time and money from each participant. Making the most of an evidence base and a website also requires time, but the participant can determine when and how to use them.

5.4. There is more support for the proposed annual exchanges than there is for conferences. **Any doubts about the value of international conferences may be due to uncertainty about their purpose, the time and money involved and in some cases, the environmental impact of international travel.**

5.5. The other lower scoring activity is 'webinars or live online events'. This may be due to unfamiliarity with such events, disappointing previous experience of them (due to inadequate technology, connectivity or preparation) or lack of access to the necessary technology and connectivity. **In a few years' time, on-line events may be much more common and the necessary technology more readily available.**

5.6. The 31 responses to the question 'Is there anything else you really need?' include a mixture of advice, proposals and requests, ranging from lobbying for changes in government policy to the development of ethical guidelines and quality standards to fundraising and the provision of exhibition space. The responses are so individual and varied in type and weight, they are difficult to group at this stage and without having site of the individual responses, it is not possible to see where a request that refers to local provision has come from. **The recommendation is that the team links these 31 responses to their authors and then creates a wall chart that organises them by type and by country. This will be a reminder of the diversity of the potential membership of the movement and its interests and a valuable resource for the team that is writing the movement's first business plan. Some of these proposals may become objectives or outputs.** (See also 7. below)

## 6. The website and communications

6.1. The survey included six possible roles for the movement's website, four of which are considered more important by respondents than the other two. The two with least support are 'send out newsletters' and 'host an online helpdesk'. One factor in the lower score may be a shortage of detail about the purpose of newsletters and the scope of the help that might be provided by a helpdesk at this stage. Some may think that a good website that provides contact details, advertises events and celebrates projects and organisations in the field obviates the need for a newsletter. They may be aware that e-newsletters are often not opened by their recipients. It may also be that at least some of the respondents are newsletter weary and as experienced practitioners or managers think they are unlikely to need a helpdesk.

6.2. Respondents would prefer to communicate with other members of the movement through a dedicated forum on the website rather than through generic social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter (Q10). All of the other roles proposed for the website could be accommodated within the functions already suggested but **as with the list of additional 'practical activities', it would be useful to list and group the other roles suggested and refer to them when finalising the brief for the website.**

## 7. Challenges

7.1. The survey drew wide-ranging and considered views on the challenges the movement might face (Q13). These are listed in Ellie Raymont's collation of the survey results. As suggested in 5.6. above, **these views could usefully be grouped by the team and used to inform the movement's first business plan and in particular its risk analysis.**