

Rae-Yen Song: working document

Please do not share this document without my consent

Pronouns: she/her or they/them in everyday usage (see 6.2 on the use of pronouns in public texts)

Introduction

Thank you for inviting me to work on a new project! This is my working document explaining how I would like to work with you in order to begin a healthy and honest working relationship by ensuring the requests I make are clear and that things aren't miscommunicated. This has been developed (and continues to develop) in order to support me practising in an ethical, caring and sustainable manner that in turn, will allow me to deliver the best project possible. If you have any questions or can't provide something that's on the list, I'm very happy to discuss things with you; I'm interested in this document as something that informs a healthy working relationship, not as a punitive standard that I measure you against.

I welcome a meeting to openly and honestly discuss things further and to work out the best way to communicate and work together.

1. Access

- 1.1. **I have scoliosis (curvature of the spine) and chronic leg pain:** At times, this affects me acutely and at others it is much easier for me to manage. It can be painful for me to stand or sit for long periods of time.

Request: I will not always need to be seated but would request access to a seat at all times (particularly during install/events/meetings/etc).

- 1.2. **I have dyslexia:** This is something I have generally learnt to work with/around. However it often takes me a long (difficult) time to read; organise/summarise my thoughts in writing/out loud; process a lot of information (amongst other things). I work closely with my producer (2.1) who is able to support me in this.

Request: Please be as clear and concise as possible with emails - especially if lengthier/dealing with a lot of information (eg structuring information as bullet points) to help me to respond quickly and efficiently.

2. Producer

- 2.1. Throughout all projects I work closely with producer, Michael Barr. He is my partner, and also an artist. He supports me personally, and with administration, copywriting, technical planning, fabrication, transport and install.

Request: At a certain point in the project, I will cc the producer into all email communication with you. From that point on, please ensure that you cc him into your emails to me.

3. Contracts

- 3.1. I request that a contract be drawn up for all projects.
- 3.2. My broad preference is for transparency; I will not agree to contractual clauses preventing me from disclosing to others the terms of my contract with you (unless there is good reason for confidentiality related to the specific context of the project).

4. Costs

4.1. Production budget

Requests:

- I request that you cover the costs of all shipping, install and deinstall necessary to the project, and these costs should not come out of the production budget. If any other costs are expected to come out of the production budget, this should be communicated to me before the production budget is agreed;
- The production budget should be advanced to me (unless an alternative arrangement is agreed upon). I prefer to solely manage the production budget from project beginning to completion (receipts and budget summary will be kept/made available).

4.2. Producer fee

Request: A fee for the producer - to be agreed based on the nature and scope of the project - should be allocated or sourced.

4.3. Proposal writing

Requests:

- If you require me to write a proposal, then I request that you provide an honorarium/proposal-writing fee. This can be agreed depending on the scope of the proposal.

4.4. Travelling/on location

Requests:

- I request that you cover the costs of all transport and accommodation necessary to the project, for both me (and the producer, where necessary);
- I request that self-catering accommodation is provided for me (and the producer, where necessary) if I am needed on location for more than 2 days;
- I request that a per diem/sustenance budget is provided for both me (and the producer, where necessary) when travelling/on location with/for your organisation (eg for site visits/install/openings/events/workshops/touring etc).

4.5. Supplementary activities

Request: If you would like me to contribute to activities or events which supplement the principal work of the project (eg artist talks, panel discussions), then please ensure that you are able to offer a supplementary fee to cover the time and labour of my involvement in these activities.

5. Communication

5.1. Emails: I will do my best to respond within a 3 working day timeframe.

Request: Please feel free to head emails "URGENT" if you need my attention more quickly.

5.2. Digital Meetings

Request: I prefer to meet digitally and to schedule these meetings for the mornings, with a maximum duration of one hour.

5.3. Complications

Request: I request that you nominate a secondary contact in your organisation, whom I can reach in the unlikely event that difficulties arise between my key contact and me.

6. Copywriting and marketing

6.1. I prefer to be involved in the copywriting process to make sure that texts sit comfortably with me and my work.

Requests:

- I reserve the right to approve all final texts/copy/press/marketing/documentation material that relates to or includes my name or my work. Once approved, no other changes should be made, unless agreed with me;
- Any copywriting deadlines should be given with ample time (at least 5 working days' notice).

6.2. In any public texts/contexts about me or my work, I should have full control over the use of any ethnic categorisation/labels to describe me. In public texts/contexts I do not refer to myself with gendered pronouns (also avoiding neutral 'they/them') - I just use my name.

Request: Please relay this information to anyone else who may be involved in marketing, public programme, editing and/or distributing texts (including external bodies) etc, to avoid any miscommunications or assumptions regarding my identity or my work.

7. Social and environmental values

I try to work as resourcefully and as responsibly as I can, and am always seeking to improve my working practices. I request that the organisations with which I work do the same.

- 7.1. All travel associated with my project should be by public transport where possible, or carbon neutral, or ideally both.
- 7.2. All materials that are not shipped back to me and are not considered artworks - after discussion and with my consent - should be recycled responsibly, and/or repurposed and shared post-project (with local artists, other spaces etc).
- 7.3. I refuse to work as a racialised individual who is perceived by default to shoulder anti-racist work.
- 7.4. If I bring other people into your organisation to participate in or support my project, I request that you host and welcome these guests by, for example, providing refreshments and comfort to support togetherness.
- 7.5. Anyone I work with, or others who work for your organisation to support my project/exhibition (such as invigilators) should not be paid less than living wage.
- 7.6. Any event/project/exhibition I am a part of should always be made accessible for those with disabilities. Wherever my name is listed on your website or any marketing material, the access information for the event/building should be listed. Where possible, this should be followed:
www.shapearts.org.uk/News/accessible-marketing-guide

Reflective questions for institution

- How is the institution funded? How is this particular project being funded?
- How is the institution handling its environmental responsibilities?
 - What happens to materials post-project?
 - Does the institution have a recycling policy?
 - Does the institution run on 100% renewable energy?
 - How else is the institution working to eliminate its carbon emissions and wider environmental impact? (For example: how do staff travel to work? How environmentally responsible are the institution's supply chains?)
 - How does the institution offset carbon emissions which cannot currently be eliminated?
 - Are you able to adhere to the [Matter Rider - created by Helen Mirra](#)?
- What is the institution doing about white supremacy?
 - What do your staff, board, and audiences look like?
 - Who do you work with, and why?

- How do you distribute power?
- How is the institution agitating for structural change to broaden accessibility at the sector or societal level? For example, if the institution is not able to do this directly, how does it support or engage with lobbyists/activists who are better placed to agitate for change?
- How does the institution archive projects? What will be the legacy of the work within the organisation? How do you support the artists you work with post-project?

Further reading / resources

- *A Freelance Supporters menu:*
www.the-uncultured.com/uploads/1/3/2/2/132249368/menu_versionone_aug2020_.pdf
- *Access docs for artists - created by Leah Clements, Alice Hattrick and Lizzy Rose:*
www.accessdocsforartists.com
- *Matter rider - by Helen Mirra:* www.hmirra.net/information/pdfs/matter_rider.pdf
- *Document 0 - Teresa Cisneros, 2018:* www.agencyforagency.com
- *Decolonising the Curriculum, the Mind, the Museum here (final afterword by Andrea Francke and Teresa Cisneros):* www.ioe.academia.edu/marquardsmith
- *Industria - Artist Leaks:* www.we-industria.org/
- *FACT & Jack Tan - Easy Read Artist Contract; rethinking what a contract is and how it can be more accessible for artists (downloadable contract template):*
www.fact.co.uk/resources/2022/03/easy-read-artist-contract

I very much welcome scheduling a meeting around this working document at a later date/mid-project in order to check-in with one another. Thank you for reading!

The origins of this working document was produced through collaborative discussion (and later personally developed in writing to meet specific requests) within workshops hosted by and thanks to Teresa Cisneros (July/August 2020).

This is a flexible document, it will naturally change and grow from personal experiences and conversations with institutions/people I work and communicate with over time. This document will hopefully become something helpful for everyone involved, as well as acting as a template/shared resource for other art workers.

Nov 2023