

Rt Hon Oliver Dowden MP
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ

3rd February 2021

Dear Oliver,

Re: Support for Freelancers

I am writing to you regarding support for freelancers in the arts.

The Government's support for the arts throughout this pandemic has been generous and significant, and I thank you again for your efforts to secure the Cultural Recovery Fund. For freelancers specifically, I am also pleased that support has been forthcoming through the Job Retention Scheme and other schemes for the self-employed. However, following discussions with my contacts in the industry, I remain concerned that some may be falling through the cracks.

Clearly, if it is indeed the case, this needs to be addressed quickly. According to the Creative Industries Federation, freelancers make up 47% of the arts and culture workforce. Indeed, they are the foundation of those industries, and the Government has, rightly, recognised their importance on several occasions.

I understand and support the Government's approach to focus on protecting the arts institutions, so freelancers can return to work as soon as possible. But those institutions are nothing without the people to run them and many of those very people are leaving the industry permanently. Clearly it will be more difficult to rebuild our world leading arts offer without the talented freelancers to fill the jobs.

So, I would ask the following: what more could we do to help freelancers at this time, and are you confident that all freelancers have been eligible for support?

I would be grateful for a response and if we could find some time to discuss this matter in the coming weeks.

With best wishes,

