

Minutes

Meeting of Aosdána Toscaireacht

2pm – 4pm, Friday, 15 March 2019 at The Arts Council, 70 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

Present

Michael Holohan (Chair); Cathy Carman; Anne Haverty; Thomas McCarthy; Geraldine O'Reilly; Samuel Walsh; Bob Quinn; Eamon Colman

In attendance

Karen Hennessy (Aosdána Registrar)

Apologies

Vincent Woods, Rhona Clarke

Previous minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of 7 February 2019 were adopted.

Saoi Announcement

The successful election of Roger Doyle to the office of Saoi will be announced at the General Assembly. The Arts Council is waiting to hear from the President's office when the conferring of the Torc by the President can take place. Once this is known and a date set the Arts Council will tie in a press release, publicity and make the announcement public for maximum coverage.

General Assembly Cork, April 2019 – Update

The Great Book of Ireland will be presented at the General Assembly. This is a great addition to the Assembly being held at UCC. The Agenda for the GA was discussed. The Registrar will give a presentation on statistical research carried out to date. This was moved to the afternoon public session. The Chair will give a presentation on the Foundation of Aosdána as well as deliver the Toscaireacht's report in the morning private session.

All Standing Orders submitted were discussed and it was requested that two of the members be contacted to clarify the SO they have proposed.

Anthony Cronin Award

It was thought that it would work well to have Anne Haverty announce the winning recipient of this Award. The Bursary panel will meet on 25 March. Applications are strong.

Discipline Ballot Results

Overall there was approximately 50% return on ballots. Members need to be reminded of their right to vote which they should exercise. The small numbers of choreographers was

discussed and that it is important to try and grow the disciplines. A discussion ensued on the body of work a member of Aosdána should have and that it needs to be clear that a body of work is needed and that people of distinction are elected.

Web Site

It was hoped to have the web site live for the General Assembly. Currently it is the Irish version that is being completed and all other work complete.

Relationship with Department of Culture, Creative Ireland and Culture Ireland

It was noted that the Department of Culture had appointed 5 International Ambassadors. It was said that members of Aosdána are themselves international and often spoken about internationally. The five ambassadors are Martin Hayes, Shelley McNamara and Yvonne Farrell of Grafton Architects, Ruth Negga and Paul Muldoon. It was noted that three of these Ambassadors are members of Aosdána.

Creative Ireland was discussed and it was noted that it will wind down in 2022. Culture Ireland was discussed and noted as having a very clear agenda, particularly in light of Global Ireland 2025.

Report on RIA and DIAS

The Chair spoke about how the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) and Dublin Institute of Advance Studies (DIAS) were set up. RIA was set up in 1785 and granted a Royal Charter in 1786. DIAS was set up by Eamon deValera under the Institute for Advanced Studies Act, 1940. These differ to Aosdána in that they do not provide funding to their members in the same way as the Cnuas. The Académie Française was discussed which was set up in 1635 and in which there are only 40 members or seats.

Performers Parallel body

A performers parallel body to Aosdána was discussed. It was thought to be a good idea and one which Aosdána would support. It did not make sense to be all one group as performers have different needs. They perform the work. The work does not exist after they pass on. Aosdána could develop an affiliation with such a group and would publically support such an assembly of artists. There was an assembly vote in the past on such a body. It was outlined that any member of Aosdána can nominate any artist and so performers can be nominated. It is then up to the membership to vote and consider the nomination. It was thought that Government could help performers by widening the Artists tax exemption and also by expanding the work scheme introduced by Regina Doherty, namely the pilot jobseeker's exemption scheme that was announced on 12 June 2017. The notion of a living wage was discussed. It was stated that a living wage should apply to all and that you cannot just apply it to artists.

Spending Review Document

It was noted that this is on the Department of Culture's web site. It was noted that it is a Government document that has come out of the evaluation unit of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Working Group

It was noted that the members of the working group will change. The Toscaireacht noted that Sheila Pratscke had attended her last working group meeting, 21 Jan 2019, and wished her well with all her future endeavours.

AOB

Private Session

A session for the Toscairi.