

Minutes of the meeting of the Toscaireacht

Date: 5th December 2011
Time: 13.00 – 17.00
Venue: Offices of the Arts Council, 70 Merrion Square, Dublin

Present

Seóirse Bodley, Anthony Cronin, Theo Dorgan, Mary FitzGerald, Alice Hanratty, Dermot Healy, Brian Maguire, Shelley McNamara, Jane O'Leary, Mary O'Malley.

In attendance

Toby Dennett (Registrar) and Catherine Boothman (60th Anniversary Project and Artists' Supports Officer)

Agenda

- Election of Chairperson
- Apologies
- Welcome and introductions
- Update from Registrar
- Previous minutes and matters arising
- New member nominations
- Meeting with the Arts Council
- Election of President Higgins
- AOB

1. Election of Chairperson

Brian Maguire was elected as Chairperson for the meeting and for all subsequent meetings of the current Toscaireacht. Proposed by Anthony Cronin, seconded by Theo Dorgan and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies. All members were in attendance.

3. Welcome and introductions

Orlaith McBride, the Director of the Arts Council joined the meeting and was introduced by the Chair. The Director welcomed Toscaireacht members to the Arts Council and welcomed the opportunity to meet with representatives of Aosdána. The Director outlined a number of issues she felt were of mutual concern to the Arts Council and Aosdána and in particular expressed interest in the role that Aosdána might play in assisting the Arts Council generally in continuing to make the case for state support for the arts and arts development in Ireland.

The Toscairí congratulated the Director on her appointment and emphasised its willingness to work with the Arts Council on areas of shared interest particularly in relation to the status of individual artists.

The issue of a joint meeting with Council was raised and it was agreed that the practice of an annual meeting between the Council and Toscaireacht should be reinstated.

The Director thanked the Toscaireacht and left the meeting.

4. Update from Registrar

The Registrar distributed a number of documents including –

- Aosdana handbook
- Standing orders governing Aosdana meetings
- Expenses claim form
- List of current Council members

The Toscaireacht discussed the current make up of Council members and the process through which appointments to the Council are made. It was noted that the representation of practising artists on the Council was limited. It was agreed that the Registrar should write to Minister Jimmy Deenihan to stress the value and importance of including professional artists on the Council.

5. Previous minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the Toscaireacht meeting held on 13 June 2011 were reviewed.

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting with the following amendment:

- Under section "4. General Assembly – Follow up to motions" it was agreed to change "Motion re: gardening curriculum" to "Motion re: gardening and school curriculum".

Matters arising

Re - Performing and interpretive artists

The Chairperson reported on a meeting held with Idir Lámha.

The Toscaireacht reiterated Aosdána support for the establishment of a body to honour interpretive and performing artists. The Toscaireacht also reiterated its view as previously articulated in a letter to the Chairperson of the Arts Council that such a body should be similar to but independent of Aosdána and that such an organisation would have a close and symbiotic relationship with Aosdána.

Re - JSTOR

It was suggested that ascertaining the level of demand among Aosdána members for JSTOR would be the best way to ascertain the feasibility of providing this service.

6. New member nominations

The Toscaireacht examined all new member nominations received. Where a conflict of interest occurred Toscairí left the meeting for the duration of discussion on that nomination.

The following nominations were approved:

Architecture

Ronnie Tallon: Nominated by Shane de Blacam; seconded by Patrick Scott.

Literature

James Harpur: Nominated by John F. Deane; seconded by Mary O'Malley.

Patrick McCabe: Nominated by Dermot Healy; seconded by Neil Jordan.

Michael O'Loughlin: Nominated by Peter Sirr; seconded by Brian Lynch.

Joe Steve

Ó Neachtain: Nominated by Micheál Ó Conghaile; seconded by Gabriel Rosenstock.

Seán O'Reilly: Nominated by Deirdre Madden; seconded by Dermot Healy.

Peter Sheridan: Nominated by Theo Dorgan; seconded Thomas Kilroy.

Music

Tommy Peoples: Nominated by Dónal Lunny; seconded by Theo Dorgan.

Visual Arts

Rita Duffy: Nominated by Pat Murphy; seconded by Paul Muldoon.

David Farrell: Nominated by Benjamin Dwyer; seconded by Amelia Stein.

Frances Hegarty: Nominated by Brian Maguire; seconded by Maud Cotter.

Jay Murphy: Nominated by John Behan; seconded by Eva Bourke.

Joe Walker: Nominated by Nick Millar; seconded by Patrick Hall.

While the above nominations were approved in principle the Toscaireacht identified a number of letters and CVs where amendments and clarifications would need to be sought.

The Toscaireacht also considered the nomination of a cinematographer. It was noted that cinematographers were not currently represented in Aosdana and that the nomination would therefore require further consideration. It was agreed that consideration should in the first instance focus on the eligibility and place of cinematography within Aosdana rather than on the artist nominated.

It was agreed that the Chairperson would seek the opinion of a number of film makers in Aosdána regarding the status of cinematography and would report this to a sub-committee of the Toscaireacht that would convene to specifically discuss the issue further.

Consideration of the nominations also prompted further discussion on collaborative, creative practice.

7. Meeting with the Arts Council

The Toscaireacht agreed that the Registrar of Aosdána and the Chairperson of the Toscaireacht should liaise with the Arts Council Director to set up a meeting with the Arts Council. Agenda items should be agreed by both parties. Suggestions for agenda items should be sent to the Chair or Registrar.

8. Election of President Higgins

The Toscaireacht welcomed the election of President Higgins.

It was agreed that the Registrar would write to President Higgins to congratulate him on his election, and to advise him of his role in relation to Aosdána.

9. AOB

There was a discussion about the relationship of artists' tax exempt income and the calculation of the universal social charge.

END