

STAND-TOGETHER ARTS SUMMIT RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were adopted by delegates from various organisations who attended the Summit of Arts Organisations hosted by STAND Foundation in Stellenbosch from 20-22 September 2021.

Resolution 1: Engaging national, provincial and local governments on policies and strategies for the arts and culture/creative industries.

Noting

1. The adoption of the revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage by parliament
2. The recently-adopted Charter of Rights for South African Artists.
3. Submissions made by the sector to government.
4. Strategic proposals that have been made at this Summit relating to the different sectors within our ecosystem
5. The different roles that national, provincial and local governments play with regard to the formulation and implementation of policy and related strategies and funding

Believing

1. That artists and co-workers in the arts and culture sector have a right to participate in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies and strategies that affect them
2. That the COVID-19 pandemic and its adverse impact on the arts and culture sector has sharpened the need for consultation and co-operation between civil society and governing authorities

Resolve

1. Actively to engage relevant government departments and political structures to pursue, and defend the interests of the arts and culture/creative industries and of our members in particular on matters of policy, strategy and funding that affect us.
2. To educate the arts and culture sector around issues that directly affect them, and to mobilise them in support of the Charter of Rights for South African Artists.
3. To establish a team across all disciplines to monitor the development and implementation of policies that affect the sector, to inform the sector about such developments, to undertake research and make proposals with regard to such policies and to inform representative civil society structures about how to engage with such policies.
4. Immediately to engage with DSAC and any other department of government around the implementation of the Revised White Paper and other policies, and to advocate for the proposals agreed to at this Summit as well as the Charter of Rights for South African Artists.
5. To engage directly with political parties to address the concerns of artists in their manifestos and policy development platforms.

Draft Resolution 2: Co-operation between the arts and culture/creative industries and broader civil society

Noting

1. That South Africa is a country deeply divided by inequality along the lines of, including but not limited to class, economy, education, (dis)abilities, gender, sexual orientation, language, race and the digital divide.
2. That the socio-economic-environmental-ecological-political context impacts directly on the artistic production, dissemination and access
3. That many who make their livelihoods within the arts and culture sector experience the impact of such inequality themselves
4. the transformative impact of the arts on society and nation-building

Believing

1. That the interests of all South Africans will best be served by a socially-just, more equitable society
2. That all South Africans have the right 'freely to participate in the cultural life of the community and to enjoy the arts' as per Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the South African Constitution
3. That the arts sector needs to cooperate with other social sectors in bringing about a more just society in which all can thrive

Resolve

1. Actively to cooperate, collaborate and build strategic alliances with broader civil society formations and campaigns that advocate for a better, more humane society.
2. To educate the arts and culture sector about broader social issues and related advocacy campaigns such as the Basic Income Grant, and to mobilise the sector in support of such campaigns.
3. To maintain a non-partisan (not aligned to any political party) approach in doing so.

Draft Resolution 3: Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on the arts and culture/creative industries

Noting

1. The devastating biopsychosocial and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts and culture/creative industries and on those who make their livelihoods within the sector
2. The lack of care and the non-sustainable support made available by government authorities for the sector during this time
3. The maladministration of relief funds by those with authority, delegated or otherwise
4. The opportunities provided by the disruptions of this moment of crisis and the resilience of the arts and culture/creative industries to engage with new and previously marginalized ways of working.

Believing

1. That the arts have a vital role to play in the economic, social and human well-being of our society
2. That concerted action needs to be undertaken at multiple levels to help the sector to recover

Resolve

1. Actively to pursue cooperation and partnerships within the arts and culture sector, and between the arts and culture sector and national and international partners to rebuild and sustain the sector.
2. To drive adequate safety measures and education regarding vaccinations against the coronavirus both among those who work within the sector and audiences to ensure maximum safety against community spread of the virus, and that workspaces can re-open sustainably
3. To engage with government, private and other agencies to represent the views and interests of the arts and culture/creative industries in matters to do with pandemic related to regulations and decisions that directly affect the sector.

Draft Resolution 4: Building and supporting sustainable representative arts structures

Noting

1. The rise in the number of membership-based organisations created by those who make their livelihoods within the arts and culture/creative industries over the last twenty months
2. The lack of support for independent, non-partisan and representative civil society structures that play advocacy roles on behalf of their members

Believing

1. That the arts and culture/creative industries and their co-workers have a right to organise themselves into professional associations, organisations and unions of their choice and to elect their own leadership
2. That membership-based, representative structures are key mechanisms for engaging with relevant authorities and for advocating for the rights and interests of the arts and culture/creative industries
3. That it is imperative that such organisations are sustainable and that sustainability includes financial viability, leadership succession planning and organizational soundness

Resolve

1. To identify, recruit and nurture new ethical leadership through formal courses and reciprocal mentorships to govern and manage representative, membership-based and/or civil society structures in the arts and culture/creative industries.
2. To support the development and consolidation of representative, non-partisan organisations in the arts and culture/creative industries, to ensure that they have the necessary legal, organisational and governance structures in place

3. Actively to lobby for public sector support and funding for formalized, representative structures that have proven memberships, sound governance structures, accountable financial systems, active programmes of action and relevant legal founding documents.

DRAFT RESOLUTION 5: Mainstreaming the arts in education and expanding support for sector specific arts education

Noting:

1. That creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and many other “soft” competency skills facilitated by arts-based teaching and learning, are the top 3 skills required in a 4IR economy
2. The skills gap in the arts sector due to the expensive nature of these skills and the inaccessibility of these to the majority of creative practitioners
3. The impact of inequitable employability and ownership in the sector.
4. The lack of capacity in the basic education system to support adequate arts and culture teaching and learning.
5. That existing curricula need revision, decolonization and interrogation and that certain ways of knowing and assessing have been marginalized
6. That educators, parents and caregivers need support to deliver curricula and appropriate ongoing assessment in a meaningful way
7. The lack of articulation across the educational system for sustainable artistic pathways
8. The importance of indigenous languages, methodologies and prior learning in shaping the conceptualization of teaching, learning and assessment frameworks.

Believing:

1. In the transformative relevance of arts-based, life-long learning
2. That all children have a right to be exposed to arts-based learning for balanced cognitive development which promotes whole brain thinking, creativity and adaptive thinking, preparing them adequately for a changing global environment
3. That the arts and creative economy are only as strong as the education that underpins it, i.e. skills development and critical thinking are essential to the creative economy value chain
4. That all artists and creative practitioners should have access to quality, relevant, accredited arts education

Resolve to:

1. Engage the education value chain from ECD to tertiary levels to ensure inclusion of arts education as a focus for all learners at all stages of their education
2. Engage the TVET system as a potential delivery mechanism for accessible accredited arts and culture skills
3. Advocate for technology and its applications to be developed from an Afrocentric perspective for use in the creative context
4. Advocate for a skills audit for the arts and creative economy sector to identify the needs and develop a strategic approach to sector skills development
5. Advocate for the development of an arts-based curriculum for ECD which can be rolled out nationally through the engagement and training of unemployed youth

6. Nurture partnerships in the education ecosystem to ensure access to arts education for all.
7. Encourage artistic research further to demonstrate the importance of Arts Education.
8. To amplify the visibility of and space for IKS in social redress.

Draft Resolution 6: Commitment to moving forward together

Noting

1. The representation of membership-based organisations and individual artists at this Summit
2. The COVID-19 conditions and limitations under which this Summit took place
3. The proposals made and the resolutions adopted at this Summit

Believing

1. That this represents but the planting of a seed for broader sectoral cooperation
2. That it is necessary to maintain lines of communication and create the conditions for building trust and collaboration

Resolve

1. That representatives of membership-based structures and key organisations gathered here shall meet on a regular basis (every 8 weeks) to share information, plan and coordinate the implementation of the Summit's resolutions and respond to issues affecting the sector as they arise
2. That we strategically engage with the media to communicate with the sector and society more broadly
3. That the following persons – Gregory Maqoma, Cornelia Faasen and Sibongile Mngoma - be elected as joint chairpersons of this informal network and that STAND Foundation be appointed to provide secretariat services until such time that the network decides differently
4. That the first meeting of this network shall be held no later than 31 October 2021
5. That this network may expand to include other membership-based organisations and key organisations that have national or provincial impact
6. That all attendees at this Summit be kept informed of developments on at least a monthly basis