

How does the group work together?

⟨...⟩ No two artist-led organisations really function in the same way ... Generator has changed over the last 25 years – the original committee members were supported by systems that have completely changed ... most of the current committee are now working three or four jobs ... Dundee as a city has culturally also changed significantly ... through this we have grown a diverse grassroots audience ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ We run entirely by the work of a constantly changing group of volunteers – although we have certain roles no one committee member has any more sway in the way that we do things than another ... each committee member serves a two year tenure, the first half of which is generally spent learning the ropes and the second half is spent passing on that knowledge to recently joined committee members ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ There's basically no written rules on how to be on the committee, we don't have a handbook or prescriptive rules. So every committee member really shapes the role as they see fit ... but I think that figuring out how you wish to work is such a huge part of the learning process ... to learn, you have to get stuck in and actually do the work ... so as roles are passed on much knowledge is lost and has to be figured out by the next person – things do get lost in the shuffle ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ We also end up finishing jobs that someone else has started without complete knowledge of what's happened up to that point – we worry a lot about not being professional enough, but try to maintain a high standard ... the ever changing nature of the committee means that we can become a bit of a faceless group ... all the responsibility is shared when things go wrong, but also all the credit is shared when things go really well ⟨...⟩

How does your constitution work?

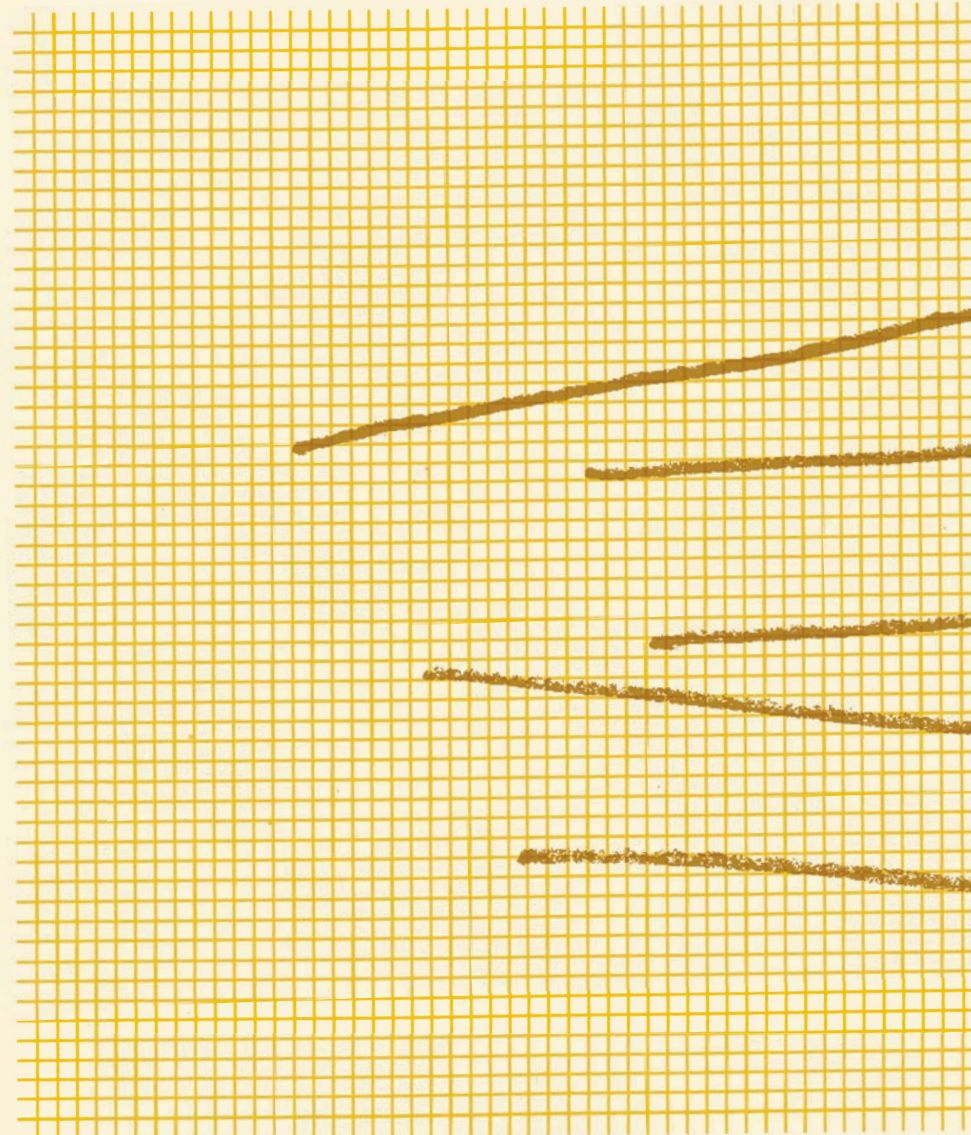
⟨...⟩ The Generator constitution was written when the organisation started – it's a curious mix of assembled information from other constitutions ... we're currently working to update and improve the structure ... in recent years, we've grown in terms of our increased funding, but our constitution has restricted what we can do ... it has been exciting to have an additional budget to develop the programme and how we operate – but it's also affected our role as committee members with extra admin and responsibility ... this has made us relook at the need for some payment for the committee's work and creating a board of trustees ... If we could remunerate ourselves in a much more solid way, would it mean that we could pass on knowledge in a better way? ... this is important, it's just nice to be reminded that we are being appreciated as artists at the end of the day ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ How sustainable is the work of volunteers in running a funded project? What structure might be sustainable for the next 25 years? ... essentially, we're trying to create a kind of culture of care and support for emerging artists and it's exactly what we want to see ourselves within the arts community ⟨...⟩

How can we best make change?

⟨...⟩ What is our place in editing such a long standing document? Is it more worthwhile to adapt to the needs of the current working committee, rather than uphold tradition? ... the work that goes into changing the constitution won't affect the committee who are working on it. But it will massively change things for future committees ... it's about passing on legacy ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ It's definitely helpful to be able to put all of this down on paper and talk about it and have a platform to talk – I guess just



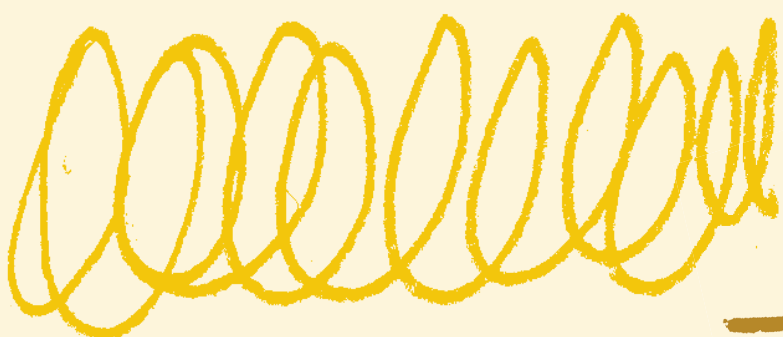
to be open and honest about what we struggle with and what we face ... I used to think nobody else is feeling this way and having the same issues ... its difficult to know if other artist-led spaces have similar issues ... it's interesting how each one can develop in a different way ⟨...⟩

How useful is archiving?

⟨...⟩ In 2020, we had a summer of reflection, and as a committee we decided to create an archive project to really examine the organisation ... and we noticed the difference between years and how they were documented, or not documented ... it is hard to determine whether these were successful years, or committees ... there were a lot of gaps ... so as part of the exhibition we also created a 'missing collection' to reconnect with previous committee members, collaborators and audiences ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ The committee experience is essentially two years of learning and research ... and what we are left with is not just the outcomes, but the fragments and traces of that time. So the archive is the trace of that learning as well as the curatorial development of a committee and its social network ... The artist led committee model is always built to function in this organic fashion. It is only fair that our archive can function in a similar way, which has historic value in the documentation of the activities of artists, curators, and in the cultural development of both Dundee and Scotland ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ It shows how each new committee member follows a similar cycle as they join the committee ... and so we continue to have the same questions and conversations ... I wonder if there's any way that we can break this cycle, or if that is even something that we actually would want to do? ⟨...⟩

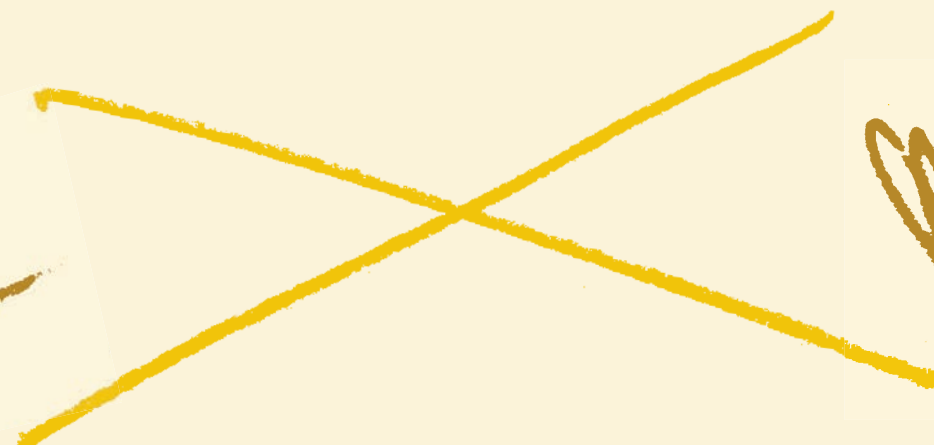


How do we learn?

⟨...⟩ I think it's a very important part of being on the committee of an artist-led group ... if this was all handed to us on a plate, we would learn a lot more quickly, but would the experience be as valuable? What is the cycle? Is this the reason why we function as an artist-led group – to create a creative platform for unlearning and relearning? ... I think it's definitely beneficial for us as new committee members to have access to a useful inclusive archive ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ We're constantly thinking – Is what we're doing right, or is it wrong? And is there a continuity in writing about what we are and thinking about who we are? And the documents? And the mission statements? ... We're constantly asking ourselves, is what we're doing professional? Is it too professional? Is it useful to the the next committee? ... so we have been thinking – What next with the archive? What happens to it? ... so we now have a future agreement for the Generator archive to be held in the Dundee University Collection – which also gives a form of legacy to our work ⟨...⟩

⟨...⟩ Looking at a lot of artists-led spaces and organisations, with a rolling committee, I'm beginning to think it isn't just about the organisation, but instead the actual purpose and all of those loose structures are for the development of individual artists ... and that this is just as important as the development and continuation of the organisation ... there is a lightness and joy in you talking about what you're doing and that process of learning is a very honest process ... because you are genuinely learning, you're not being told what to do ... every time you're finding a new way of doing it ... so, for me, this whole sector, particularly the ones that are organised through rolling committees, is about actually creating more generous and interesting artists who openly work together with other artists ⟨...⟩



ONE SHARED OWNER

02

ARTISTS TALKING ABOUT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

This is one of six posters. Each poster captures a number of questions that arose from a series of artist conversations that focused on the running of artist-led projects.

The posters are part of a larger research, survey and mapping project designed to create a stronger understanding and greater visibility of the range and uniqueness of collective artist-led practice across Scotland.

Alongside the Scottish Artists Union Learning Programme this conversation about knowledge transfer was led by Rhona Jack & Kaya Fraser (Generator Projects committee members, Dundee) who shared thoughts on the varying problems of maintaining institutional memory within a rolling artist-led committee.

Rhona and Kaya outlined how, during the Pandemic period, the Generator Projects committee took the decision to spend some of the time (when there was less primary programming) to archive past artist-led activity and reflect on some of the organisational and structural changes that occurred within their artist-led organisation.

We hope that these focused thoughts will act as a point of self reflection for individual artists, or as a catalyst for future artist groups to openly share and build their own ideas.



A MANIFESTO FOR THE COMMITTEE

BE AWARE OF THE WIDER COMMUNITY YOU'RE WORKING WITHIN

What is the context of your place? Who is your activity for?

GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU WHO CAN HELP

Forming connections is invaluable — listen to other voices

SHOW UP AND DO THE WORK

You get out what you put in — artist led activity is always self dire

KNOW HOW TO COMMUNICATE AS A GROUP

Explore and share the skills and needs of each person

DON'T FORGET TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Develop a practice of care for each artist — know your limits

REMEMBER WHY YOU STARTED IN THE FIRST PLACE

Take time to evaluate and know your group history

DON'T LOSE THE ARTIST YOU ARE IN THE ARTIST-LED SPACE

Take the time to develop your own practice and share with the group

REALISE HOW MUCH YOU ARE LEARNING

Take time to reflect, learn from mistakes, grasp new opportunities

ARCHIVE THE WORK

Remember and share what you and previous committees

KNOW WHEN TO REINVENT, CHANGE DIRECTION, OR STOP

Be honest. Be prepared to take risks

