

Report

Assistant Directors and SDUK

Kathleen Douglas, 16 February 2015

Attended by; Emma Black, Lucy, Martin Berry, Piers Haggard, John Fricker, Will, Ann and others

Points discussed:

- How much should ADs be paid, same as an ASM?
- Guidelines for defining an AD's role
- The need for contracts which outline maximum hours, expectations and what happens in the event of transfers, re-rehearsals etc.
- Defining expectations from both directors and assistant directors
- Theatres not budgeting for assistants (ie the director wants one but its not in the budget
- The differences in shadowing, interning and assisting,

A lots of these points highlight the need for definition of an assistant directors role. Whether there should be a universal guideline or whether this is just the responsibility for the AD, director (and sometimes general manager) to determine remains to be seen.

The session would like SDUK to provide networking opportunities and also to be involved in the transparency of how jobs are advertised. It was suggested job adverts needed to be more specific, which would hopefully have the outcome of positions being more widely advertised (diversifying the industry) and also reduce admin

because of the specificity ie “only apply if we have seen your work previously”.

The session was attended by assistants who had worked on various levels and in different industries such as the fringe, opera, touring companies as well as directors who identified that guidance for them on how to utilise assistants would be appreciated.

Overall, it was decided that a set of guidelines for best practice needed to be outlined and because of the diversity of our industry, a survey needed to be conducted with both directors and assistant directors across this diversity. It was agreed that 15 directors and 15 assistants would be a good start in gathering information which will inform these guidelines. A focus group will be set up from the emails gathered at the event to create this survey. Please get in touch if you would like to be involved in that process or if you would like to be surveyed.

From those results we hope to submit a guideline to SDUK. It was pointed out that a guideline exists with Equity so this will be sourced and considered also.