

Independent Enquiry into Greater London Arts

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In the Eye of the Needle: report of the Independent Enquiry into Greater London Arts

The Independent Enquiry called by GLA's Executive last year, following the resignations of the Black Arts/Equal Opportunities Officer and two other members of staff who alleged institutional racism, publishes its report, In the Eye of the Needle, today.

Racism, the panel finds, does exist at every level of GLA. "Structural and/or institutional aspects of racism in GLA have been further compounded and reinforced by bad management practices and procedures which affected in particular the position and function of the Black Arts/Equal Opportunities Officer."

Institutional racism cannot however be tackled in isolation from the defects in structure and management of the whole organisation. "Racism reflects more profound ills: a lack of democracy, a lack of accountability and a lack of responsiveness within the organisation."

Hence the Panel has tried to examine ways of "opening up the Association, of linking it more closely to clients, democratising all its structures and of setting up effective channels for accountability".

Amongst the recommendations, the Enquiry proposes a doubling of ordinary members' representation on the Executive Committee and the representation of the staff. It calls for a new and representative staff Sub-Committee and the launching of a membership recruitment drive. Of the three new Assistant Directors to be appointed, one is to have responsibility,

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amongst other things, for co-ordinating and implementing a Black Arts policy, backed up by an anti-racist programme. Relationships with funders of GLA and other arts bodies, states the Report, should be more broad-based than hitherto. A specially convened group composed of Enquiry members, Executive members and staff members should, it is suggested to GLA's Executive, see to the implementation of the recommendations.

GLA's panel funds does exist at every level of GLA.

"Structural and/or institutional aspects of racism in GLA

The Press Conference to launch In the Eye of the Needle is on Monday, March 24, 11.30am at Holborn Library, Theobalds Road, London WC1.

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