

Scottish BPOC Writers Network

info@scottishbpocwritersnetwork.org

scottishbpocwriters@gmail.com (from Mar 2022)

www.scottishbpocwritersnetwork.org (from Mar 2022)

scotbamewriters@gmail.com (until Mar 2022)

www.scottishbamewritersnetwork.org



Constitution

Adopted on 5th December 2021

Type of organisation

1. The organisation will be an unincorporated association.

Scottish principal office

2. The principal office of the organisation will be in Scotland (and must remain in Scotland).

Name

3. The name of the organisation is Scottish BPOC Writers Network (BPOC stands for Black, People of Colour).
 - a. The acronym is: SBWN
 - b. The organisation formerly operated as an artists' collective known as Scottish BAME Writers Network from mid-2018 - December 2021 (BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic).

Purposes and Aims

4. The organisation's purposes and aims are:
 - a. To operate as an advocacy group that aims to connect Scottish BPOC* writers with the wider literary and arts sector primarily in Scotland, additionally in the UK and internationally.
 - i. *BPOC stands for Black, People of Colour. While we use the term BPOC, we acknowledge the limitations of this terminology. At the core of our network is the aim to address and overcome systemic barriers that our members face directly or indirectly based on their ethnic or national identities, race or perceived racial identities, or the colour of their skin as per the Equality Act of 2010. This includes people who identify as Black, brown, people of colour, Global Majority, mixed-race, multiple heritage and/or are from the Global South, and/or are East and South-East Asian, West Asian, Asian, Middle Eastern, African, African-Caribbean, Caribbean, Latinx, Pacific Islander, Indigenous, or First Nations, and diasporas.

- ii. 'Scottish BPOC writers' includes BPOC writers who are from and/or based in Scotland and/or have a strong connection to Scotland (for example have a Scottish parent or lived in Scotland for one year or longer).
- b. To partner with literary and arts organisations to facilitate opportunities for Scottish BPOC writers and necessary conversations around inclusive programming in an effort to address and overcome systemic barriers.
- c. To advocate for paid opportunities and fair payment for writers and artists, in line with literary and art organisations' guidelines such as Society of Authors, Scottish Book Trust, Scottish Artists Union.
- d. To collaborate and partner with BPOC writers by providing SBWN's own programme of events, publishing opportunities and an online community.
- e. To prioritise BPOC Scotland-based writers and BPOC-led opportunities, and bring focus to diverse literary voices while aiming to remain accessible to marginalised groups.
- f. To acknowledge the lived experiences and intersectionality of the SBWN's community and to uplift, give space, encourage and validate each members' unique perspectives and narratives.
- g. To acknowledge that many barriers exist for BPOC writers and that quality work by BPOC writers is overlooked due to patterns of white dominance, discrimination and other systemic barriers.
- h. To recognise that colourism and anti-Blackness exist within BPOC spaces and state that SBWN will not stand for either.
- i. To investigate and, if agreed by the Operational Team, to plan a longer-term pathway to becoming a CIC or SCIO.
- j. SBWN's values of inclusive representation, equity, equality, intersectional and anti-oppressive practices in SBWN's organising and programming.
- k. To facilitate intersectional and more accessible Safer Spaces for members, artists and participants through implementing our [Safer Spaces Policy](#).

Powers

- 5. In order to achieve its aims, SBWN may:
 - a. Raise money
 - b. Open bank accounts
 - c. Take out insurance
 - d. Employ staff
 - e. Hire freelancers
 - f. Acquire and manage buildings
 - g. Organise courses and events
 - h. Do anything that is lawful which will help it to fulfil its aims

Community Membership

- 6. Priority membership is open to any BPOC writer or literary professional who is Scottish and/or based in Scotland and:

- a. Joins or participates in an SBWN online space, such as the SBWN Facebook Group or SBWN's digital meeting rooms.
 - b. Attends an SBWN or Partner online or venue-based event.
 - c. Participates in a publishing or literary SBWN or Partner opportunity.
 - d. Applies to an SBWN or Partner open call or invitation to participate.
7. Membership may be extended to BPOC writers or literary professionals based outwith Scotland on occasion, for specific activities or events.
 8. To improve accessibility, there is no membership fee.
 9. All members must abide by SBWN's [Safer Spaces Policy](#).
 10. The membership of any member may be suspended or terminated by the Operational Team for not abiding by SBWN's [Safer Spaces Policy](#) and/or [Facebook group guidelines](#). The Operational Team reserves the right to monitor, moderate, limit comments, unapprove, remove or delete any posts or remove members from events.
 11. Excluding the Operational Team, commissioned artists and those with contractual obligations, members may terminate their membership at any time without notice.

Operational Team

12. The Operational Team will be responsible for running SBWN, including programming, developing partnerships, fundraising, commissioning, curating, publishing, marketing, and administration.
13. The Operational Team will endeavour to work within a non-hierarchical and collaborative structure where every Operational Team member has an equal vote on decision making.
14. Each Operational Team member will be paid the same hourly rate and expected to attend Operational Team meetings once a month (12 times a year).
15. All Operational Team members will be issued a contract agreement and must abide by SBWN's [Safer Spaces Policy](#).
16. The Operational Team shall typically consist of:
 - a. One or two Co-Founders in the role of Advisor
 - b. BPOC writers who are Scottish or based in Scotland in the roles of:
 - i. Co-Directors
 - ii. Communications and Editorial Manager
 - iii. Programme Managers (including roles such as Writer Development, Events, Fundraising and Community)
17. Co-Director responsibilities will include steering the organisation, partnership development, financials, fundraising and team member development.
18. The maximum number of Operational Team members is 9.
19. The quorum for Operational Team meetings shall be 3 members.

Commissioned Artists and Contractors

20. SBWN and/or Partner organisations may commission artists (including writers) from the BPOC and/or SBWN community.
21. Contracts will generally be issued for commissioned writers and artists with agreed terms.
22. Commissioned artists and contractors must abide by SBWN's [Safer Spaces Policy](#).

Volunteers

23. Occasionally, SBWN may work with volunteers.
24. Volunteers may identify as BPOC, or white, or another racial or ethnic identity.
25. Volunteers must abide by SBWN's [Safer Spaces Policy](#).

Partners and Allies

26. SBWN may work with partners and allies that support BPOC writers and literary professionals in various capacities, for example: on joint events, publishing or submission opportunities, professional development activities.
27. Partners and Allies may identify as BPOC, or white, or another racial or ethnic identity.
28. Partners and Allies must abide by SBWN's [Safer Spaces Policy](#) within their joint project settings.
29. SBWN may hire an individual as a Partner Team Member over several months to work on a specific programme.
30. Contracts will generally be issued for long-term projects or landmark events with agreed terms.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

31. As laid out in SBWN's [Safer Spaces Policy](#), SBWN will aim to facilitate inclusive and supportive spaces, in particular for women (trans, intersex and cis) and all nonbinary, agender and gender variant people. Self-definition is at the sole discretion of that individual. SBWN will not tolerate verbal or physical abuse, nor microaggressions to include racism, anti-Blackness, colourism, xenophobia, misogyny, transphobia, homophobia, misgendering, ableism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, incorrectly identifying one's ethnic origins or race, or anything tantamount to hate speech or an attempt to belittle or abuse another person or persons.
32. SBWN recognise that some people experience different kinds of oppression & violence at the same time.
33. SBWN aims to build in access provisions in their programming and endeavours to ensure all SBWN spaces are as accessible as possible, including access provisions for physical and language needs, such as a BSL interpreter, captions, wheelchair and other disabled access requirements for events and/or digital spaces, and/or low-income access provisions, such as free tickets and/or travel stipends, where possible to include those with caring responsibilities.
34. Accessibility requirements and/or Access Documents are welcomed and/or invited from members, operational team members, partners, volunteers, and commissioned artists and contractors.
35. Some events or activities may be open to the general public or the wider literary community.
36. Some events or activities may advise participatory age ranges, for example, 'suitable for 18+ years.'
37. SBWN will not discriminate on the grounds of disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, nationality, religion, class, pregnancy or maternity, marital status, or age.

38. On the grounds of race, skin colour, ethnicity, heritage or origin, and as outlined in the Purposes and Aims, SBWN aims to promote SBWN members and address and overcome systemic barriers that they face directly or indirectly based on their ethnic or national identities, race or perceived racial identities, or the colour of their skin as per the Equality Act of 2010. This includes people who identify as Black, brown, people of colour, mixed-race, multiple heritage and/or are from the Global Majority, Global South, and/or are East and South-East Asian, West Asian, Asian, Middle Eastern, African, African-Caribbean, Caribbean, Latinx, Pacific Islander, Indigenous, or First Nations, and diasporas.

Finance

39. An account will be maintained on behalf of the Organisation at a bank agreed by the committee. Two signatories will be nominated by the Committee. The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.
40. Any money raised and/or obtained by the Organisation shall be used only to further the Purpose and Aims of the Organisation.
41. Any cheques and payments issued shall be made by the Co-Director, Treasurer, Bookkeeper or an authorised Operational Team member.
42. Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Co-Director who is acting Treasurer

Meetings

43. The Operational Team shall hold General Meetings once a month.
 - a. General Meetings will follow an agenda and openly discuss all items on the agenda including 'any other business' and seek to find a general agreement that everyone present can agree to.
 - b. If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.
44. Once a year the General Meeting in March, will include:
 - a. A report on the Organisation's activities
 - b. A report from a Co-Director acting as Treasurer on the finances of the Organisation.
45. Special General Meetings may be called by the Operational Team to discuss an urgent matter. Operational Team members will receive seven days' notice and notice of the business to be discussed.

Amendments to the Constitution

46. Amendments to the constitution may be requested in writing by any Member or during a General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.
47. Amendments to the constitution must be agreed by at least 3 Operational Team Members.

Dissolution

48. If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the Organisation it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.
49. If it is agreed to dissolve the Organisation, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a local charitable organisation. The organisation will be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.

This constitution was agreed at the Inaugural General Meeting of the Scottish BPOC Writers Network on:

Date:	5th December 2021
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Name and position:	Jeda Pearl Lewis, Co-Director
	Kelly Kanayama, Communications and Editorial Manager
	Titilayo Farukuoye, Co-Director
	Mae Diansangu, Events and Fundraising Manager
	Alycia Pirmohamed, Advisor