

Royal Opera House Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement October 2022 – September 2023

Introduction

Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires certain organisation with turnover over £36million per annum to publish a statement each year outlining the steps it has taken to ensure there is no slavery or human trafficking in its business or supply chain. The Royal Opera House is a large organisation for these purposes and welcomes the opportunity to state very clearly its policy in these respects.

The Royal Opera House unreservedly condemns modern slavery and human trafficking wherever in the world it occurs and is committed to a zero-tolerance approach by continuously improving its practices in relation to every part of its business as well as its supply chain. This statement is made on behalf of The Royal Opera House and its subsidiaries but only the Royal Opera House Covent Garden Foundation is required to make this statement.

The Royal Opera House is required to publicise annually, on its website, its activities over the latest financial year aimed towards the eradication of modern slavery and human trafficking. This is our seventh statement to be published.

Our Organisation

Royal Opera House (ROH) aims to enrich people’s lives through exceptional opera and ballet experiences. Home to two of the world’s great artistic companies – The Royal Opera and The Royal Ballet, performing with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House – we seek to be always accessible and engaging, to develop audiences across the UK and internationally to break new ground in the presentation of our artforms.

We are one of the busiest theatres in the world, delivering over 400 performances and around 1,350 learning events each year, and employing 1,000 permanent staff. We are a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), supported by the British public via Arts Council England, and a registered charity, receiving donations from those who share our ambitions.

Responsibility for our Modern Slavery approach sits within our Finance Department. Should there be any questions or concerns as to the implementation of these requirements, please direct them to the [Director of Finance](#). If any staff are concerned that modern slavery or human trafficking is taking place in our business or supply chains, they should raise their concerns to the [Director of Finance](#) or through the [Whistleblowing policy](#).

Our policies

In order to maintain our high standards of corporate governance, ROH has in place the following policies, which are described in brief on our [website](#) and are made available to staff, suppliers and contractors as required.

- Modern Slavery and Ethical Sourcing Policy
- House Procurement Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy

We note that there were no submissions made via our Whistleblowing avenues in 2022-2023 which related to concerns around modern slavery.

Our risk assessment approach

The organisation sources a wide range of goods and services, both in the U.K and globally. Therefore, while we are conscious that modern slavery and human trafficking can occur in any sector, the Royal Opera House takes a risk management approach to due diligence.

We segment our suppliers using a risk assessment matrix based on a combination of contract value, industry and the location of the supply chain. This is done using best practice guidance from organisations such as the Ethical Trade Initiative and input from external experts.

We will decline to enter or renew a contract with a supplier or potential supplier if our counterparty is unable to give us sufficient confirmations and commitments. However, we also go beyond this: prioritising suppliers who show that they take these commitments seriously rather than those who do the minimum required.

Actions over the past year

Following an internal review of our due diligence processes in the previous year, during the 2022/2023 Season we have continued to be vigilant in making decisions regarding our suppliers and potential suppliers.

Specifically, we have:

- Commissioned a Modern Slavery audit using our internal auditors, who assessed our current processes and internal adherence to policies. The audit was completed in May and the subsequent report both noted strengths (including the existence of detailed Policy and Process documents and various communication & awareness raising initiatives) and made recommendations which we have since been working through.
- As a result of the audit recommendations, we instructed an external consultant to review our policies and processes and advise on how we can best mitigate risk.
- Developed an adapted version of our supplier Code of Conduct for specific industries, such as our costume makers, and began to roll this out across those supply groups.
- Continued to assess Modern Slavery Act 2015 adherence to our supplier selection and ongoing contact management processes e.g., by including Modern Slavery Act 2015 adherence as a minimum standard during tendering processes.
- Included supplier onboarding and due diligence capability in the specification for new financial and purchasing software tender, which is currently open for submissions.

Training and capability building

Over the past year we have:

- Run training sessions on human rights in the supply chain for 25 senior members of staff, including our CEO and members of the Executive team. The sessions covered topics included our obligations under current legislation; a deeper dive into areas of ROH's global supply chain which present a higher risk of human rights violations and mitigation strategies.
- Continued to include an online Modern Slavery Awareness as one of our compliance training modules for staff who purchase on behalf of the ROH. This training is expected to take place as part of our annual programme of compliance activities.

Ensuring effectiveness in the future

Plans for the coming year include:

- Selecting and implementing a new finance & procurement system during the 2023/2024 Season, resulting in (among other things) enhanced supplier onboarding & due diligence capability.
- Continue our programme of training and awareness, including our International Day for the Abolition of Slavery campaign in early December.
- Continue to assess Modern Slavery Act adherence as part of our supplier selection and tendering processes.
- Implementing the recommendations made by our external consultant.
- Scheduling a follow up visit with our internal auditors to assess progress against their recommendations.

Approval process

Approved by the Chief Executive Officer Alex Beard, 03 October 2023

Approved by the Board of Trustees, 03 October 2023