

Imperial UCU RSA Union solidarity motion

Charity workers are overworked, underpaid and exploited. And though not-for-profits often talk of justice, it rarely extends to their own employees.

In 2022 staff at the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) had to fight for their union recognition after voluntary recognition was denied 3 times by senior management. Since then, staff members across all teams and levels of the RSA have been campaigning for a fair pay rise reflective of the current cost-of-living pressures.

They have asked for a flat rate of pay that gives the lowest paid members of staff a 10% pay increase to offset a 14% real-terms pay cut in the last 4 years, and also for a 8% pension contribution as staff pensions were slashed to 5.5% during the pandemic.

The RSA has offered a pay rise equivalent to just 2.3% for some of members, and no return to higher pension contributions. The RSA union estimates their pay claim would cost the RSA about £300k, or less than 1% of the charity's total reserves. In the midst of negotiations, RSA management changed the charity's reserves policy to make it much harder to use reserves to support staff.

Regrettably, the RSA management's response so far has been completely at odds with its values, its public-facing image, and many of the principles that draw support to the RSA. As a result, union members went out on the first strike in the organisation's 270-year history!

Union members at the RSA need solidarity. Management are refusing to negotiate and we need to ramp up the campaign to respond to the aggressive anti-union approach of their boss. These workers on strike rely on support from the labour movement to keep their fight going.

This branch resolves:

1. To boycott any activities at the RSA until the union's demands are met, [as set out by the 2023 pay claim](#)*, and the dispute is resolved
2. To write to the college/university leadership and urge they boycott the RSA and write to Andy Haldane, RSA CEO to resolve the dispute with the workers
3. To promote the upcoming picket dates for the RSA strike to its members and to bring the branch banner to a picket
4. To send a message of solidarity to the RSA pickets
5. To make a donation to the RSA strike solidarity fund of £200: <https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/support-the-rsa-strikers/>
6. To write to Andy Haldane, RSA CEO and condemn his treatment of workers
7. To promote and publicise the boycott of RSA activities on social media

*A flat £2800 salary increase. An increase from 5.5% to 8% pension contributions. A £400 allowance for staff who don't benefit from hybrid working

Motion passed a non-quorate all members' meeting on 18/1/24, and subsequently fully approved at a quorate meeting of elected reps on 23/1/24.