

ASD Name Change Working Group

Meeting: 30/08/23

Location: Online

Present: Melanie Wilson (MW), Gareth Fry (GF), Jamie McIntyre (JM), Peter Rice (PR), Liam McDermott (LMD), Ian Cunningham (IC), Rosie Stroud (RS)

Apologies:

MW introduces meeting, explaining that this meeting will be wrapping up the consultation process, with a chance for attendees to ask questions about the process and for the ASD to feedback results of the membership survey.

MW mentions that the ASD has engaged a name change consultant (Zoe Milton) to aid the ASD on this process, to bring together the various discussions and conversations around the name change.

Vicki Hill worked with Zoe to digest the various meeting minutes and feedback from members, and came to the decision to undertake a membership survey (something the ASD has undertaken before) to explore how people are feeling about the name change, and ask questions of the members to better understand the membership feeling and understand the membership demographics.

Zoe Milton and Helen Atkinson have compiled the data and created a report on the key themes discovered in the survey.

Results of the Membership Survey

MW talks on Participation rates of the survey, which found a disappointing rate of members completing the survey. Only 138 members completed the survey, with 441 opening the survey.

Most of the responses were from professional members (80%), with 11% Future Professionals and the rest being Corporate, NCO or Associate Membership. This roughly tracks with the wider membership.

Responses were majority male (75%), followed by Female (21%) and with 5% of respondents preferring not to say and 1% of members identifying themselves as non-binary. Pronouns followed similar percentage breakdowns.

Broken down by age, the largest group was 25-34 (30%), with 35-44 being 26%, followed by 45-54 (21%), 55-64 (9%) and 18-24 (8%).

Ethnicity data showed that 81% of respondents were White British, with 9% answering 'Other', 4% preferring not to say, 3% White Irish and 2% Chinese.

Location data showed that 47 of the respondents were based in London, with the other responses showing a diversity across the UK. Nationality responses showed a large percentage of respondents as British, with a distribution of other nationalities from around the world.

MW takes us through Main Job Title data, which shows that Sound Designer makes up the highest proportion of responses, with Sound Engineer and Head of Sound making up the other responses. The wider responses show a huge variation of job titles, as respondents were able to enter their own response rather than selecting a pre-existing option.

MW notes that this shows a plurality of job roles and lots of movement within the jobs that we do.

Most responses identified that they were freelance (54%) followed by a combination of freelance and employed (25%), Employed (14%) and a company director (7%).

The large majority of respondents mentioned that the name of the ASD did not concern them before joining, and that they knew what the ASD stood for (64%). 21% of respondents answered that they felt it included them, with 8% saying the name was not important to them and 6% saying that the name put them off.

In terms of membership feelings on the name, 36% responded that the name was not perfect, but what is. 20% answered that the ASD had better things to worry about, 18% responded to leave it alone, and 13% answered that the name was off putting to potential members.

MW wraps up the data by mentioning that this survey formed the widest reach of work as part of the name change process, and that other research work was undertaken in regards to Cost, and other implications. The cost is estimated at roughly £1000. Steps were taken during the rebranding process undertaken last year to ensure materials were easily translated in case of a name change.

More data in relation to the membership survey is available to those who are interested, and advised to contact MW for further information.

Further Steps with the Board

The Final Vote will be opened in Late September. The results of the membership survey will also provide us with an estimation of the active members within the association. This is estimated to be around 450 active members (roughly half).

The viability of the name change vote will be set at 450 votes. Any less than that in total votes will deem the vote unviable. A positive vote will be deemed if over 50% of the total votes are in favour of the decision. This means that 225 people is the minimum count for a positive vote.

The vote will be 2 simple questions:

1. Do you want to Change the Name (Yes/No).
2. What would you like to change the name to?

Every voter will be asked both questions, so even those who vote no on the change will be able to select their preference of name in the second question. There will be 3 options provided for the second question - not a free choice.

A number of options were proposed within the initial vote, as well as proposals at the name change town hall earlier this year. Other options were taken from suggestions made during AGM's and meetings over the course of this process.

The board have voted to select a top 3 from those proposed. The options are not going to be shared outside of the election, so members will need to go through to the voting page in order to see them (in the hope of enticing more members to click through and ensure a higher response rate).

The top 3 as voted for by the board were (in no particular order):

- The Association of Sound Design and Production
- The Association of Theatre Sound
- The Association for Sound Production and Design

Two of the names add a direct representation of Production, while the other removes specificity in terms of job role, but does add specificity in terms of Industry (Theatre).

GF adds that it is smart to not reveal the names ahead of time to lure people in to vote.

JM asks whether 2 of them being so similar is a negative and if there is space for something to provide a wider difference in options.

MW mentions that the board has not met since this vote and that there was scope to discuss this further. MW agrees that they should be 3 distinct options.

PR adds that the other options selected had very insignificant votes, and lists the other options that were proposed.

LMD notes that it is interesting that the membership survey shows a large amount of responses identifying as an 'engineer' and yet none of the choices include engineer, but focus on production.

MW notes that Production may include those who work in all aspects of production who may not identify as engineers.

PR suggests that one of the two similar options becomes an Engineer option.

JM proposes the option of the Association of Sound Design, which doesn't change the branding as significantly but does move to include all who work within Sound Design.

LMD notes that moving away from the ASD acronym also moves us from the clash with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

GF notes that a quick search of ASPD yields some results of Anti-Social Personality Disorder.

PR notes that the discussion around The Association of Sound Design was limited as it felt it would not be the 'jolt' of change that might be needed as a fresh identity.

LMD proposes a shift away from Acronym based branding in place of a Single word name that defines the association similar to that of Equity.

Strapline

MW adds that alongside the potential name change, the ASD is exploring the development of a strapline which could go alongside the name in certain places of branding.

Wrapup

MW wraps up by thanking the attendees for their support, help and suggestions throughout the process.

MW notes that this process may not be the last time for the association. Other boards and memberships may further explore this in the future as the demographics change over the years. MW is glad for the consultation throughout and the engagement of the membership.

A name change report will be produced, detailing the process which may provide useful information for any future explorations.