

Written evidence submitted by Chimera

I run a small but relatively successful live event production company with my business partner. We have been trading for over ten years and were on course to have our best year by some margin this year. We don't employ any full-time staff, as is generally the case in our industry, but we do contract a regular group of freelancers on a job by job basis.

Covid 19 has brought about the immediate and total shut down of our sector. We have received some financial support from the government but since myself and my business partner are company directors and largely receive our income via dividends, we aren't eligible for the full amount we would be if we were either self employed or employed. This differentiation seems rather perverse and I don't understand the reasoning behind this.

I think the main issue we face in the live events industry is not surviving the first 3 months for which some support has been announced, it is what happens beyond this time. Our industry won't get back to any sort of normal level of operation for who knows how long – we assume probably a year. Even then, will things return to normal? Will there be a live events industry left by then? We need some clarity in what sort of medium-term support we will be offered so we can decide if it is worth continuing.

As extreme lockdown measures are eased, maybe we will be looking at running smaller events connected virtually, or connecting presenters remotely to an online audience in a manner which is better than can be achieved via online conference platforms. This will only replace a tiny amount of the work which was previously taking place in our sector and many people will find themselves out of work.