

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

Rates of Pay for Artists Guidance

March 2022



Rates of Pay for Artists: Guidance

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Introduction

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is the development and funding agency for the Arts in Northern Ireland. We distribute public money and National Lottery funds to develop and deliver a wide variety of arts projects, events and initiatives across Northern Ireland. From theatre and literature to arts in the community, we work in partnership with hundreds of artists, arts organisations and venues.

The Arts Council is committed to fair pay for artists.

- We wish to ensure that artists and professionals working in the creative community are paid fairly and appropriately for their time.
- We wish to ensure that all organisations and projects which receive public funding are demonstrating best practice with regard to fair pay and that they understand the impact on the wider sector of not doing so.

All organisations seeking funding from the Arts Council are expected to pay artists fairly.

- We expect organisations seeking funding from us, through any of our funding programmes, to be clear about all costs they allocate in their budgets relating to the payment of people involved in delivering their work.
- When working with artists and creative professionals, we encourage applicants to reference relevant industry standards on rates of remuneration.
- We expect all organisations which seek Regular Funding from us to commit to pay a Living Wage, according to the Living Wage Foundation, to all core workers.
- We encourage all of the Arts Council's Annually Funded organisations to provide clear statements which describe how they aim to support and ensure fair pay for artists, creative practitioners, staff and other creative professionals that they work with.

All individuals seeking funding from the Arts Council are encouraged to pay themselves fairly.

- We encourage individuals applying to our Support for the Individual Artists Programme to include fair pay for their own artistic costs in their budgets.
- We encourage all individuals applying for projects which involve others, to pay everyone involved fairly, including covering their own costs.

Key sources of guidance on industry standards, union rates and codes of practice from key lead bodies

It is not the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's role to prescribe the rates of pay that any organisation applies when employing staff or when working with and/or commissioning artists and creative practitioners. Beyond the National Minimum Wage/National Living Wage legislation, which does not, for instance, cover freelancers or the self-employed, there are a wide range of unions, associations and lead bodies which provide more specific and detailed guidance on pay and conditions for those they represent in the arts and creative industries.

Below we set out a summary of these bodies, links to their rates of pay (where possible) and a summary overview of what they offer and who they represent. Please note that in some instances full information on rates is only available to paid-up members of the organisations.

Visual Arts, Applied Arts and Crafts

Visual Artists Ireland (VAI)

VAI is the representative body for professional visual artists on the island of Ireland. VAI research has identified 'Isolation', a 'Need for Support', and a 'Need for Information' as the three primary areas of concern for visual artists. Each of these impact areas are directly referenced by a range of services, which are directed towards its vision statement: "We dare to dream of a time when artists will live in a world of opportunities."

Through the delivery of Networking, Support, and Information services, VAI allows individual artists and artist groups to develop their careers, develop a capacity to take advantage of the opportunities, and to share knowledge. VAI does this through Advocacy, Advice, Membership Services, Lifelong Learning, and Information Provision.

 <https://visualartists.ie/services/visual-artists-payment-guidelines/>

a-n The Artists Information Company

a-n is the largest artists' membership organisation in the UK, with over 26,000 members. *'We support artists and those who work with them in many practical ways, acting on behalf of our membership and the visual arts sector to improve artists' livelihoods. We have a reputation for providing compelling insights and playing a catalytic role in influencing and informing cultural policy.'*

- **Exhibition Payment: The a-n/AIR Paying Artists Guide**

a-n provides sample day rates to guide arts budgeting and help visual artists negotiate a fair rate of pay for short-term contracts, including commissions, residencies, community projects and gallery education. The guidance reflects the artists' career stage, as well as the experience level and overheads, takes account of the nature and costs of self-employment, and aligns artists' practices with comparator professions.

- **Paying Artists Campaign**

The Paying Artists Campaign was set up by a-n to secure payment for artists who exhibit in publicly-funded galleries. It has consulted widely with artists, major public funders and visual arts organisations to come up with a set of recommended payments to cover a wide range of exhibition scenarios and guidance for implementation. In addition to the Exhibition Payment Guide, the campaign produces a suite of supporting resources to help with exhibition agreements, negotiation, proposals, contracts and budgets.

a-n also highlights other organisations' guidance on fees and payments for the visual arts sector.

 <https://www.a-n.co.uk/resource/guidance-on-fees-and-day-rates-for-visual-artists/>

 [https://static.a-n.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Guidance on fees and day rates for visual artists 2022.pdf](https://static.a-n.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Guidance_on_fees_and_day_rates_for_visual_artists_2022.pdf)

Association of Photography (AOP)

The Association of Photography is a membership organisation promoting and protecting the worth and standing of professional and assisting photographers working in the creative sector. It lobbies for the interests and rights of all photographers, especially in the commercial photographic industry. The 'AOP Legal and Business Template Forms and Guidance' free download includes guidance on setting a day rate.

 [AOP information for photographers \(the-aop.org\)](https://www.aop.org/)

Music

The Musicians Union (MU)

The Musicians Union is a trade union representing musicians and those working in all aspects of music. They produce detailed guidance and rates of pay information for all aspects of music, including rates for playing live; recording and broadcasting; songwriting and composition; and for those working in music education. They have details on fees for orchestral employment and freelance rates; fees for session musicians; teaching; and musicians in theatre (in associations with UK Theatre Trust). This guidance includes their 'Fair Play Guide', which is a guide to ensure musicians are appropriately rewarded for their efforts when playing gigs, and their National Gig Rates. MU also advocates their 'Work Not Play' campaign, calling more widely for musicians to be paid.



[Rates of Pay & Collective Agreements in Music | The MU \(musiciansunion.org.uk\) / https://musiciansunion.org.uk/rates](https://musiciansunion.org.uk/rates)

Incorporate Society of Musicians (ISM)

The ISM is the UK's professional body for musicians. On their website they offer advice and resources on contracts, rights, and all aspects of managing your career as a musician, specifically listing fees and rates of pay for music tuition, music education, accompanists, and organists.




[Incorporated Society of Musicians \(ism.org\) / https://www.ism.org/](https://www.ism.org/)

Theatre, Dance and the Performing Arts

Independent Theatre Council (ITC)

ITC is the management association representing the UK theatre's independent performing arts sector. They work across the UK in drama, dance, opera and musical theatre, mime and physical theatre, circus, puppetry, street arts and mixed media. The ITC negotiates minimum rates of pay on behalf of its members with the appropriate unions for administrative staff, choreographers, designers, directors, fight directors, performers, stage managers and writers.

 [Rates of Pay – ITC \(itc-arts.org\)](https://www.itc-arts.org/rates-of-pay)

Equity

Equity is the UK trade union representing more than 47,000 professional performers and creative practitioners, covering acting, comedy, dancers, singers and all aspects of the performance sector. Equity negotiates agreements with employers and employer groups to cover all areas of live and recorded media, and also negotiates with employers to provide minimum levels of pay and engagement fees across the entertainment industry. Whilst Equity provides a wide range of agreements and rates of pay guidance, some are published online for all to access, whereas others are only accessible to those who are paid-up members.

 [Equity - Login](#)

BECTU

BECTU is the UK's media and entertainment trade union, representing over 40,000 staff, contract and freelance workers in the media and entertainment industries. Its membership includes broadcasting, film, independent production, theatre and the arts, IT and telecoms, live events, leisure and digital media. BECTU's website includes detailed guidance and rates of pay for a wide range of roles in film, TV and independent production.

 [Ratecards: find out the rates for the work you do | Bectu](#)

UK Theatre

UK Theatre is the UK's leading theatre and performing arts membership organisation. They have rate of pay agreements outlined on their site which bring together relevant rates and agreements from the main unions (MU, BECTU, WGGB, SSP, EQUITY) as pertains to those working in theatre and performing arts.

 [Rates of Pay & Agreements - UK Theatre](#)

Literature and Publishing

Society of Authors (SoA)

The Society of Authors is a trade union for writers, illustrators and literary translators, at all stages of their careers. Whilst fees are a matter for individuals to negotiate, and competition law prevents SoA from recommending rates, they do provide the observed rates and other resources to help with rates for freelance writing, editing and proofreading, rates for appearances, events, translation, broadcasting and indexing.

SoA also oversees the C.R.E.A.T.O.R campaign – advocating for fairer rights and contracts for writers.

 [About | The Society of Authors](#)

 [Advice | The Society of Authors](#)

The Writers Guild of Great Britain (WGGB)


The Writers' Guild of Great Britain is a trade union representing professional writers in TV, film, theatre, radio, books, poetry, animation and videogames. Their rates and agreements cover TV, theatre, radio and some areas of film. In addition, they produce detailed, best-practice advice, guidelines and rates for writers in videogames, animation, comics and musical theatre in their resources section. They're also behind 'Free is NOT an option' – a guide (and supporting campaign) for TV Writers, Agents and Programme Makers to tackle the growing trend of asking writers to work for free.

 [Writers' Guild of Great Britain | WGGB \(writersguild.org.uk\)](#)

 [Rates & agreements - Writers' Guild of Great Britain \(writersguild.org.uk\)](#)

National Union of Journalists

The National Union of Journalists is the voice for journalists and journalism, representing a broad range of media professionals. They carry reported rates for a wide range of writing in broadcast, newspaper, book and magazine publishing, teaching, and translation. They also cover photographic commissions across these sectors. The NUJ freelance fees guide is aimed primarily at freelance members working for UK publishers and other media outlets.

 [National Union of Journalists \(NUJ\): Home
Freelance resources \(nuj.org.uk\)](#)

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If you need further information on Rates of Pay, please contact us by email: info@artscouncil-ni.org and use the subject title **Rates of Pay**. Please then email us your enquiry and provide a telephone number; if possible we will arrange a time to call you back.

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