

The Big Freelancer Survey 2023

Hello, Welcome and Thank You.

With your help we are building a better, more accurate picture of our industry. This will allow us to focus on how best we can help going forward. Please be as honest as you feel comfortable with being.

All answers are anonymous.

1 - Firstly, did you fill in the Big Freelancer Survey 2022?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

Last year our survey focused on the impact of COVID and returning to work. This year we are turning our attention to skill retention in the industry and the effect this is having on freelancers. We appreciate that there are a lot of surveys out there, so we will do our best to keep it simple.

2 - Now, a couple of questions about your work

2A. What area of Entertainment do you mainly work in?

*If you work in several, please choose the **main area**.*

- a. Film
- b. TV
- c. Theatre
- d. Live events/concerts
- e. Opera
- f. Dance
- g. Circus
- h. Recorded audio
- i. Video games

- j. Other (Please state)

2B. Which sub sectors do you work in (Theatre/Dance/Opera/Circus)?

Please choose based on your answer to question 1a.

Pick as many as relevant.

- a. West End
- b. Off West End / London
- c. Regional / National
- d. Touring - National
- e. Touring - International
- f. Live Streams
- g. Fringe
- h. Studio
- i. Immersive
- j. Education / Creative Learning
- k. Other

2C. Which sub sectors do you work in (TV)?

Please choose based on your answer to question 1a.

Pick as many as relevant.

- a. Live Broadcast
- b. TV Movie
- c. Commercials
- d. Documentary
- e. HETV (High End TV)
- f. Education / Creative Learning
- g. Other

2D. Which sub sectors do you work in (Film)?

Please choose based on your answer to question 1a.

Pick as many as relevant.

- a. Feature Films
- b. Short Films
- c. Low Budget Films
- d. Documentary

- e. Education / Creative Learning
- f. Other

2E. Which sub sectors do you work in (Live Events)?

Please choose based on your answer to question 1a.

Pick as many as relevant.

- a. Live Performance
- b. Touring - National
- c. Touring - International
- d. Live Streams
- e. Immersive
- f. Education / Creative Learning
- g. Other

2F. Which sub sectors do you work in (Audio)?

Please choose based on your answer to question 1a.

Pick as many as relevant.

- a. Radio
- b. Podcasts
- c. Documentary
- d. Education / Creative learning
- e. Other

2G. Which sub sectors do you work in (Video Games)?

Please choose based on your answer to question 1a.

Pick as many as relevant.

- a. AAA
- b. Indie
- c. Sub Indie
- d. Other

2H. Tell us which sector and sub sector you work in.

Please fill in if you selected 'Other' in 1a.

3 - How many years experience do you have working in the entertainment industry?

Please enter a number (enter 1 for up to 1 year)

4 - Which type of work do you mainly do?

Please pick the closest option(s), or submit your role in 'Other'.

- A. Performance (acting / dancing / singing)
- B. Music (instrumental)
- C. Music (composition)
- D. Directing / Assistant Directing
- E. Writing
- F. Dramaturgy
- G. Producing
- H. Production Management
- I. Stage Management
- J. Company Management
- K. Sound (Creative / Design)
- L. Sound / Audio (Technical)
- M. Lighting (Creative / Design)
- N. Lighting / LX (Technical)
- O. Set Design
- P. Carpentry / Set Building
- Q. Movement / Choreography
- R. Camera / Photography
- S. Video Design / Projection
- T. Automation
- U. Rigging
- V. Costume Design
- W. Wardrobe (Technical)
- X. Hair / Wigs
- Y. Make-Up

- Z. Location Work
 - AA. Front of House / Venue-based
 - BB. Stage / Floor Crew
 - CC. Graphics
 - DD. SFX / VFX
 - EE. Editing
 - FF. Armoury
 - GG. Fight / Stunt work
 - HH. Puppetry (design / construction)
 - II. Props making / Supervising
 - JJ. Voice / Dialect / Language coaching
 - KK. Support (incl. Chaperone)
 - LL. Covid / Health & Safety
 - MM. Office / Production
 - NN. Marketing / PR
 - OO. Casting
 - PP. Other

5 - Now, a few questions about you, and how you identify.

Just a reminder that all answers are anonymous.

The following section contains questions about your background and current circumstances.

It is important for us to know this to help lobby for support where it might be most needed.

5A. Where do you live?

- a. England
- b. Northern Ireland
- c. Scotland
- d. Wales
- e. Other

5B. Which county do you live in? (England)

Please choose based on your answer to 5a.

- a. Avon
- b. Bedfordshire
- c. Berkshire
- d. Buckinghamshire
- e. Cambridgeshire
- f. Cheshire
- g. Cornwall
- h. Cumbria
- i. Derbyshire
- j. Devon
- k. Dorset
- l. Durham
- m. Essex
- n. Gloucestershire
- o. Greater London
- p. Hampshire
- q. Herefordshire
- r. Hertfordshire
- s. Isle of Wight
- t. Kent
- u. Lancashire
- v. Leicestershire
- w. Lincolnshire
- x. Merseyside
- y. Norfolk
- z. Northamptonshire
- aa. Northumberland
- bb. Nottinghamshire
- cc. Oxfordshire
- dd. Rutland

- ee. Schools
- ff. Shropshire
- gg. Somerset
- hh. Staffordshire
- ii. Suffolk
- jj. Surrey
- kk. Sussex
- ll. Tyne and Wear
- mm. Warwickshire
- nn. West Midlands
- oo. Wiltshire
- pp. Worcestershire
- qq. Yorkshire

5C. Which county do you live in? (Northern Ireland)

Please choose based on your answer to 5a.

- a. Antrim
- b. Armagh
- c. Derry/Londonderry
- d. Down
- e. Fermanagh
- f. Tyrone

5D. Which county do you live in? (Scotland)

Please choose based on your answer to 5a.

- a. Aberdeenshire
- b. Argyllshire and Buteshire
- c. Ayrshire
- d. Banffshire
- e. Berwickshire
- f. Caithness
- g. Dumbartonshire
- h. Dumfriesshire

- i. Edinburghshire (Mid-lothian)
- j. Elginshire (Moray)
- k. Fife and Kinross Shires
- l. Forfarshire (Angus)
- m. Haddingtonshire (East Lothian)
- n. Inverness-shire - Hebrides
- o. Inverness-shire - Isle of Skye
- p. Inverness-shire - Mainland
- q. Kincardineshire
- r. Kirkcudbrightshire
- s. Lanarkshire
- t. Linlithgowshire (West Lothian)
- u. Nairn
- v. Orkney Islands
- w. Peebles-shire
- x. Perthshire and Clackmannanshire
- y. Renfrewshire
- z. Ross and Cromarty Shires - Isle of Lewis
- aa. Ross and Cromarty Shires - Mainland
- bb. Roxburghshire
- cc. Selkirkshire
- dd. Shetland Islands
- ee. Stirlingshire
- ff. Sutherland
- gg. Wigtownshire

5E. Which county do you live in? (Wales)

Please choose based on your answer to 5a.

- a. Blaenau Gwent
- b. Bridgend (Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr)
- c. Caerphilly (Caerffili)
- d. Cardiff (Caerdydd)
- e. Carmarthenshire (Sir Gaerfyrddin)

- f. Ceredigion
- g. Conwy
- h. Denbighshire (Sir Ddinbych)
- i. Flintshire (Sir y Fflint)
- j. Gwynedd
- k. Isle of Anglesey (Ynys Môn)
- l. Merthyr Tydfil (Merthyr Tudful)
- m. Monmouthshire (Sir Fynwy)
- n. Neath Port Talbot (Castell-nedd Port Talbot)
- o. Newport (Casnewydd)
- p. Pembrokeshire (Sir Benfro)
- q. Powys
- r. Rhondda Cynon Taff
- s. Swansea (Abertawe)
- t. Torfaen (Tor-faen)
- u. Vale of Glamorgan (Bro Morgannwg)
- v. Wrexham (Wrecsam)

5F. Please specify where you live.

If you chose 'Other' in question 5a.

5G. What is your first spoken language?

If you select Other, please let us know the language.

- a. English
- b. Welsh
- c. Irish
- d. Scottish Gaelic
- e. Other

5H. Which of the following best describes your current living situation?

- a. Homeowner - owned outright
- b. Homeowner - with a mortgage
- c. Renting - a room (lodging in someone else's home)
- d. Renting - flat or house share
- e. Renting - with a partner/solo
- f. Living with parents/guardians
- g. Assisted living/sheltered accommodation/care home
- h. Other
- i. Prefer not to say

5I. Thinking about when you were growing up, which of the following applies best to the highest or main income earner in your household?

- a. Director/senior manager/professional.
- b. Mid-level manager/professional.
- c. Administrative/sales/service worker.
- d. Skilled/qualified manual worker.
- e. Semi-skilled manual worker.
- f. Semi-routine or routine/unskilled worker.
- g. Long-term unemployed/never undertaken paid work.
- h. Don't know/not applicable/prefer not to say.

5J. Please select all that apply to you.

For these purposes, school age is considered 4-18 inclusive.

- a. I am a co-parent/carer of pre-school age child/children
- b. I am a single parent/sole carer of pre-school age child/children
- c. I am a co-parent/carer of school age child/children
- d. I am a single parent/sole carer of school age child/children
- e. I am a co-carer of someone else (not a child)
- f. I am a sole carer of someone else (not a child)

- g. None of the above.
- h. Prefer not to say.

Just a reminder that all your answers to every question are recorded anonymously. All the data collected will help to lobby for support where it is most needed now, and in the future. We are aware that the following questions are sensitive. While our intention is to be as inclusive as possible, we recognise that the use of language differs from person to person. If you use different language from that used in the question, please feel free to select 'Other', and enter your preferred self description.

5K. Which of the following options would best describe your ethnicity?

- a. Asian - Any Other/Mixed Asian Background
- b. Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
- c. Asian or Asian British - Chinese
- d. Asian or Asian British - Indian
- e. Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- f. Black - Any Other/Mixed Black Background
- g. Black or Black British - African
- h. Black or Black British - Caribbean
- i. Latinx
- j. Middle East & North African
- k. Middle East & North African - Any Other Mixed Background
- l. Mixed / Multiple - Any Other Backgrounds
- m. Mixed / Multiple - White and Asian
- n. Mixed / Multiple - White and Black African
- o. Mixed / Multiple - White and Black Caribbean
- p. White - Any Other/Mixed White Background
- q. White - British
- r. White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- s. White - Irish
- t. Any other Ethnic Group

- u. Prefer Not To Say
- v. Other

5L. Please state your ethnicity below.

Please answer if you selected 'Other' or 'Any other Ethnic Group' in 5k.

5M. Please select all that apply to you.

If you use other language, please input in 'other'.

- a. Deaf, deaf or hard of hearing
- b. Blind or low vision
- c. Physical disability
- d. Mental health condition
- e. Pain condition
- f. Neurodivergent
- g. Other physical/access/mobility/dexterity needs
- h. Prefer not to say
- i. None of the above apply to me
- j. Other

5N. How do you identify your sexual orientation?

- a. Pan-sexual
- b. Bisexual
- c. Gay man
- d. Gay woman / lesbian
- e. Queer
- f. Asexual
- g. Heterosexual
- h. I use other language
- i. Prefer not to say

5O. How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Using your own language. Please answer if you selected 'I use other language' in 4h

5P. What is your gender?

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Non binary
- D. I use other language
- E. Prefer not to say

5Q. How would you describe your gender?

Using other language. Please answer if you selected 'I use other language' in 4j

5R. Do you identify with the gender you were assigned at birth?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

6 - Thank you. Now let's think about the last 12 months...

Don't worry—all answers will be anonymous.

6A. In the tax year 2021-22, which of the following most accurately reflects the proportion of your total annual income which came from your freelance work?

By this, we mean the work that you told us about earlier.

- a. 0% / Not applicable
- b. 10%
- c. 20%
- d. 30%
- e. 40%
- f. 50%
- g. 60%
- h. 70%
- i. 80%
- j. 90%
- k. 100%

6B. In the tax year 2021-22, which of the following best describes your net income before tax from your sector specific freelance work?

Please only answer this question if you feel comfortable to do so

- a. £0-5k
- b. £5-10k
- c. £10-15k
- d. £15-20k
- e. £20-25k
- f. £25-30k
- g. £30-40k
- h. £40-50k
- i. £50-100k

- j. £100k+
- k. Prefer not to say

6C. In the tax year 2021-22, did you rely on additional work to subsidise your income?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

6D. In the tax year 2021-22, did you receive any other type of financial support?

- a. Arts Councils / Creative Scotland
- b. Charitable Grants
- c. Locally administered grants
- d. Direct government support (e.g. Universal Credit)
- e. Funding from professional bodies / unions
- f. Loan - from a commercial source (e.g. a bank or other lender)
- g. Loan - from family or friends
- h. Private support (e.g. family, friends)
- i. None
- j. Other

6E. How does the amount of work you do within the industry compare to pre-pandemic levels. Has it?

- a. Gone up a lot
- b. Gone up a little
- c. Stayed the same
- d. Gone down a little
- e. Gone down a lot
- f. Not applicable

6F. How does your income from this work compare to pre-pandemic levels. Has it?

- a. Gone up a lot
- b. Gone up a little
- c. Stayed the same

- d. Gone down a little
- e. Gone down a lot
- f. Not applicable

6G. How have your work-related expenses changed in the past 12 months?

- g. Gone up a lot
- h. Gone up a little
- i. Stayed the same
- j. Gone down a little
- k. Gone down a lot
- l. Not applicable

6H. Do you currently have any financial debt? (Excluding mortgages)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

6I. Has your debt level changed in the last 12 months?

- a. My debt level has increased
- b. My debt level has stayed the same
- c. My debt level has decreased

6J. Do you currently have any savings?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

6K. Have your savings changed in the last 12 months?

- a. My level of savings have increased
- b. My level of savings have stayed the same
- c. My level of savings have decreased

7 - We're nearly there, but before we finish let's dig a little deeper into your current situation, thinking about how secure you feel in your work, how safe you feel in your workplace(s) and how valued you feel in the industry.

7A. Comparing your work situation now to before the pandemic, which of the following options best applies to your current work situation?

- a. I've completely left the sector
- b. I still work in the sector
- c. I still work in the sector, but I am considering leaving / changing
- d. I've moved sub sector (eg theatre to tv)
- e. I do a mix of work - some in the sector
- f.

7B. What are the main reasons for this change?

Please answer if you selected A, C or D in question 7a.

- a. Not enough pay
- b. Not enough work
- c. Mental Health
- d. Job security
- e. Something else
- f. Prefer not to say

7C. Do you think you will still be working in the industry in 12 months time?

- a. Very likely
- b. Quite likely
- c. Quite unlikely
- d. Very unlikely
- e. I don't know

7D. Which of these best describes how secure you currently feel about your work?

- a. Very secure

- b. Quite secure
- c. Quite insecure
- d. Very insecure

7E. Thinking of your work overall, which of these best describes how safe you currently feel in the places where you work?

Could be Covid related, or other risks, health & safety, bullying, harassment etc.

- a. Very safe
- b. Quite safe
- c. Quite unsafe
- d. Very unsafe

7F. There are growing concerns about a retention/skills crisis in the industry. As part of the 2023 survey we are looking at how this is affecting freelancers. At any point over the past 12 months which of the following have applied to you:

Please tick all that apply.

- a. I have felt under pressure to do more work for the same or less pay to do more work for the same or less pay
- b. I have felt under pressure to do more work for the same or less pay to do more work within the same or less hours
- c. I have felt under pressure to do more work for the same or less pay to do work that isn't in my contract
- d. I have felt under pressure to do more work for the same or less pay to do work that I am not qualified for
- e. I have felt under pressure to do more work for the same or less pay to do work that I don't feel I have the skills or experience for
- f. I have felt under pressure to do more work for the same or less pay to temporarily cover work that is normally done by someone else
- g. I have felt under pressure to do more work for the same or less pay to permanently cover work that is normally done by someone else
- h. I have witnessed other people do more work for the same or less pay
- i. I have witnessed other people do more work within the same or less hours
- j. I have witnessed other people do work that isn't in their contract

- k. I have witnessed other people do work that they are not qualified for
- l. I have witnessed other people do work that they don't feel they have the skills or experience for
- m. I have witnessed other people be asked to temporarily cover work that is normally done by someone else
- n. I have witnessed other people be asked to permanently cover work that is normally done by someone else
- o. None of the above

7G. If you would like, please use this space to expand on your answers from the previous question, or add anything you have noticed about the skills drain.

7H. Overall, do you feel Brexit has been a source of uncertainty for your work in the industry?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure
- d. Not applicable

7I. If you would like, please use this space to expand on your answer to the previous question, or add anything you have noticed about the impact of Brexit on you and/or on the industry in general.

7J. Aside from your income, how valued do you currently feel in the industry?

- a. Very valued
- b. Quite valued
- c. Quite undervalued
- d. Very undervalued

7K. At any time in the last 12 months, have you experienced or witnessed any of the following forms of behaviour in relation to your work?

Please choose as many as apply.

- a. Bullying
- b. Harassment
- c. Sexism
- d. Racism
- e. Ableism
- f. Transphobia
- g. Homophobia
- h. Unfair treatment
- i. Dangerous workplace
- j. Other discrimination
- k. None of the above
- l. Other (Please state)

7L. To your knowledge, was the incident reported?

If you experienced or witnessed multiple incidents, thinking about the one that you consider to be the most significant/serious.

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know
- d. There was no system in place to report it

7M. To your knowledge, was the incident appropriately addressed?

If you experienced or witnessed multiple incidents, thinking about the one that you consider to be the most significant/serious.

- a. Yes
- b. No

- c. I don't know
- d. Not applicable

8. Thank you, we're almost there.

These next questions are a bit more free-form, so please feel free to contribute as much or as little as you would like.

Any answers or quotes used in the survey reports will be fully anonymised.

8A. Using up to 5 key-words or phrases, please can you describe your experiences of working in the industry over the past 12 months from your own, personal perspective. Please feel free to write as much or as little as you would like.

8B. If you could change three things about the industry, and your work in it, what would they be?

Feel free to write as much or as little as you would like.

8C. Is there anything else you would like to tell us or share?

Feel free to write as much or as little as you like.

Thank you.

Please email your filled out form to hello@freelancersmaketheatrework.com.