

SAFREA releases 2018/2019 SA freelance trends report

The Southern African Freelancers' Association (SAFREA) has released new insights into the South African freelance landscape through its 2018/2019 SA Media Freelance Industry and Rates Report.

“In this year’s report, we delve a little deeper to identify the challenges that impact our fellow freelancers and the exciting opportunities that exist for creative entrepreneurs in Southern Africa,” comments Tina Krynauw, SAFREA Chair.



The report also presents the rates trends for various media disciplines, including journalism, copy-editing, graphic design, social media and photography. It is interesting to note that a number of rates have changed since the 2017/2018 report, with ranges widening to incorporate rates on the higher and lower end of the scale.

The 2018/2019 survey was completed by nearly 400 respondents, between 28 January and 28 February 2019, comprising both SAFREA members and non-members. This annual report is the third of its kind for SAFREA.

2018/2019 report reveals the following findings at a glance:

- Women run the world of freelancing with more than 77% female respondents.
- Freelancing has no age limit; respondents range in age from 19 to 80.
- There are a number of new freelancers on the scene (40% of respondents have only been freelancing for the last five years).
- Wordsmiths dominate the freelance landscape, specifically editors, journalists and copywriters.
- Freelancers are highly qualified; 27,99% hold a Bachelor's Degree and 25,45% hold a post-graduate qualification (e.g. Honours).
- More than a third of respondents earn less than R10,000 per month; while over 40% of respondents earn between R11,000 and R30,000 a month.

The majority of respondents also have over 10 years of experience in their primary and secondary specialities, and freelancing is their primary source of income.

“With the right support and training, including marketing and negotiating skills, as well as a proper business approach to freelancing, we are confident that we'll see a higher proportion of respondents join the R30,000+ income group in time,” says Krynauw.

Know your worth

According to respondents, the biggest challenges facing freelancers include low rates, poor client payment practices, and exploitation by clients with a ‘take it or leave it’ attitude. Many freelancers feel ‘forced’ to accept low rates out of desperation or for fear of losing out on an opportunity. Unfortunately, this short-sighted approach can do more harm than good as it undermines fellow freelancers.



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Leigh Andrews 22 Oct 2018



“We need freelancers to realise their own worth as highly-skilled, highly-qualified professionals and demand to be paid accordingly – not just for themselves, but for the upliftment of the entire freelance industry,” says Krynauw.

SAFREIA works to raise the professional standing of freelancers in the media and communications industry and promotes professional standards and ethical conduct by both freelancers and their clients. Our network includes hundreds of talented writers, editors, photographers, graphic designers, researchers, translators, and other experts in media and communications.

“Freelancing does not mean free! It is high-time that companies recognise that fact and fairly compensate the incredible value that freelance media and communications professionals can bring to their businesses in 2019 and beyond,” concludes Krynauw.

Download the [2018/2019 SA Freelance Media Industry and Rates Report](#) (PDF File. Size 2.60MB)