



The Writers Guild of Great Britain (WGGB) submission to the Treasury Committee's call for evidence on Government's coronavirus financial package.

1. The Writers' Guild of Great Britain (WGGB) is a trade union representing professional writers in TV, film, theatre, radio, books, comedy, poetry, animation and videogames. Our members also include emerging and aspiring writers. We are pleased to provide evidence on behalf of our members.
2. Whilst we appreciate the unprecedented support that the Chancellor has introduced to support British businesses and employees, the provisions being made for freelance workers (such as writers) are currently inadequate.
3. The overwhelming majority of professional writers are self-employed. Over the past few weeks they have seen productions close or be cancelled and production halt across Film, TV and Radio.
4. For writers this means a significant loss of primary earnings including, but not limited to, box office revenue and the final stage of payment for scripts which are often made only when filming or production starts.
5. Not only has their primary source of income been affected, but the secondary sources of income, often vital in supplementing their earnings such as festivals, workshops, public speaking events etc have also all been cancelled.
6. Recent polling by the creative industries federation suggests that 60% of creative freelancers predict their income will more than halve in 2020, with many suddenly facing the loss of all their planned income for the coming months.
7. We believe that it is worth restating the importance of creative workers to the economy, currently worth over £117bn.
8. The £94.25 per week offered to freelance workers via Universal Credit is not enough to cover the basic living expenses of writers or other creative workers.
9. It is also unfair for self-employed workers to see their income slashed when other workers are set to receive 80% of their wages from the government.
10. WGGB is supporting proposals for a Temporary Income Protection Fund of £15bn to provide all self-employed workers with a monthly income matching their average existing earnings over the past three years.
11. If this is not possible, then at very least a guaranteed minimum of the real living wage must be paid.