

# Science Writers' Habits in Asking for Higher Pay Rates on Freelance Assignments

If you do freelance work in science, health, or environmental journalism, The Open Notebook wants to know whether, when and how you ask for higher pay rates than what you've been offered on assignments. Please answer the questions below. This survey should take fewer than 5 minutes.

All responses are anonymous.

Thank you!

\* Required

1. **Once you've been offered a pay rate for an assignment, how often do you ask for a higher rate? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Always

2. **If you answered “occasionally” or “often,” what factors do you use to decide whether to ask for a higher rate? Check all that apply. \***

*Check all that apply.*

- The offered rate relative to your usual rate range
- The anticipated hourly rate for the offered rate
- Extent and/or quality of your previous experience with that editor or publication
- Whether you know of other writers who have successfully asked for higher rates at that publication
- Whether you've had success asking for higher rates in the past
- The amount of experience you have writing about the topic or general area
- Your current level of concern about your income
- Gut feeling
- N/A
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. **If you sometimes or always ask for a higher pay rate, what approach(es) have you used? Check all that apply. \***

*Check all that apply.*

- Inquire whether a higher rate is possible
- Say you're unable to take the assignment for the offered rate
- Note your usual rate range
- Note what the anticipated hourly rate is for the offered rate
- Note your previous experience with that editor or publication
- Name other writers who you know are getting a higher rate at the same publication
- Note what your rate is when you write for specific other publications
- Note your length of experience as a science writer and/or your expertise on the topic
- Acknowledge that the publication's budget is tight but say that it doesn't hurt to ask
- Note personal circumstances or financial stress
- N/A
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **If you sometimes or always ask for a higher pay rate, how often have you been successful? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Always
- N/A

5. **If you don't receive a higher rate after asking, what is your typical course of action? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Do the assignment anyway
- Walk away from the assignment
- N/A
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Have you ever asked for a higher pay rate AFTER completing an assignment, if it turned out to require more work than anticipated? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

7. If you answered "yes," how often have you been successful in getting a higher rate AFTER completing a story? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Always
- N/A

8. Have you ever lost an assignment because you asked for a higher pay rate? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- N/A

9. If you never or rarely ask for a higher pay rate on stories you've been assigned, why is that?

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10. Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience of asking for higher pay rates or on the subject more generally?

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11. How long have you been a science writer? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Less than a year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11+ years

12. **How do you describe your gender? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. **Which best describes your ethnicity? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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