

Mar/Apr 2016

# FREE

# Boosting freelances

THE NUJ'S "Boost your income and maximise your professional profile" event held in London in January was attended by over 100 journalists, including some who had recently been laid off from staff positions and were making the move into freelance journalism. The feedback from attendees was that it was a great success.

Photographer and NUJ Freelance Industrial Council Chair Nick McGowan-Lowe repeated again some of the most important things a freelance needs to constantly remind themselves about: "Ask for more," and "Get it in writing, always".

LFB member and NUJ Vice-President Tim Dawson gave advice on how journalists can make money

from ebooks (see page 5), "how to be interesting but not too interesting on Twitter", what to do if a commissioning editor nicks your story, and what to do when asked to work for nothing. Tim's answer to the last one is: "Never to do it."

Janet Awe, who curates LFB's own Twitter feed @NUJ\_LFB, shared with freelances practically all they'll need to know on maximising your website and social media profile. (Janet helped LFB into the Twitter-sphere back in 2012: see [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1204twit.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1204twit.html)).

Mark Whitehead (pictured) told journalists about the tricky subject of how to wear both journalist and

PR hats, and attendant ethical issues.

There's an excellent write-up of the event at [www.nuj.org.uk/news/get-it-in-writing-and-always-ask-for-more/](http://www.nuj.org.uk/news/get-it-in-writing-and-always-ask-for-more/)

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- There are an awful lot of NUJ national events like this one coming up, some arranged not too long in advance – so do make sure you're on the NUJ mailing list for these. (Check with [membership@nuj.org.uk](mailto:membership@nuj.org.uk) if you're not getting messages). If you take time to read the many emails that come into your inbox from "National Union of Journalists", you may find details of some really excellent meetings of this type buried deep among other material.



Mark Whitehead advises freelances on wearing both journalist and PR hats

Photo: © Mark Thomas

## Photographers 'defrauded' on Payback forms

PHOTO AGENCY Rex Features wrote to photographers in December to say that it has "recently discovered that a small number of Rex contributors' authorisation forms were fraudulently signed by a Rex employee on behalf of some contributors and sent to DACS".

This follows an investigation by members of the Editorial Photo UK group ([www.EPUK.org](http://www.EPUK.org)) who were concerned about the possibilities for just such malpractice opened up by the proposal that photo agencies form their own collecting society.

As photographer David Hoffman points out, there are a number of other issues to be resolved, including how much of these payments have

been "skimmed" off and how they can be recovered.

The letter concludes, "If you would like us to modify your relationship with DACS, including by withdrawing Rex's collection of royalties on your behalf, please let me know by responding to this email". EPUK and the NUJ advise photographers not to take any action or to respond to this email until the extent of this malpractice becomes clearer.

DACS is the collecting society through whose Payback scheme many or most NUJ photographers currently get payment for their secondary rights – those that it is impractical for them to collect themselves, for example photocopying of

publications containing their work. EPUK understands that DACS is working quickly and diligently to carry out the necessary checks and is working to minimise the delay in Payback payments to Rex claimants resulting from the fraudulent actions at Rex.

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- And a reminder to photographers to be wary of any new contracts "offered" by agencies. They are likely to be trying to get you to sign away rights to payments for "secondary" uses of your work: details at [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1512dacs.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1512dacs.html). If you have not yet signed up to receive these payments, go to [www.dacs.org.uk](http://www.dacs.org.uk).

LFB meetings

14 March

Women in journalism

11 April

What do (new) LFB members want?

See back page & [www.twitter.com/NUJ\\_LFB](http://www.twitter.com/NUJ_LFB)