

Attention!

Any NUJ member contemplating work either for **TravelPride** or for **Arise TV Limited** should first telephone the Freelance Office via the NUJ switchboard on **020 7843 3700**

The Rate for the Job

THIS MONTH'S Rates for the Job include impressive amounts reportedly paid for writing for US titles and for copywriting.

Thinking about work for a company you've not dealt with before? Look at the Rate for the Job to find out what companies in similar niches have paid. Then aim higher.

You can submit rates online at **www.londonfreelance.org/rates** – please give not only the basic rate (e.g. for First British Serial rights) but extra payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web. These are shown as (eg) £400+100.

Rates marked **X** are, in the editor's fallible opinion, below par. Treat all rates as minima, even perhaps the happy ☺ few and see **www.londonfreelance.org/feesguide** for hints on talking them up.

Broadcasting: ITV Daybreak psychologist punditry, travel expenses only paid £0 **XXXX**.

Photography: Balder (Sweden) 5 photos £250 **X**; CLIC Sargent half day shoot for cancer charity £200.

Punditry: women's organisation local group 40-minute talk £60.

Shifts: University of the Third Age day £200; Observer magazine subbing day taxed at source £190; Sun subbing day £165; Money Saving Expert reporting day £150; Telegraph subbing day £150 + holiday pay; Condé Nast World of Interiors subbing day taxed at source, £135 + holiday pay, House and Garden same terms, £130; copywriting; Landscape Institute news stories, day shift from home £250; Metropolitan subbing

day £150; **metro.co.uk** lifestyle reporting 9-hour day shift, £100 **XXX**; and **www.procopywriters.co.uk** survey – in London per day £426, outside London per day £339, very experienced *per hour* £100, beginners *per hour* £30.

Translation: Buzzfeed per day (unspecified languages pairs) £160.

Words, per 1000: Telegraph 1200 words @ £480 = £480; Greater Manchester Arts 1500 words @ £500 = £333; human rights publication 700 words @ £100 = £143; Q re-use of 1995 feature, writer retains copyright £120; Ecologist feature £100; Selvedge magazine (textiles) feature £50 **XX**; and according to **whopayswriters.com** – Variety US\$7500, Popular Mechanics US\$2000, Teen Vogue US\$1500.

Words, other: Times front page story £233 **XXXX**; The Stage 250-word overnight review @ £20 = £80 **XXXX**; The Culture Trip research, writing in WordPress US\$70 **X**.



The Gong

The Gong is awarded to publishers who need a wake-up call on late payment. This month's nomination goes to *The Times* – reported online at **www.londonfreelance.org/rates/submit** as paying three months after an article was submitted. See past entries at **www.londonfreelance.org/gong.html** – and also see how to claim interest and compensation from late payers at **www.londonfreelance.org/interest.html** and how NUJ members can ask for assistance with them at **www.londonfreelance.org/collect.html**

Photo © **Dave Rotchelle**

A stern reminder to do your taxes

YOU HAVE already missed the deadline to send in a tax return for tax year April 2016-April 2017 on paper.

Now you can only do your tax return for that year online. You have until **31 January 2018** to do this. The sign-up page for the website of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC, the tax people) is linked from the online version of this article at **www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1711tax.html**

If you're unsure of your Government Gateway password to access your HMRC account and start filing your tax return online, request a new one *now*.

If you became self-employed in tax year 2016-2017 and haven't yet registered with HMRC for online tax returns, contact your local tax office now as you'll need to get a password sent to you by post for security reasons. HMRC warn that this can take up to a few weeks.

HMRC's website has been known to crash under the sheer volume of submitted tax returns in the run-up to the **31 January** deadline. There are also automatic three-figure fines for failing to submit your tax return by the deadline. Don't say we didn't warn you.

You also have just over four months to fill any holes in your Class 2 self-employed National Insurance (NI) contributions history before "Class 2s" (at £2.85 a week) are abolished. After that, such voluntary contributions will be charged at a



The offices of the Inland Revenue – now HMRC, the tax people – at The Strand, in Central London **Photo: © Matt Salusbury**

much higher rate. From April next year you will instead be charged "Class 4" contributions: if you make a profit of over £8164 a year, that's 9 per cent of your profits.

If you've neglected to pay Class 2 contributions via your tax return for any period, the resulting holes in your NI contributions history will affect your state pension entitlements.

Database errors by HMRC and others have led to some random self-employed people having their NI contributions history "overwritten" – removed from their tax calculations. So you'd better contact your tax office to find out whether there are any gaps you need to fill with vol-

untary payments while there's still a cheaper Class 2 rate.

Meanwhile, the Government's Making Tax Digital plan to make all self-employed folk submit quarterly tax returns online on some yet-to-be-developed platform seems to have been seen off, at least temporarily. Now only businesses with a turnover of £85,000 or more will be compelled to keep "digital records" from 2019.

Other businesses (including most of us) are now expected to be "asked" to keep digital records and provide quarterly tax updates from 2020 onwards.

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