



SAGE Rate Card 2019

2019/08/25

Introduction

The tables below represent a broad spread of possible rates. If the rates seem exceptionally low or high, consider that these are intended to cover a wide range of job types, genres, durations, locations, funding models, labour conditions, and budgets. Also keep in mind the realistic growth rate of a career over a period of 40 years.

Rates should be considered negotiable.

We encourage editors and producers alike to read our [pre-employment checklist](#) and the [what to expect from an editor document](#).

Rates exclude the rental of editing equipment, which we strongly recommend be charged separately.

Weekly rates, ZAR

	Junior		Mid-level		Highly experienced and/or international	
Story editor "offline"	9 000	to 13 500	13 500	to 22 500	22 500	to 32 800
Finishing editor "online"	11 000	to 16 600	16 600	to 25 600	25 600	to 40 000
Colourist	12 500	to 18 300	18 300	to 28 000	28 000	to 43 700
1st Assistant editor	6 000	to 9 100	9 100	to 14 000	14 000	to 21 900
2nd assistant, logger/digitiser, subtitler	3 100	to 4 800	4 800	to 6 700	6 700	to 10 500
Sound editor or designer	6 900	to 12 500	12 500	to 22 500	22 500	to 40 000

Daily rates, ZAR

	Junior		Mid-level		Highly experienced and/or international	
Story editor "offline"	1 800	to 2 700	2 700	to 4 500	4 500	to 6 560
Finishing editor "online"	2 200	to 3 320	3 320	to 5 120	5 120	to 8 000
Colourist	2 500	to 3 660	3 660	to 5 600	5 600	to 8 740
1st Assistant editor	1 200	to 1 820	1 820	to 2 800	2 800	to 4 380
2nd assistant, logger/digitiser, subtitler	620	to 960	960	to 1 340	1 340	to 2 100
Sound editor or designer	1 380	to 2 500	2 500	to 4 500	4 500	to 8 000

Conditions

- Hours to be negotiated between editor and producer
- Excluding equipment and software license

See our [what to expect from an editor](#) and [employees vs. independent contractors](#) documents, as well as our [independent contractor agreement](#).

Overtime

- All time after 10 hours per day charged at 1.5x.
- All time after 14 hours per day charged at 2x.
- 6th day and public holidays charged at 1.5x daily rate, minimum call 10 hours.
- 7th day charged at 2x daily rate, minimum call 10 hours.

About the rate card

SAGE has published an annual rate card of recommended salaries for editors for the last 18 years. Though focussed on freelance editors, this rate card can also be used as a starting point for full-time employment negotiations.

We regularly do surveys about rates, as well as monitor our anonymous rate reporter and job submissions by producers.

Our rate card is calculated using four main principles:

1. Inflation matching

We look at the average CPI since the previous rate card release in order to calculate the rates.

This year we've added the average CPI at 4.7%. This is in accordance to Stats SA.

We urge all post-production professionals to consider job sustainability when negotiating rates.

2. Skills growth

On top of inflation, we consider a 15-year career growth. Not everyone will improve their skills at the same rate, which is why we maintain a spread across all levels of experience.

Beyond 15 years of skills growth, highly experienced editors are considered to be in a strong individual negotiating position.

3. A spread of rates

We've created three experience groups: junior, mid-level, and highly experienced.

Note that experience does not necessarily equate to number of years spent working in the post-production industry, but rather the specific years of experience at a specific task. We have chosen to not provide a years of experience criteria for each group, as we feel that different editors progress at different rates. When deciding on which category to place yourself in, keep in mind that the average career lasts 40 years, and that your skills will continuously develop over that period.

We urge editors to consider job offerings below their minimum rate very carefully.

4. Rates and conditions comparable to the camera department

SAGE's policy is that the post-production rates should match those of the camera department, as both departments contribute similar technical and creative effort. When negotiating, we encourage editors to ask what the other heads of departments are earning.

We also recommend that editors negotiate for duration-pay rather than lump-sum pay, as this requires the producer to take some of the risk of post-production scheduling—which should never be exclusively the editors' risk.

Lastly, we strongly disagree with the trend of balancing the camera and post-production costs as they appear in the budget: duration of work is the only reasonable comparison. When discussing rates, we encourage editors and producers to compare total hours with hours.

About SAGE

SAGE is a guild, not a union. We aim to improve the skills, opportunities and working conditions of post-production professionals, and to represent them at government level.

Editors are a fundamental part of the technical and creative process of making content, and should be recognised for the role they play. We aim to encompass all post-production professionals, including: online editors, colourists, sound editors and mixers, editing assistants, loggers and subtitlers.

While we do provide contact details for the convenience of producers, SAGE is not an employment agency, and cannot be held responsible for managing the working relationship, collecting fees or selecting an editor for a particular job. Producers should interview candidates to ensure that they have the suitable skills for a particular production. Please ask for personal references or examples of work to help you make your decision.

Please see our [website](#) for more information.