

EDN PRESS RELEASE  
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## Survey Reveals Current Cost of Making Documentaries in Today's Audiovisual Market

**A recent survey among documentary filmmakers entitled "The Cost of Docs" provides figures and insights into the actual cost of producing a documentary film in today's audiovisual market. The survey takes a closer look at the financial aspects involved in the production of documentaries from the research stage up to the final cut. The survey, spearheaded by the Whicker's World Foundation, was conducted in partnership with EDN - European Documentary Network and Sheffield Doc/Fest.**

What factors constitute the costs of making a documentary and what are the main challenges documentary filmmakers have to deal with to complete their projects? Finding out more about the financial conditions documentary filmmakers have to work under was among the main aims of the survey which involved nearly 200 respondents and included a set of 16 questions related to the financial side of documentary filmmaking. The survey report is now available in PDF file format and can be downloaded [here](#).

### Key take-aways:

- 87% of the surveyed filmmakers could only finish their films by sacrificing a part of their wages
- travel, transport and accommodation costs are the main cost hurdles in documentary filmmaking
- costs for licensing fees (music & archive), staff and post-production range among the top cost factors of a production
- 65% of the producers indicated tight production budgets and insufficient fund-raising opportunities as main reason for not being paid their calculated income
- producers frequently indicated that their projects are made out of passion, meaning that their own financial means were involved in finalizing the film

Emily James, documentary producer/director and one of the respondents, states: "Documentary filmmakers often auto-exploit themselves paying others on their crew full rates when they don't pay themselves. It makes it difficult to build a career or to make a sustainable living out of directing documentaries."

With regard to costs for transport, more than half of the respondents indicated that more money had been spent on such expenses compared to previous films. Transport emerged as the greatest costs increase followed by editing-staff and post-production (color grading, sound mixing). Areas in which costs decreased compared to earlier films, are related to on-screen talent, security and graphics. Among the costs that remained on the same level were those for insurances, translation services and fees for facilitation and location.

For enquiries or a copy of the questionnaire, please contact:

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Credits: Text and graphic design by Curtis Gallant and Robert Pyburn, published by Whicker's World Foundation

### **About the Whicker's World Foundation**

The Foundation is an international charity set up in 2015 with the bequest of broadcaster Alan Whicker to give annual grants to emerging documentary talent of around €130,000.

### **About EDN**

The European Documentary Network is a global network for professionals working with documentary film and TV. Around 1000 members from more than 60 countries have joined EDN. The organisation is open for both newcomers and established filmmakers from around the world. EDN provides documentary consulting and informs about possibilities for funding, financing, development, co-production, distribution and collaboration across borders. This is done via individual consultancy to members on documentary projects, activities like workshops, seminars and conferences as well as through the "EDN Financing Guide" and the "EDN Co-production Guide", two indispensable resource publications provided by EDN.

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### **For editors:**

This press release, photos, images and the EDN logo are also available for download at the EDN web site: <http://www.edn.dk/edn/contact-press/press/>

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### **EDN - European Documentary Network**

Stimulating networks and knowledge within the documentary sector

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