THE COST OF DOCS

2021/2022

THE WHICKERS

Sheffield DocFest

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fifth edition of The Whickers' Cost of Docs Survey. This report looks specifically at the changing landscape for documentary makers in the UK and internationally.

In addition to our work funding and supporting emerging talent around the world, we seek to champion documentary makers and to amplify their voices in the industry as a whole. The initial aim, back in 2016, was to ensure that our main funding award, now £100,000, was still the game-changing amount that we wanted it to be. Since then, we have added new questions on the impact of Brexit, COVID and the future of virtual pitches. Our aim is to continue evaluating and confronting the challenges faced by filmmakers in uncertain times.

Key questions:

- How far does The Whickers' top Funding Award of £100,000 go in today's market?
- What financial and political challenges face documentary filmmakers in 2022?
- How have things changed, year by year, since the first edition of the Cost of Docs Survey in 2016?

The survey was completed anonymously by 169 self-selecting documentary makers. Some questions allowed respondents to choose multiple options, whilst others were not applicable to all, therefore percentages may not always add up to 100%.

You will find a copy of the original survey questions in the appendix.

If quoting from this report, please credit The Whickers. Contact info@whickerawards.com for any queries or to request a copy of the four previous editions of the Cost of Docs report.

Written and designed by Emily Copley and Jane Ray. Additional research by Curtis Gallant, with grateful thanks to Sheffield DocFest, for helping us to formulate questions and support the distribution.

KEY FINDINGS

Here is a summary of the key findings. It is worth bearing in mind that respondents completed this survey before the war in Ukraine and subsequent fuel crisis.

- The cost of documentary making continues to rise. Prices have risen across all 18 categories. Travel is the cost increase cited by most respondents (65%) with production crew (61%) and post-production costs (53%) coming 2nd and 3rd. This ongoing escalation of costs is the main reason for The Whickers to increase their top funding award from £80K to £100K.

- Increased production costs have inevitably led to corner cutting. The three most common ways of making ends meet have been to multi-task, reduce crew payments and the filmmaker's own wage. 48% have used these methods, with 16% saying they have cut down on the number of shooting days.

- However, far fewer are willing to sacrifice on editing costs. Only 3% have dared cut editing days and more than 60% of filmmakers now hire in a craft editor. A few years ago, this figure stood at 39%.

- The net outcome is that less than a fifth of respondents (18%) perceive that they have been paid fairly for the time and effort they have poured into their documentary making. One said *"I couldn't afford the rent during filming at one point, so was sleeping on friends' sofas."*

- This is not because respondents are valuing their time at a higher daily rate. The opposite appears to be true: in 2016, 26% of respondents felt that their contribution was worth a fee in excess of £60k, now that figure stands at 2%.

KEY FINDINGS

- Brexit appears to be having more of a long-term impact on documentary making than predicted by the previous survey. The opposite appears to be true of COVID-19.

- Figures for those finding the fallout from Brexit an increasing issue are rising even for respondents outside the UK where it has doubled from 12% to 24%.

- Meanwhile those who say COVID-19 *"threatens my future as a documentary maker"* has considerably dropped since 2020 (26%, down from 45%).

- Respondents seem to have fallen out of love with online pitching. This represented a popular option at the start of the pandemic, with 57% then saying they would recommend this as their preferred option. That figure has now plummeted to 13%.

- Despite the increase in the costs of pitching, documentary makers say they prefer to meet others and attempt to sell their proposals face-to-face. One explained: *"It's as much about building a network as it is about the pitch. You can't do that virtually."*

- A quarter recommend a hybrid solution, but one respondent said: *"Online festivals are the end of any hope of distribution and income from films."*

- There are high levels of frustration with the documentary funding application process. 2022 has seen a surge in the number of failed applications. 31% of all respondents who have applied for funding have received none whatsoever, a rise of 8%. Some see a geographical bias with one saying *"There's a massive gap between the access to funding between developing countries and the West."*

KEY FINDINGS

- Despite inflationary pressures and increased costs, the most common amount of funding received is below £10k and the least common is above £100k.

- Documentary makers appear to be moving away from academic training. Fewer than ever are taking related degrees in documentary (an 11% drop) whilst marginally higher numbers this year are describing themselves as ‘self-taught’, ‘learning on the job’ or picking up skills via ‘short courses’.

- Bucking the trend of the previous 3 years, shooting footage on smartphones has not progressed. After 3 years of growth there has been a 6% drop.

- The use of high-end cinema cameras has also seen a sharp decline in use. After a rise in popularity there has been a 10% drop, with mid-range cameras retaining their popularity.

- Drone use has risen threefold since the previous survey. Then it was 11%, now drones are being utilised by near a third of respondents.

- The ultimate goal for any documentary is to find its audience. This year has seen a boost in the number of respondents whose documentaries have found an audience on VOD platforms, in cinemas and at festivals. Now only 39% say their documentary is ‘not available to a paying audience’. Just a couple of years ago this figure stood at 63%.

KEY FINDINGS

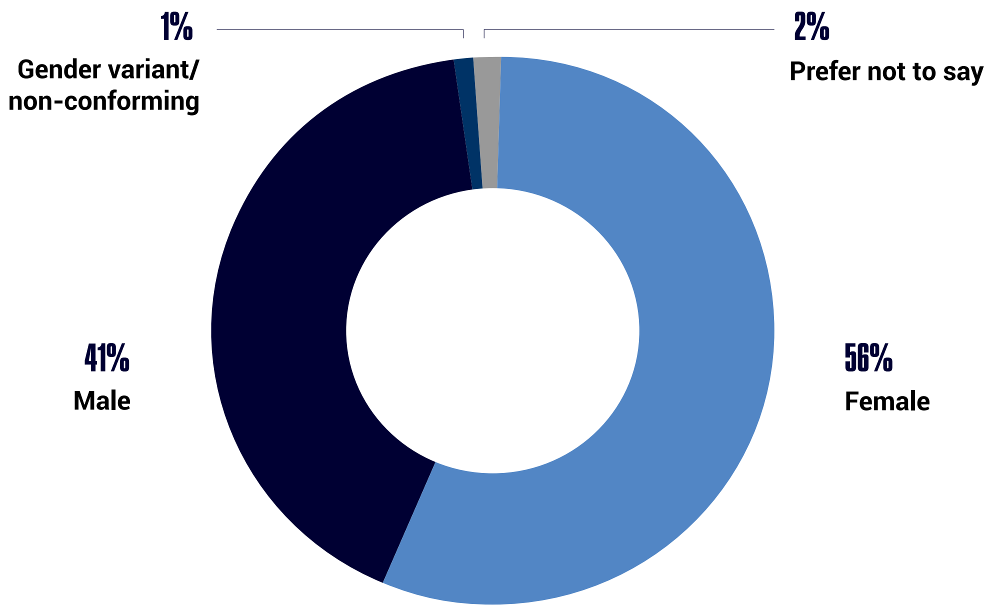
- Despite the welcome upsurge in the number of documentaries that are being shown at film festivals, there is little evidence to suggest these festival appearances subsequently generate sales or lead to distribution deals. This is a point frequently highlighted in verbatim comments, with one respondent adding that there needs to be a *"move towards alternate forms of distribution"*.

- Even though there's been pressure and sacrifice, not one of our respondents is saying that they will completely abandon documentary making this year, with one still able to say *"It's the greatest job in the world".*

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

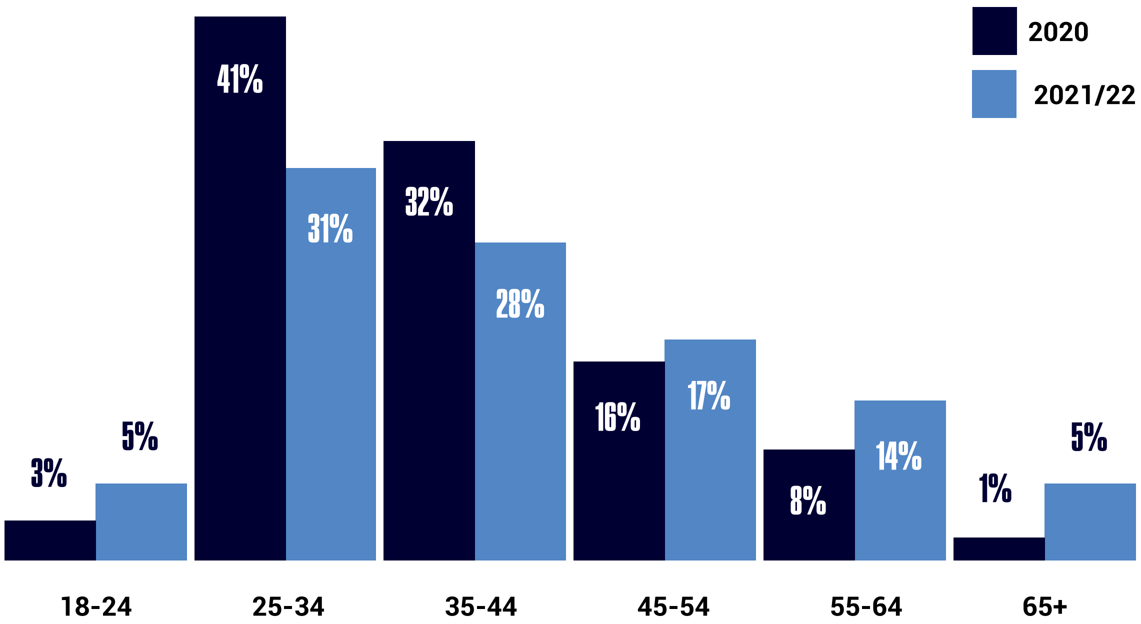
GENDER

The first few questions in this survey aimed to find out more about the respondents themselves - their ages, ethnicity and country of residence. **We asked respondents to identify their gender (Q53)** - revealing that 56% of respondents identified as female (57% in 2020 and 62% in 2018/19), 41% as male (42% in 2020), and 1% as gender variant/non-conforming (2% in 2020). Although we cannot deduce that this is reflective of the gender make-up of the documentary industry as a whole, it is useful to keep in mind when digesting the forthcoming data.



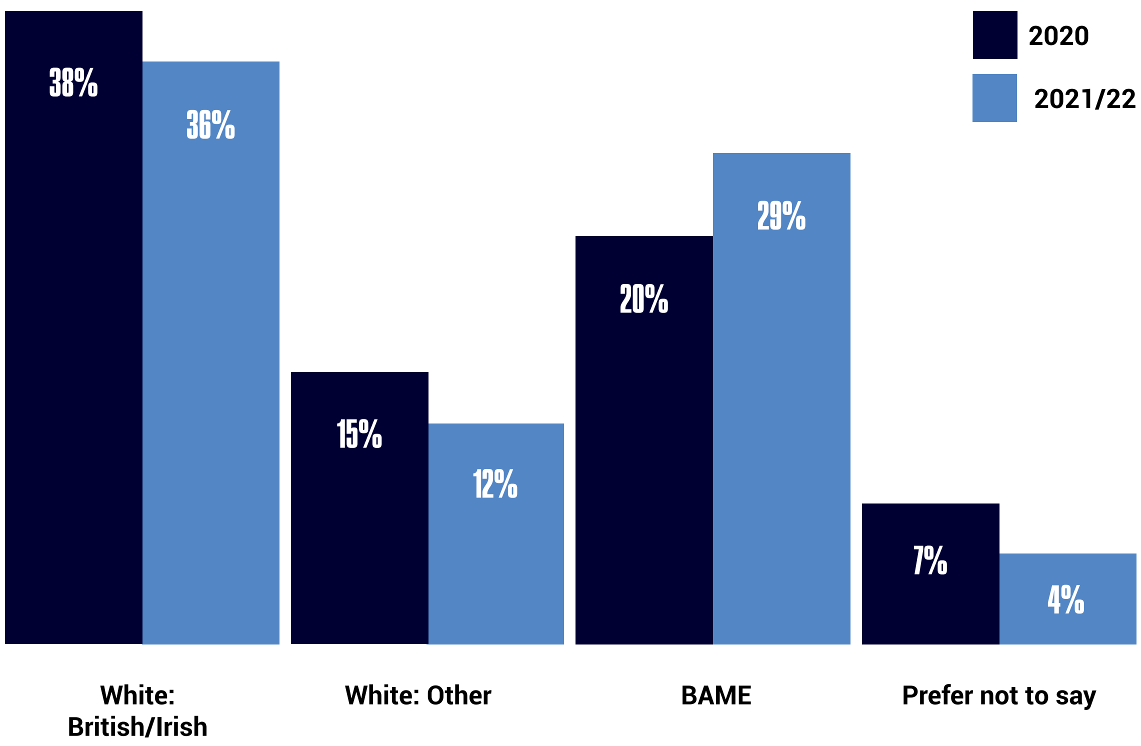
AGE

As in previous years, **we asked respondents to identify their age (Q52)** and as previously, our greatest proportion of respondents fell into the 25-34 age bracket (31%). This was followed by the 28% of respondents who fell into the 35-44 age bracket. So the majority of those who took this survey were in their mid-twenties to mid-forties. Fewer respondents fell into the 45-54 and 55-65 age brackets (17% and 14%), and even fewer into the 18-24 and 65+ brackets (5% and 1%). This year's figures on age are, overall, consistent with the previous 2 years. It suggests that documentary production is a still dominated by those in the late twenties to early thirties. However, this year we did have a 6% increase of older respondents within the 45-54 age bracket. This tallies with the fact that we have more respondents this year with higher levels of industry experience than in 2018/19 and 2020 (more detail on Roles & Experience on page 12).



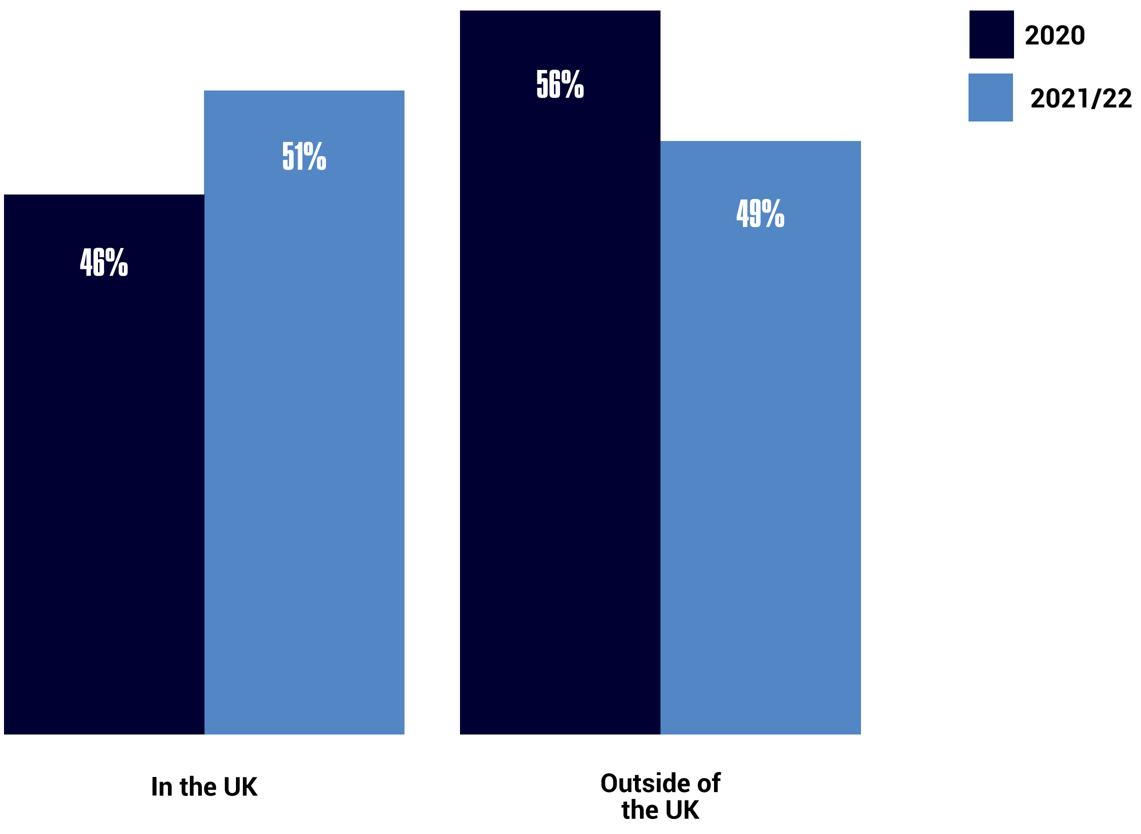
ETHNICITY

This new question was introduced last year to identify the ethnicity of our respondents (Q55). For the second year running, respondents to the Cost of Docs survey are overwhelmingly white British/Irish. This year the figure has dropped by 2%, from 38% to 36% of the total. However, it is interesting to note that respondents from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities have increased by 9% to 29% this year. 29% is more than double the UK average of residents identifying as BAME, which according to the UK census is 14%.



COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE

We also asked respondents for their country of residence (Q54). It is interesting that a UK based organisation with help of a UK based documentary festival (Sheffield DocFest) attracts almost half of respondents from outside the UK (49%). This is a slight decrease from the 56% of non-UK resident respondents last year. The high number of international respondents is helped by the continuing convention that recognises English as global language of the documentary industry. This year we had responses from countries such as: Kenya, Afghanistan, Sweden, Ghana, Australia, South Africa and India.



“THERE IS A MASSIVE GAP BETWEEN THE ACCESS TO FUNDING BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THE WEST.”

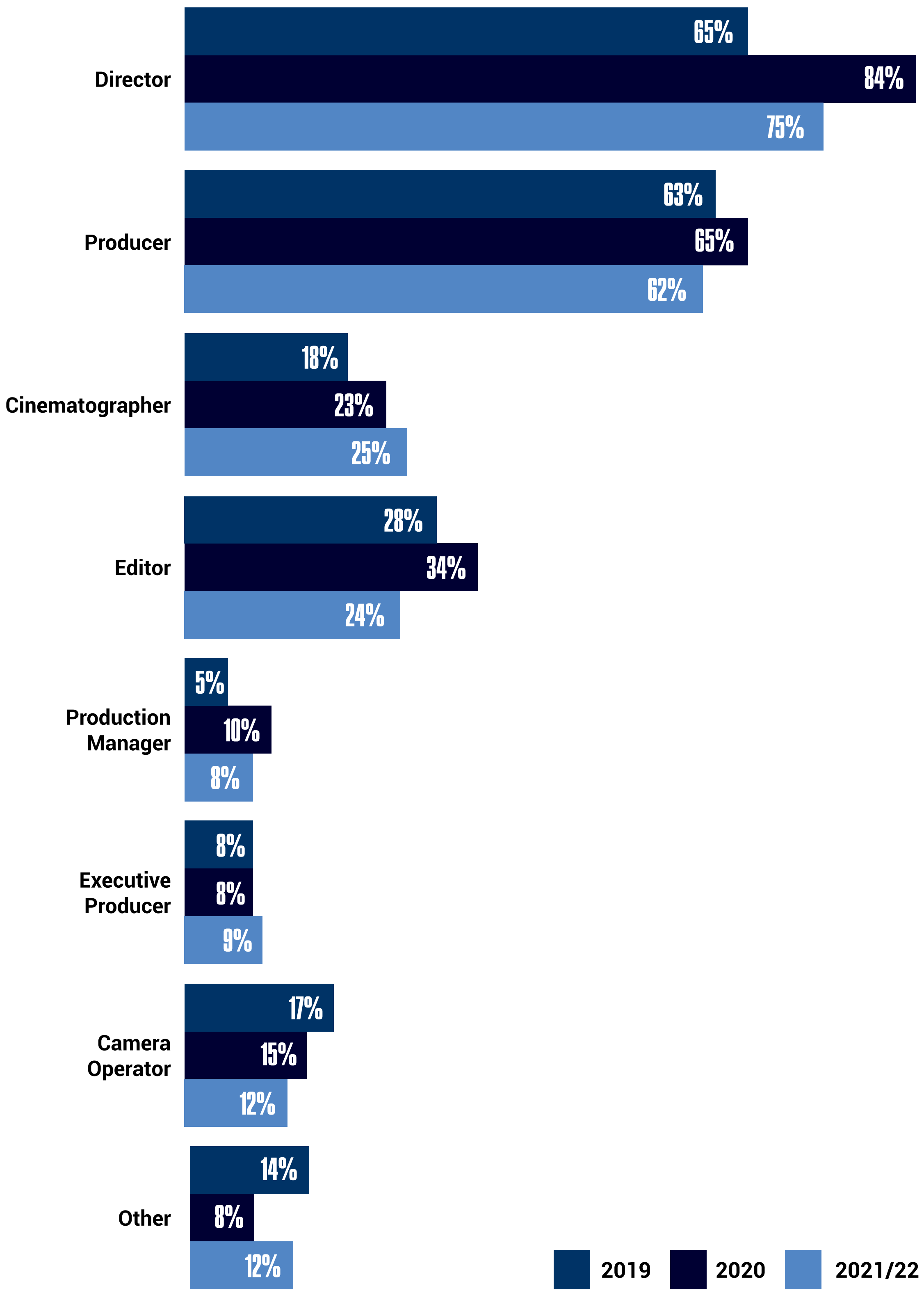
ROLES & EXPERIENCE

PROFESSIONAL ROLE

As in the previous year, when **we asked respondents what their professional roles were (Q1)**, the majority of respondents this year identified as Directors or Producers, at 75% and 62% respectively. However, this is a significant drop in both categories since 2020 survey (84% Director and 65% Producer). This appears to be a **move towards multi-tasking**. This year in the 'Other' category, multi-tasking was given as an alternative job title. On its own, this is not statistically significant. However, coupled with the number of comments in the free text box, where respondents explained how they were delivering documentaries in a more challenging financial market, it could be seen as a significant trend in 2022. More respondents say they are making ends meet by doubling up on roles, for example, by doing their own editing or sound recording. This raises questions about the sustainability of these craft industries.

The survey was also completed by Editors (24%), Cinematographers (25%), Camera Operators (12%), Executive Producers (9%) and Production Managers (8%). A further 12% of our respondents selected the 'Other' box, and identified themselves as Sound Recordists, Writers, Series Producers and PDs (Producing Directors).

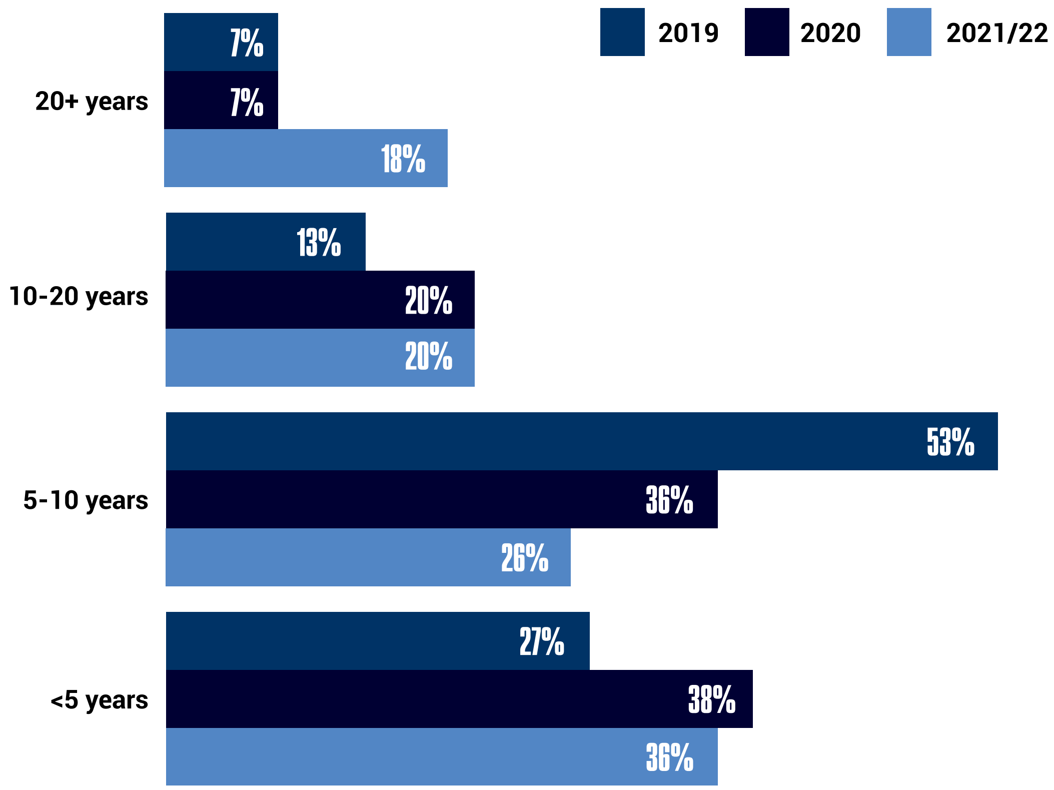
It is interesting to note that the number of people identifying as 'Cinematographers' has increased from 18% to 25% since 2018/19. Whereas, respondents calling themselves 'Camera Operators' has dropped from 17% to 12% over the same period. This continuing trend is backed anecdotally by respondents assigning roles that carry more status in a highly competitive industry. It also echoes the move towards multi-skilling, as the Cinematographer role is a highly editorial role as well as a technical one. This change also ties in with responses to question 37 (page 39) on 'Cost Cutting', where 24% of respondents say that they were cutting back on crew in order to reduce costs.


Director
65%
84%
75%
Producer
63%
65%
62%
Cinematographer
18%
23%
25%
Editor
28%
34%
24%
Production Manager
5%
10%
8%
Executive Producer
8%
8%
9%
Camera Operator
17%
15%
12%
Other
14%
8%
12%
2019
2020
2021/22

EXPERIENCE

We asked respondents **how many years they had worked in the documentary film industry (Q2)** and the majority (36%) responded that they had worked for less than 5 years. Considering that the majority of those who took this survey were in their mid-twenties to mid-forties, the data is unsurprising. A further 26% answered that they had worked in the industry between 5 and 10 years and 20% had been working in the industry between 10-20 years.

Year on year, the number of those with 5-10 years of experience has dropped significantly from 53% of the total to 36%, whilst the number of respondents who had worked in the documentary field for more than 20 years has increased significantly from 7% to 18%. The results of the rest of the survey can therefore be read in light of the fact that we have more respondents this year, in comparison to 2019 and 2020, with a lot of experience.

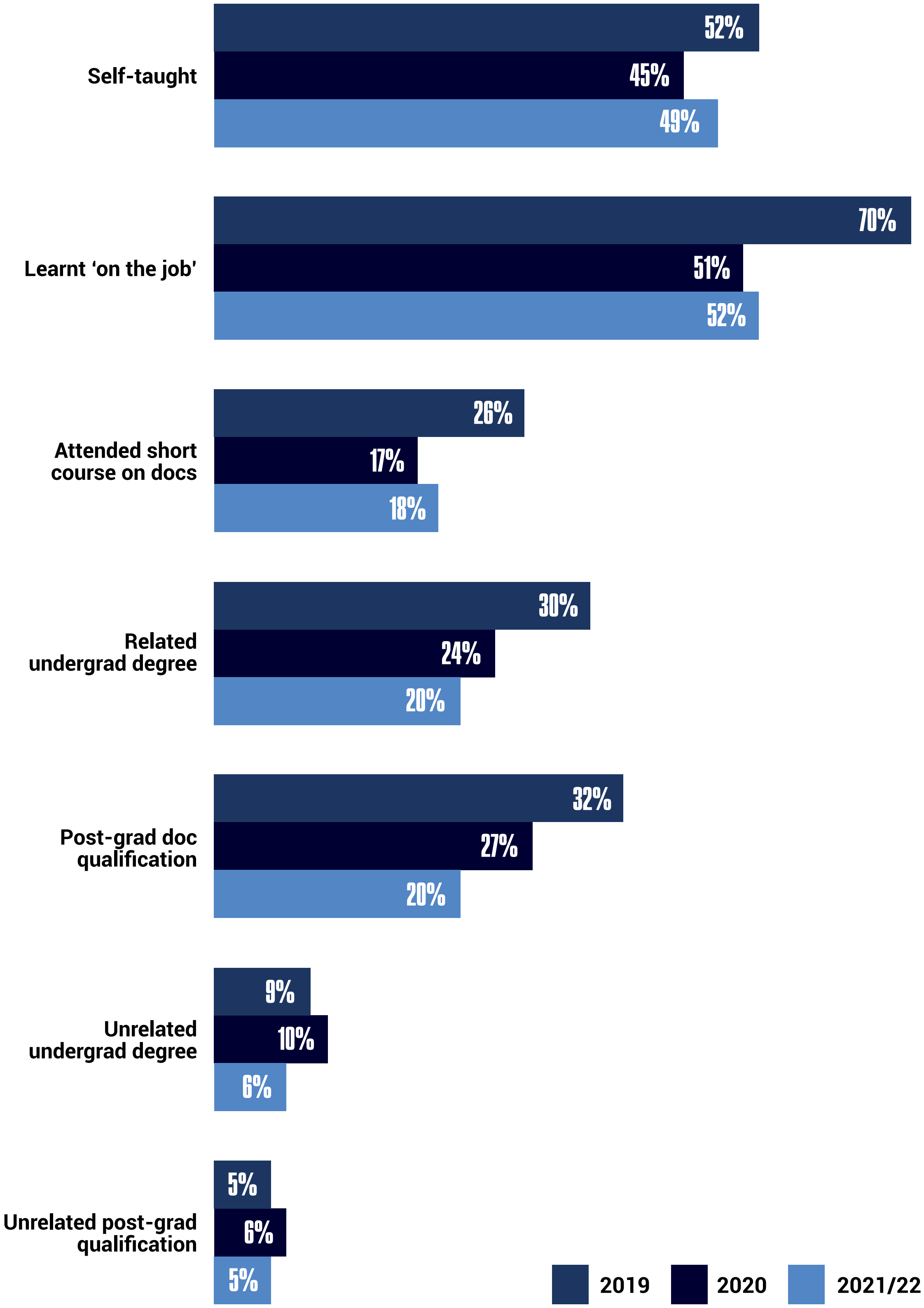


TRAINING

We also aimed to gauge the level of documentary skills training undertaken by our respondents (Q3). The figures over the past three years show that there is a general trend away from classroom-based learning, and towards learning on the job and being self-taught.

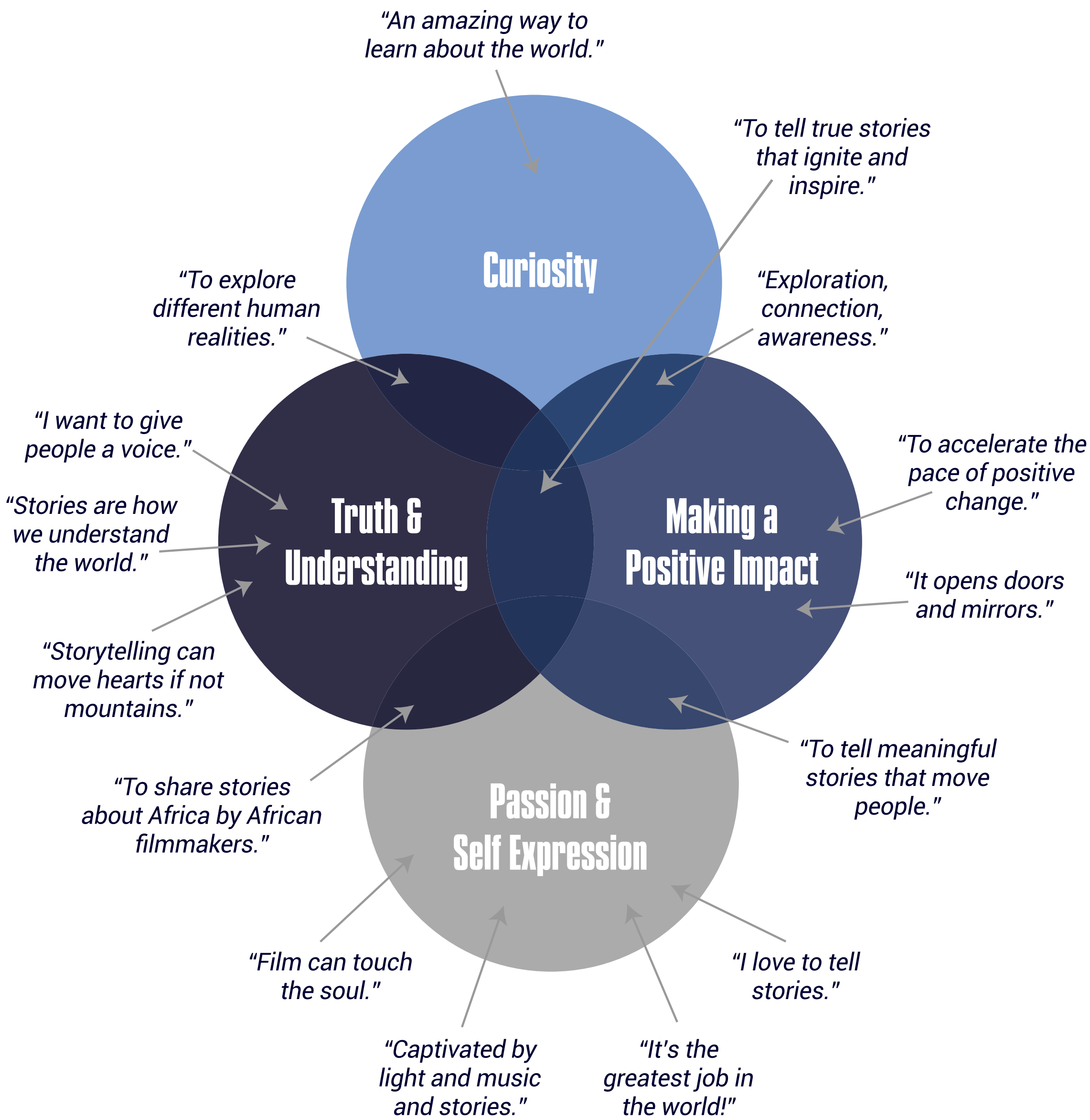
We discovered that over half of respondents (52%) said that they learnt their documentary skills 'on the job' and a substantial 49% considered themselves to be 'self-taught'. This is an increase of 1% and 4% respectively year on year. Meanwhile, there has been a 4% drop in respondents taking a related undergraduate degree course in documentary making, which is down from 24% last year. Across three years the drop has been even greater, falling 10% since 2019. So, three years ago nearly a third of respondents took a related degree course and now the figure is less than a quarter. There is a corresponding drop in the number of people taking related post-graduate degrees, down from 32% in 2019 to 20% this year. The pandemic may have played a part in this as it has been a lot more difficult for students to take hands on, practical degrees during lockdown. However, it may also say something significant about the rising cost of tuition.

It may be worth noting that there has been a slight increase of 1% since last year of respondents attending short courses in documentary making. It would have been interesting to know if these courses were in person or online. We have noticed, anecdotally, that several online documentary courses have sprung up in the last two years to plug a perceived gap in tuition.


Self-taught
52%
45%
49%
Learnt 'on the job'
70%
51%
52%
Attended short course on docs
26%
17%
18%
Related undergrad degree
30%
24%
20%
Post-grad doc qualification
32%
27%
20%
Unrelated undergrad degree
9%
10%
6%
Unrelated post-grad qualification
5%
6%
5%
2019
2020
2021/22

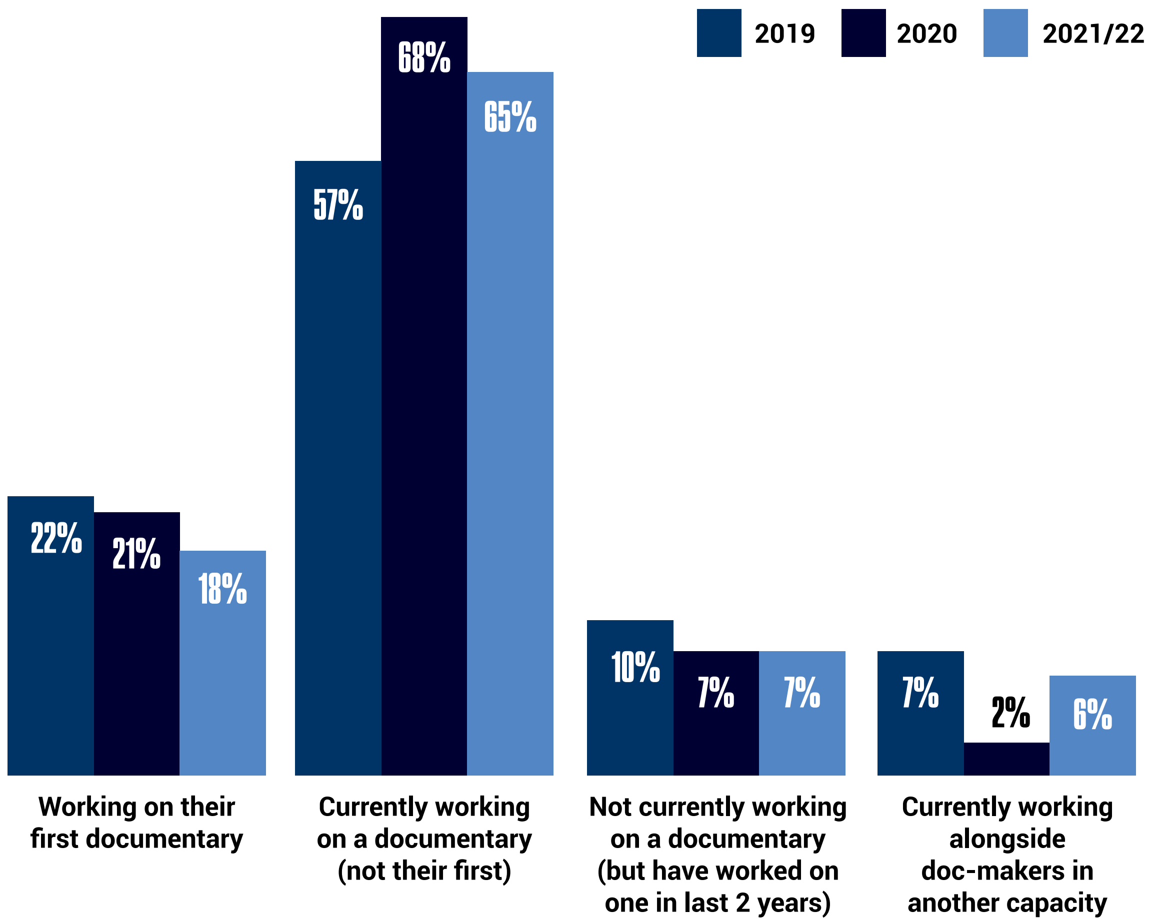
WHY DO YOU MAKE DOCUMENTARIES?

Having established the background and training of our respondents, **we sought to learn more about why exactly our respondents made documentaries** - in just seven words or less. Very similar to last year, the responses fell largely into four main camps, with much overlap between them: curiosity; truth and understanding, making a positive impact; and passion and self-expression.



ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON A DOCUMENTARY?

We asked respondents if they are making a documentary right now or if they have made one in the last two years (Q7). We ask this question in order to gauge how current their experience is. The main point shown by our statistics is that we have fewer documentarians responding this year and more who see themselves in ancillary or supporting roles. This number has increased three-fold since last year from 2% to 6%. Never before have we had so few documentary makers respond who are completing their first documentary. Our data sample is too small to say that the increasing strain on the industry is discouraging new joiners, but taken in tandem with later responses to questions about running costs and available funding, a fuller picture emerges.



“I COULDN’T AFFORD RENT DURING FILMING AT ONE POINT, SO I WAS SLEEPING ON FRIENDS’ SOFAS.”

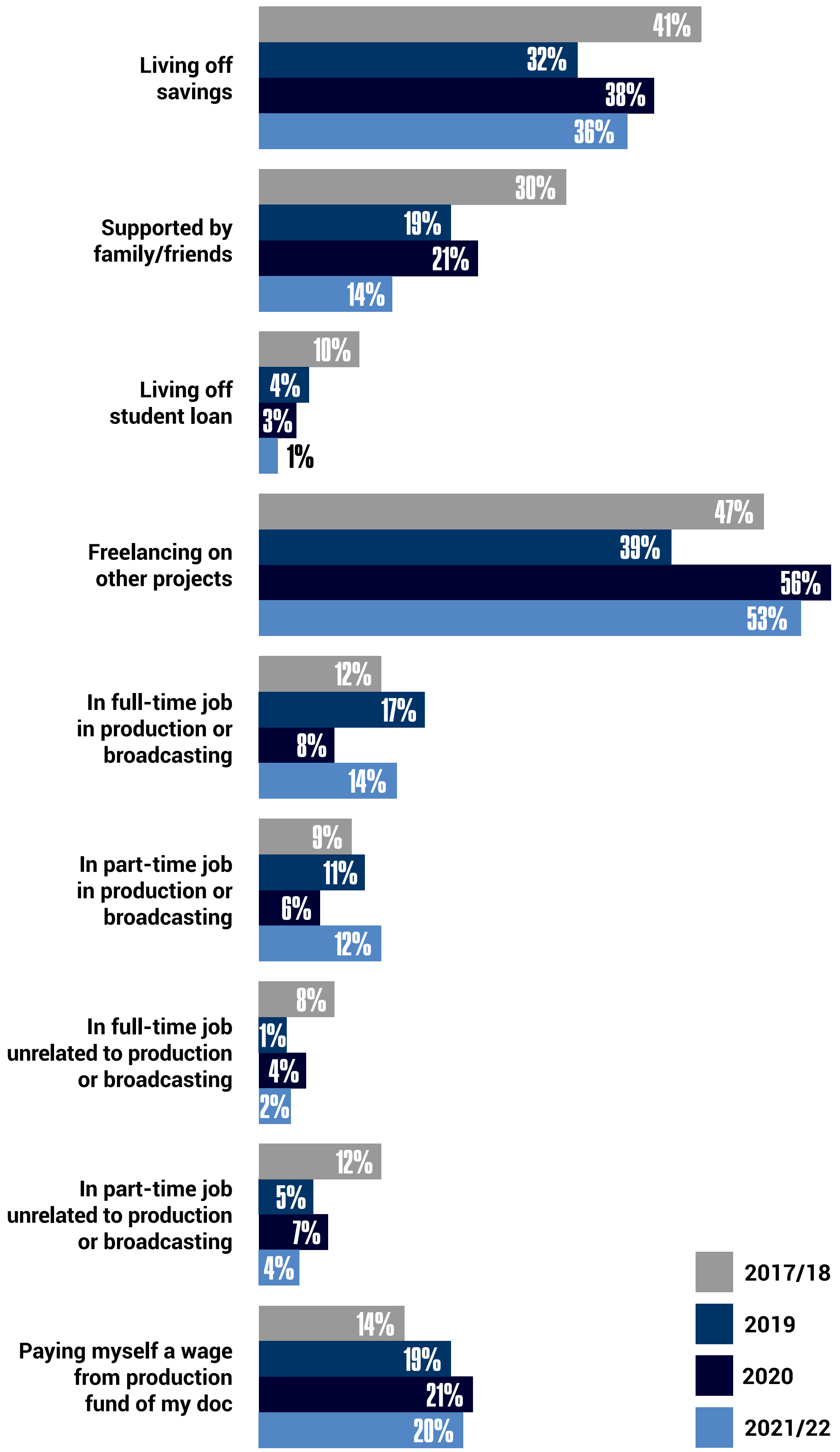
FINANCE & FUNDING

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

This question was directed at the 83% of our respondents who are currently making documentaries, and aims to determine how they are making enough money to live on for the duration of this endeavour (Q9). Respondents were invited to tick all options that applied. On the face of it this is a good news story with fewer than ever respondents claiming that they need to live off their savings or their families in order to survive. Conversely, more respondents than ever before are currently working in documentary related jobs either part-time or full-time. This figure has nearly doubled from 14% to 26% since last year. However, these results must be seen in conjunction with the fact that we have had fewer respondents than any previous year who are working on their first documentary.

Once again, we see that the most common way for documentary makers to support themselves is by freelancing elsewhere. This stands at 53%, making it the most usual way to survive in the industry. The next highest category is those living off their savings, however this has dropped slightly from 38% to 36% year on year. There has been a much bigger drop in those relying on financial support from family and friends. This has dropped from 21% to 14% year on year.

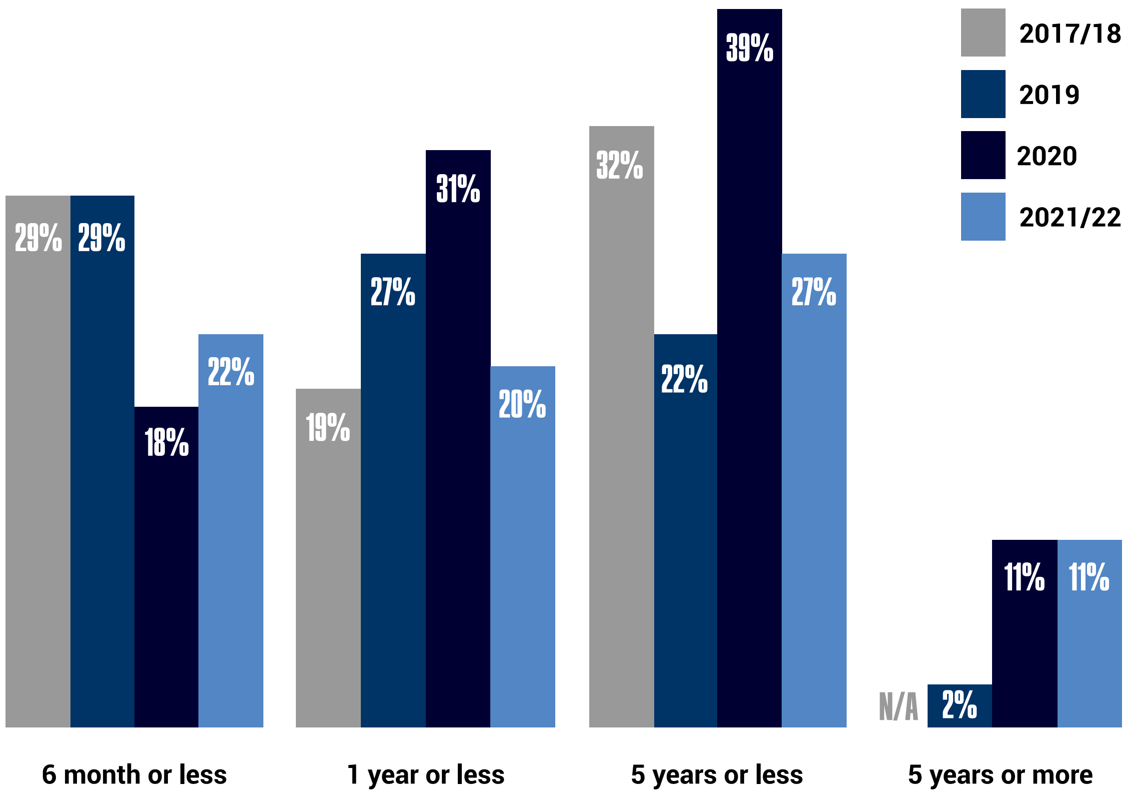
As our previous Cost of Docs survey reports have shown, it remains clear that documentary filmmakers are still not able to make a healthy living from their work. However, there are small signs that documentary making is less of an expensive and potentially ruinous hobby, and more of a professional career choice. It may also show post-COVID signs of recovery in the industry.


Living off savings
41%
32%
38%
36%
Supported by family/friends
30%
19%
21%
14%
Living off student loan
10%
4%
3%
1%
Freelancing on other projects
47%
39%
56%
53%
In full-time job in production or broadcasting
12%
17%
8%
14%
In part-time job in production or broadcasting
9%
11%
6%
12%
In full-time job unrelated to production or broadcasting
8%
1%
4%
2%
In part-time job unrelated to production or broadcasting
12%
5%
7%
4%
Paying myself a wage from production fund of my doc
14%
19%
21%
20%
2017/18
2019
2020
2021/22

TIME TAKEN TO COMPLETE A DOCUMENTARY

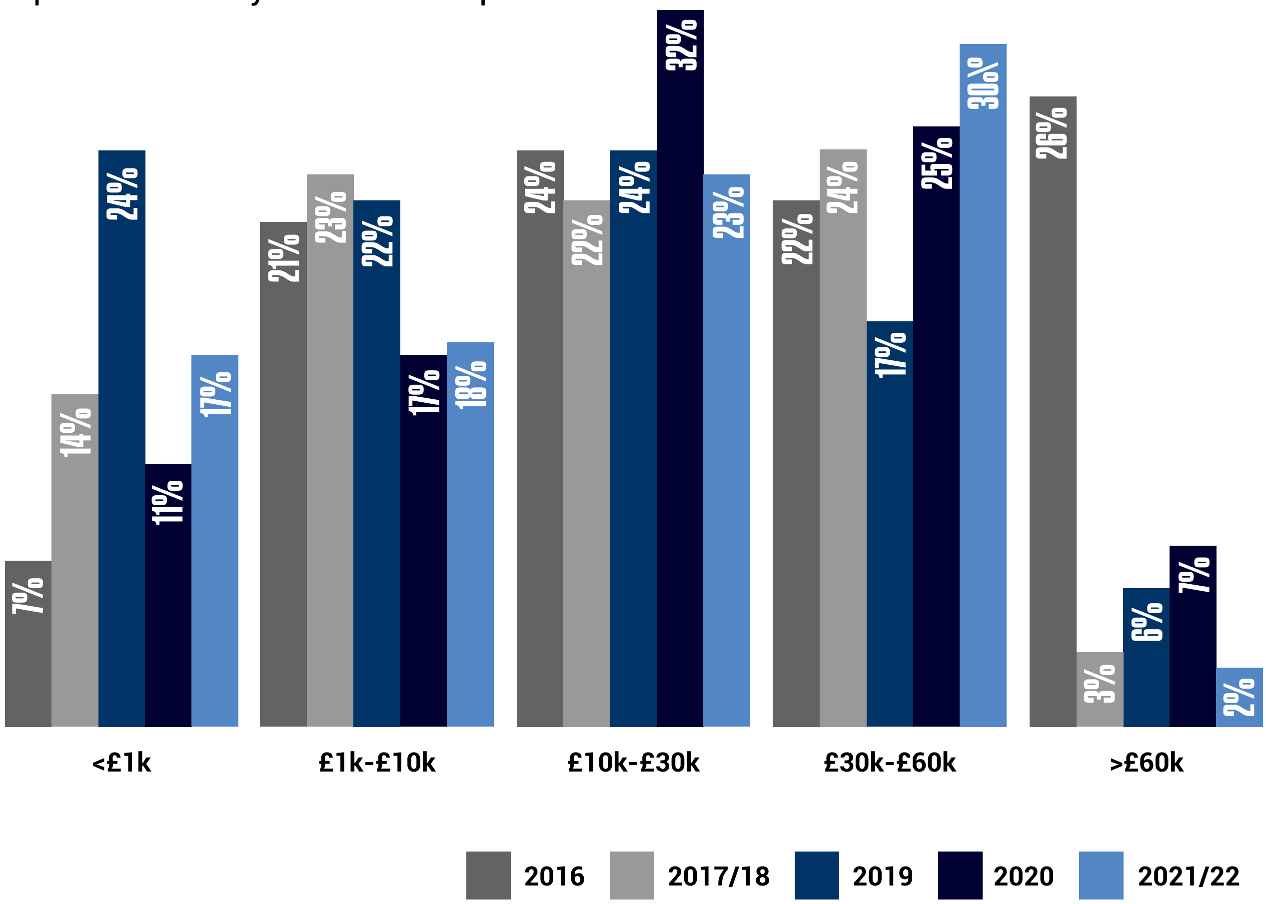
Next, **we wanted to know how long it took respondents to complete their last documentary (Q10)**. This is a good news, bad news story. On the one hand, there has been a 4% rise in documentaries being made within 6 months and a 12% drop in documentaries taking 2-5 years to complete. This may correspond with the previous response that showed fewer people tied up in other freelance work whilst making their documentary. On the other hand, this report will show later that more people are cutting the number of filming and editing days due to financial restraints.

It is useful to note that last year's dramatic increase from 2% to 11% in the number of documentaries taking over 5 years to complete. This may have been a response to the pandemic. It has not risen again and remains static at 11%.



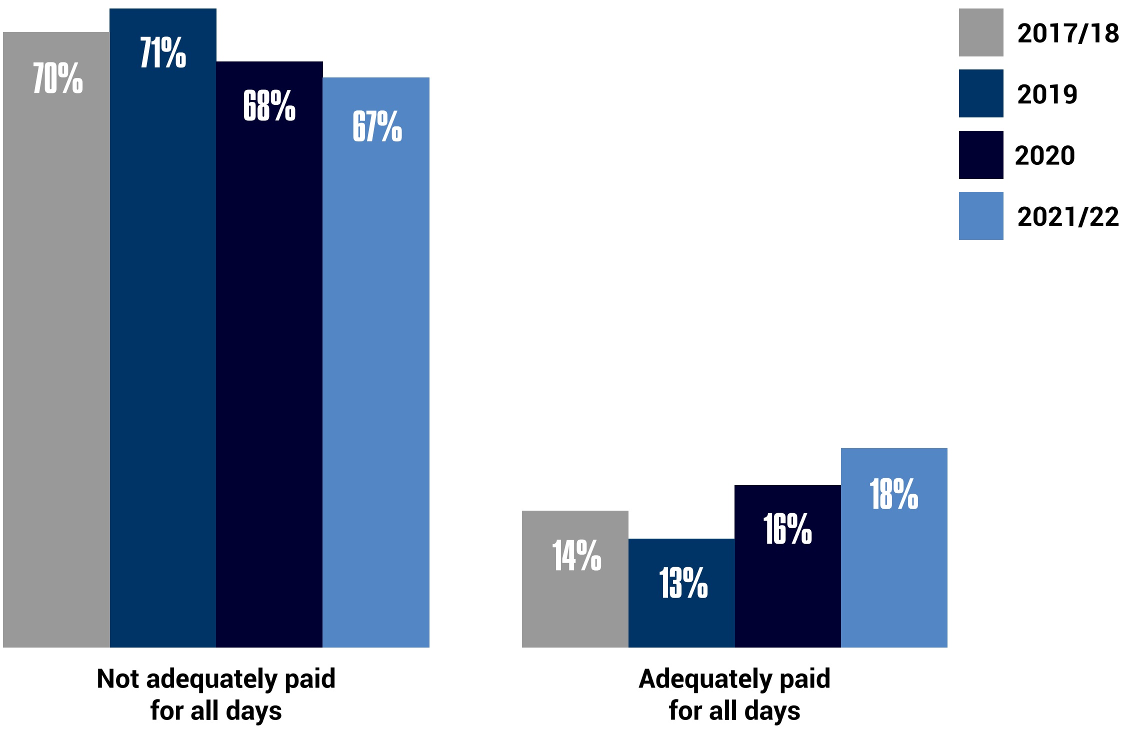
COST OF TIME TAKEN

Another way to look at the outlay and return involved in creating a documentary was to ask respondents to **estimate how much their time would have cost if they were paid for every day dedicated to working on their documentary (Q13)**. This year, the data suggests that respondents are feeling increasingly short-changed. The category estimating their value to be between £30k-£60k has been the category to show the highest upward trend, with a 5% rise to 30% since 2020. There are two factors that may influence this. Firstly, answers to question 2 (page 13) reveal that this year's respondents are more experienced than previous years and may therefore be calculating the overall figure using a higher day rate. Secondly, some verbatim responses show that cuts in finances (see page 40) mean that respondents are doubling, tripling and in one case quadrupling the roles they are taking on to complete their documentary. The highest amount from a single respondent was that they would be owed £100,000
if paid for the days of work completed.



PERCEIVED AND ACTUAL RENUMERATION FOR DOCUMENTARY WORK

The following question aimed to gauge whether or not respondents felt they had been adequately paid for all of the days that they had spent working on their most recent documentary film (Q14). This question is of course subjective, and relies heavily on respondents having a solid idea of their professional market worth, but it is also a helpful indication of the gap between the wages that documentary filmmakers are actually receiving, and the wages that they believe that they are owed for their time and expertise. This year's results, again, demonstrate that respondents still feel that they are not being appropriately paid for the work that they are doing. Only 18% of respondents felt that they had been paid appropriately and fully on their last project, compared to 16% in 2020, 13% in 2019 and 14% in 2017. For a second year, this shows a tiny cause for optimism, although it is not clear if this is optimism born of a marginal increase in renumeration or a lowering of expectation.



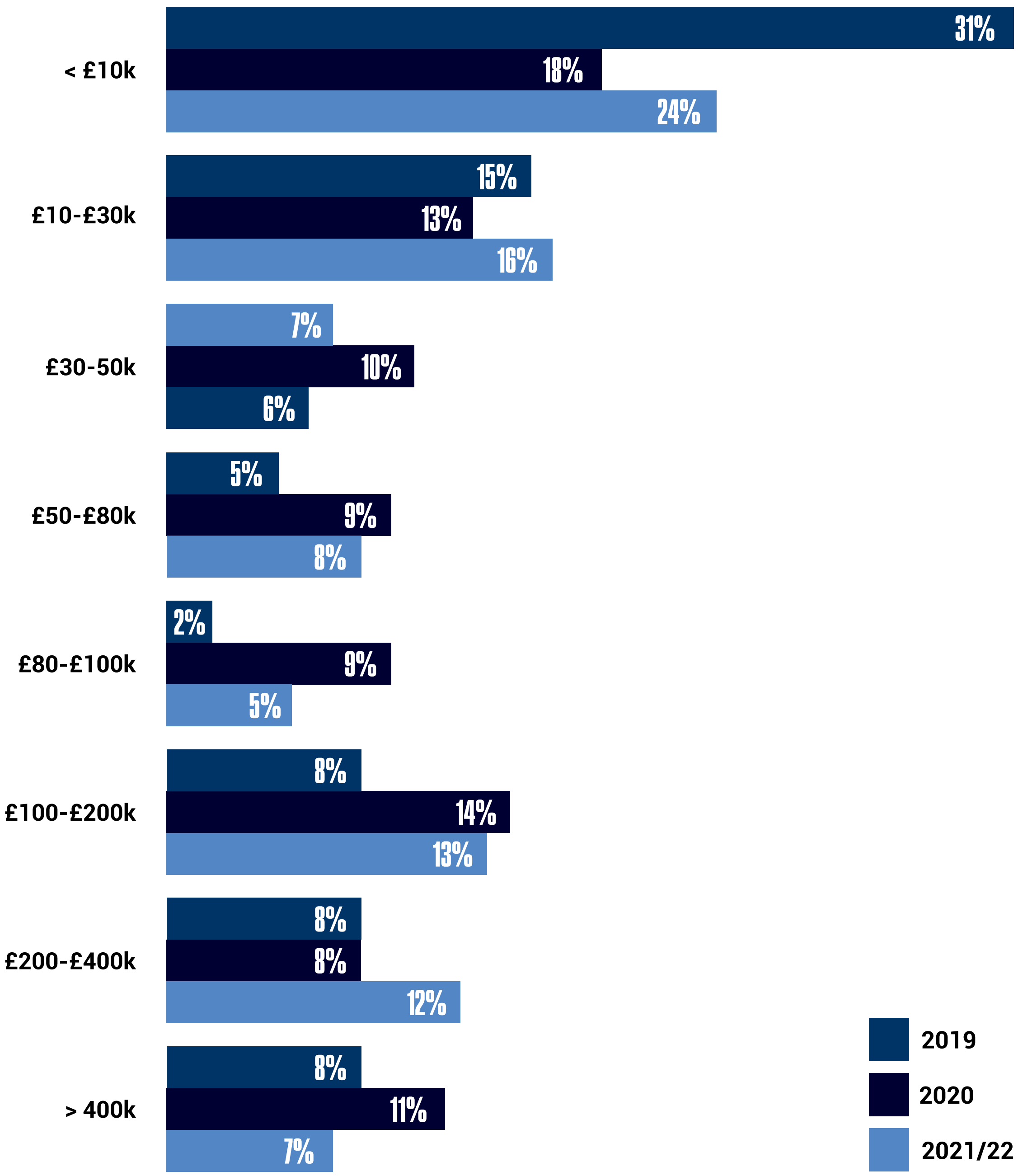
WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR TIME WERE YOU PAID FOR ON YOUR LAST DOCUMENTARY?

For a slightly different angle, **we asked respondents to estimate what percentage of their time they felt they had actually been paid for on their previous documentary project (Q15)**. Answers ranged from 0% to 100%, with an average answer that respondents felt that they had been properly paid for just 36% of their time. This is a slight increase of 3% from last year's figure of 33%.

THE COST OF MAKING A DOCUMENTARY

Our next set of questions aimed to find out if documentaries are costing more to make than last year, and if so what factors are driving those costs. A good indication of increased cost is the **size of the prospective budget (Q17).** At the lower end of the scale, 24% of respondents said they were making their documentary for less than £10k. Last year that figure was lower at 18%. However, on the other end of the scale there has been a marked increase in the number of respondents working on projects with a budget between £200-£400k. 12% this year compared to 8% in the previous two years. As we have already seen that directors' wages have barely increased, the big cost rises must be elsewhere.

However, another factor in the increase in budgets, that we have seen on page 12, is that we have a more experienced set of respondents for a second year running.



FINANCING A DOCUMENTARY FILM

To get a better sense of **what proportion of our respondents had applied for funding for their documentary film, and to which funds they had applied (Q18)**, we provided respondents with an extensive list of documentary grant-givers. We added to lists in previous surveys to be more inclusive of newly-emerged and smaller funds. Others included grants from Women in Film & TV, Hot Docs and local public funding. A comprehensive list compiled with further information on funds is available **HERE**.

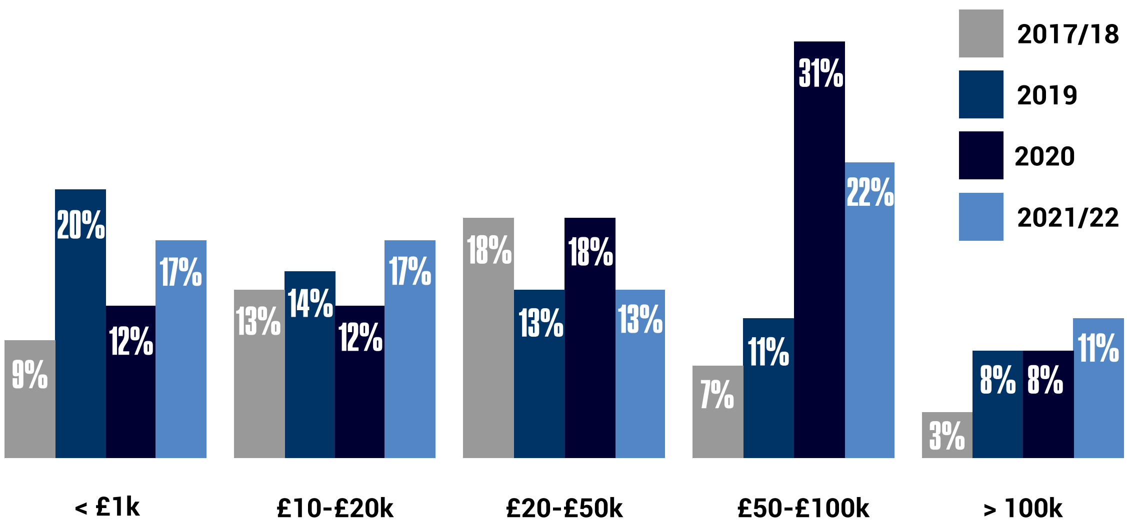
- 33% A BROADCASTER
- 30% SUNDANCE DOC FUND
- 30% DOC SOCIETY
- 22% THE WHICKERS
- 20% PRIVATE INVESTOR
- 21% CATAPULT FILM FUND
- 19% CREATIVE EUROPE MEDIA
- 19% IDFA BERTHA FUND
- 18% CHICKEN & EGG ACCELERATOR LAB
- 16% TRIBECA FILM INSTITUTE
- 13% CINEREACH
- 13% JUSTFILMS/FORD FOUNDATION
- 12% ONE WORLD MEDIA PRODUCTION FUND
- 11% INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY ASSOCIATION (IDA)
- 9% IMPACT PARTNERS DEVELOPMENT FUND
- 9% DOHA FILM INSTITUTE
- 8% THE FLEDGLING FUND
- 7% WELLCOME INSTITUTE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FUND
- 7% THE FILMMAKER FUND
- 4% BFI GLOBAL CINEMA FUND
- 2% FORK FILMS
- 1% DEREK FREESE DOCUMENTARY FUND

20% NEVER APPLIED FOR FUNDING

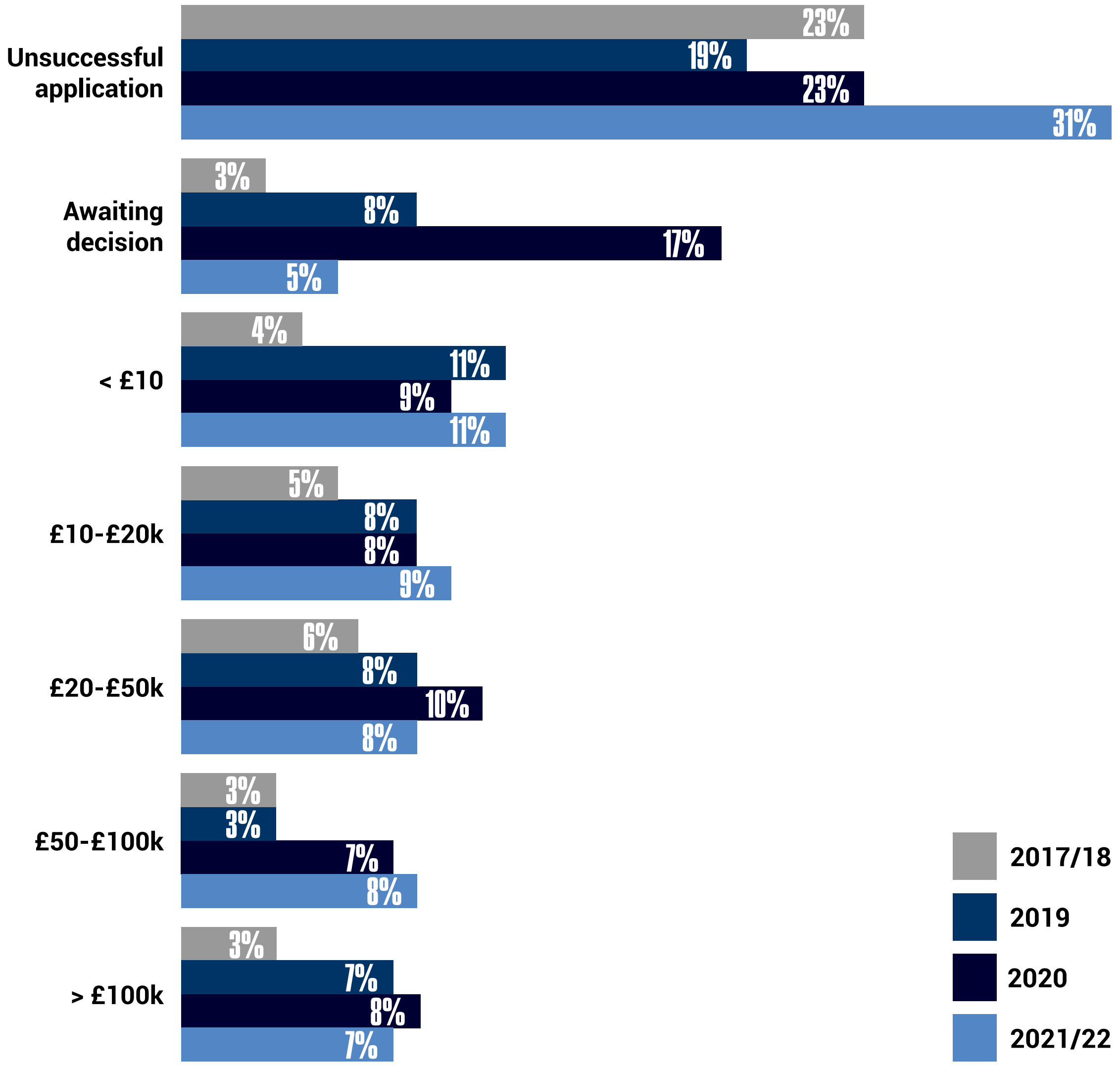
The results did not differ greatly from those of our 2019 and 2020 respondents - with filmmakers still largely seeking funding from international documentary grant-giving organisations such as Sundance, Tribeca and Doc Society. However, the number of respondents who had applied to Tribeca has dropped from 25% in 2020 to 16% this year. This may be due to the fact that the Tribeca Film Institute, among other global funds, moved from free entry to invitation only, as a direct response to the impact of COVID-19. Surprisingly, after the amount of respondents who had never applied for funding dropped a staggering amount from 2019 (36%) to only 6% in 2020, we have seen the figure rise back up to 20% this year, showing that funding organisations are now the 'go to' financier for only 80% of respondents, compared to 94% in 2020.

AMOUNT OF FUNDING APPLIED FOR VS. AMOUNT RECEIVED

For those respondents who answered that they had previously applied for funding for their documentary from an external source, we asked them, on average, how much they had applied for (Q19). The graph below details the differences in the amount requested by filmmakers in their funding applications from 2017. This year we have seen an increase in the number of respondents seeking between £10-£20k and over £100k. Compared to the high figure last year (31%), the number applying for £50-£100K is still the highest overall, but it had decreased by 9% to only 22%.



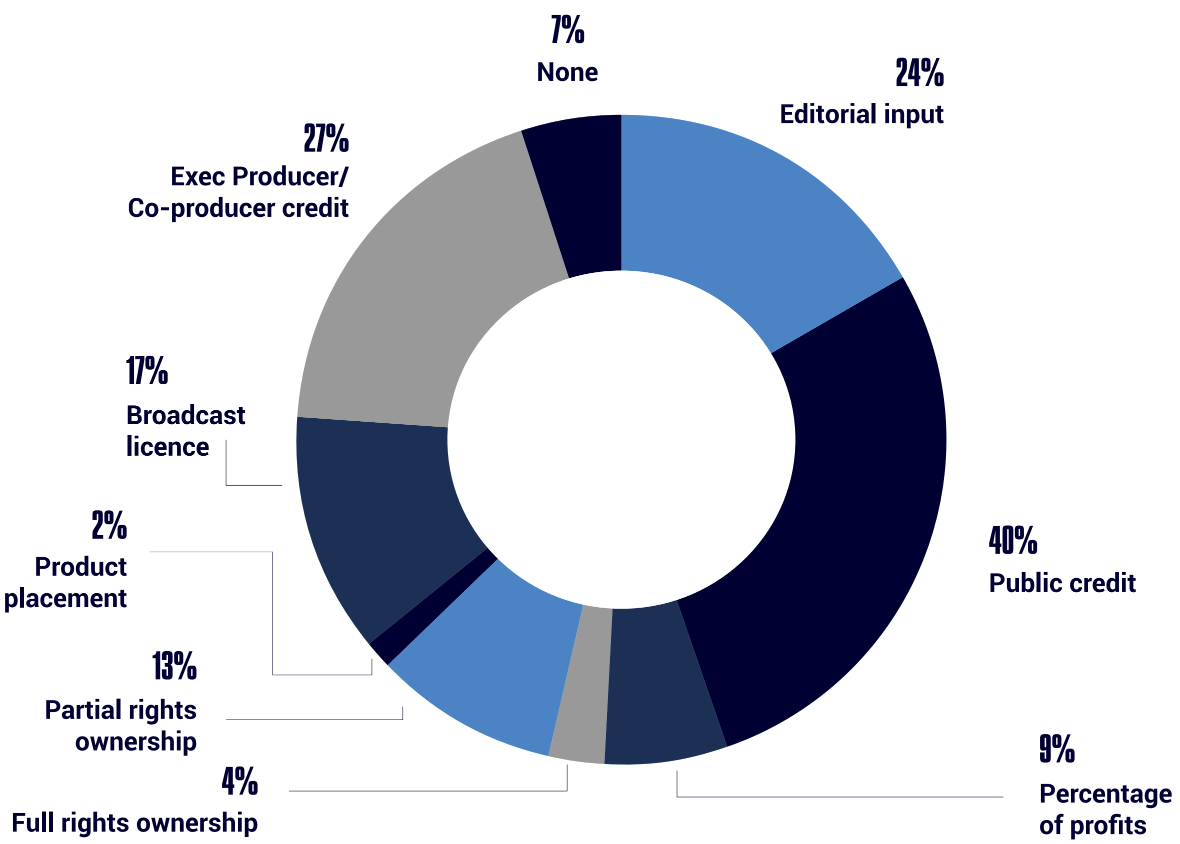
The logical follow-up question then asked respondents how much funding they had received, if any (Q20). The graph below highlights the widening gap between those whose applications garnered significant funding of more than £100K (down to 11%) and those who received nothing at all (up to 31%). The number of unsuccessful applications increased from 23% in 2020 to 31%, with the most significant difference being a decrease of 12% of those awaiting decision. Respondents last year suggested that the 9% increase in those waiting for results appears to relate to staffing issues arising from the global lockdown. As this figure in 2021 has decreased, it is likely that their suggestion was correct.



"I FIND THE DRIP FEED METHOD OF FUNDING QUITE FRUSTRATING AND VERY DIFFICULT TO PLAN AROUND."

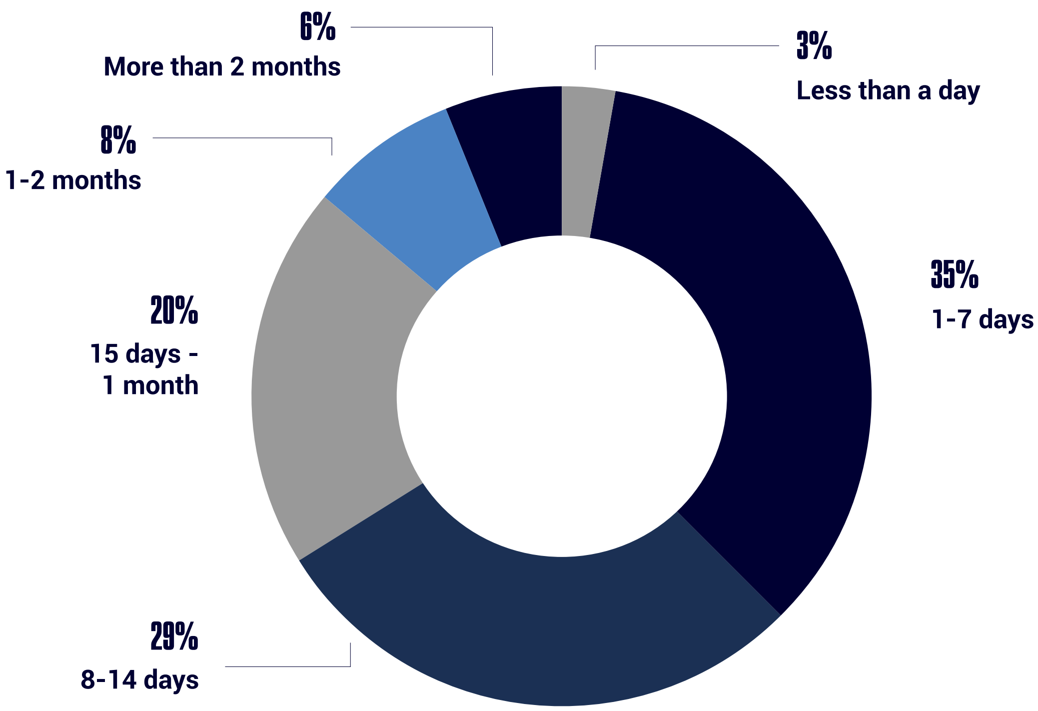
EXPECTATIONS OF FUNDERS

For those who had previously been awarded funding for their documentaries, we wanted to ascertain the expectations of their funders (Q21). 40% of respondents who had received funding answered that the funder expected to be publicly credited for their support, with 24% expecting editorial input throughout the filmmaking process. 17% of our respondents had received financing from a funder who expected full or partial ownership of the rights for the film, in comparison to just 1% in 2019. 17% in comparison to only 1% in both 2019 and 2020 demanded the broadcast licence for the film in question, which may be explained by the increase in respondents applying for funds from broadcasters (see page 28). The largest increase of 24% since 2020 is funders expecting an Executive Producer or Co-Producer credit, which has risen from 3% to 27%. New to this year, 2% of funders supported projects in exchange for product placement.



APPLYING FOR FUNDING

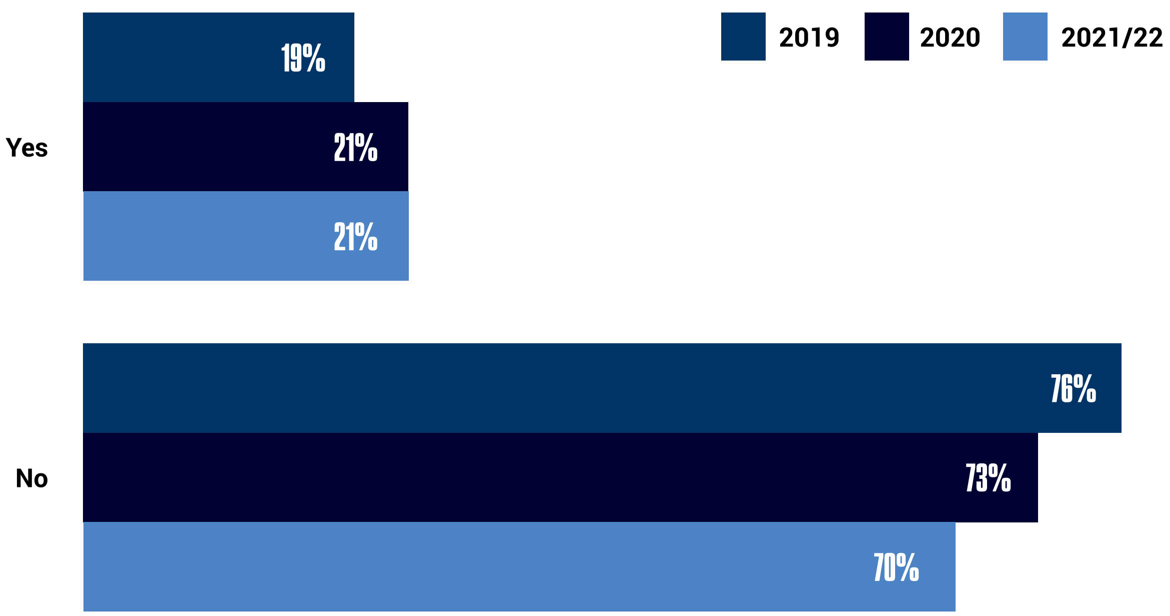
Given that we have already shown that just under a third of funding applications fail, **we sought to discover how much time is invested in each application form (Q22)**. Compared to the previous year, there has been an overall drop in the amount of time spent on an individual application. In 2020 the highest response was that an application was taking them up to 14 days to complete, whereas this year the most popular category was 1-7 days. This may be related to the pandemic, with verbatim comments suggesting that more time was being spent at home refining and tinkering with application forms, as it was impossible to be out filming. It is still worth noting, however, that 6% of respondents are still spending more than two months on a single funding application. It shows what a significant amount of time documentary makers spent in sourcing finance for their work.



CROWDFUNDING

2019 saw the introduction of a new question to the Cost of Docs survey, on the impact of crowdfunding. **We asked respondents whether or not they had used a crowdfunding platform to raise funds for their previous projects (Q23)**. The results were surprising and this year shows only a minimal change. Only 21% of respondents had ever used a crowdfunding site in an attempt to raise finance for their documentary film, while the vast majority - 70% of respondents - had never tried this method to raise funds. Of these 21% who had previously tried crowdfunding to source funds, respondents answered that on average they had managed to raise approximately 15% of their total budget for the documentary in this way, in comparison to 21% in 2020.

It is generally accepted that crowdfunding is a democratic but also very time-consuming way to source funds, and only one respondent said that they had managed to raise 75% of their budget this way. The vast majority received no financial benefit.

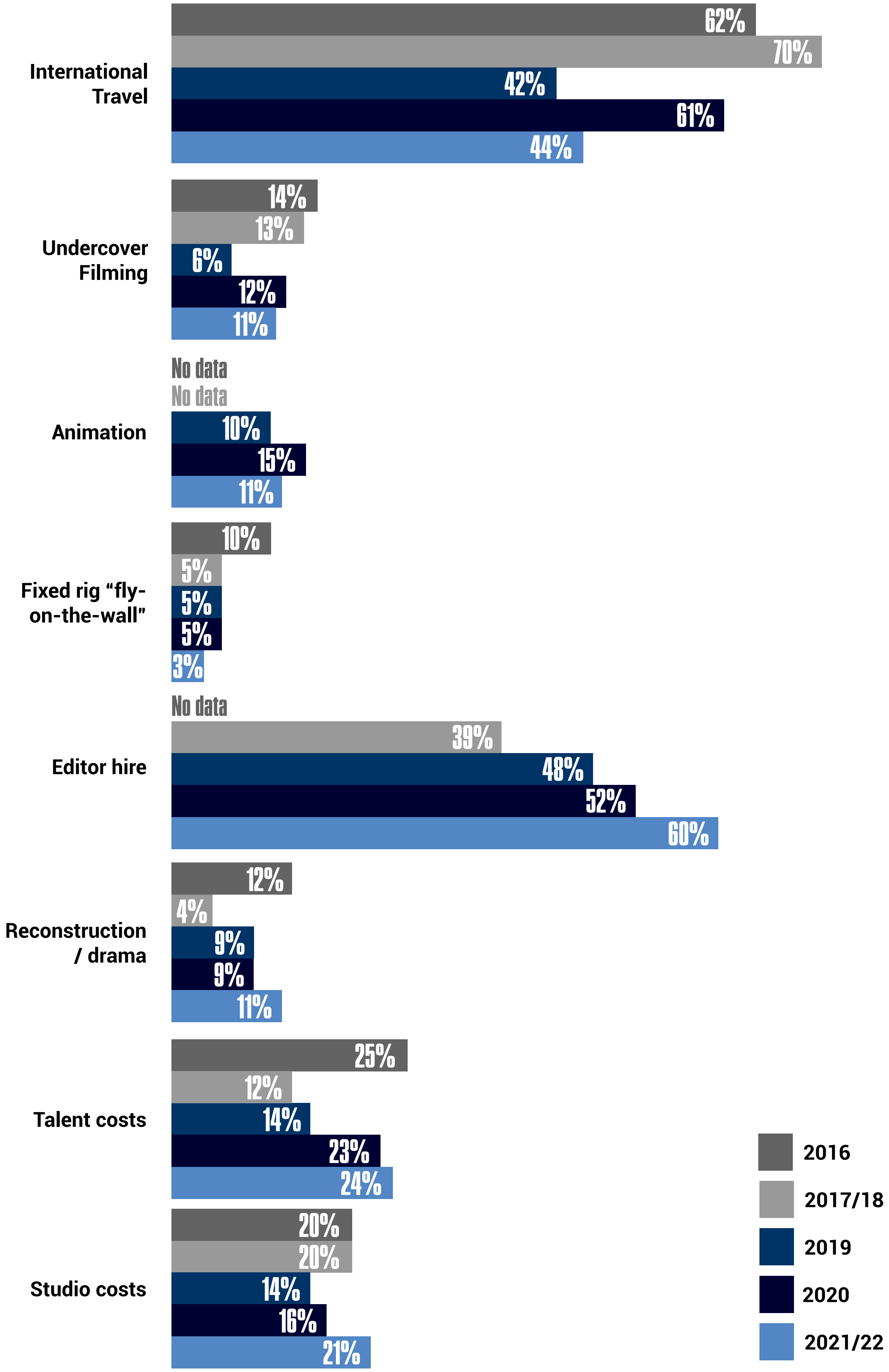


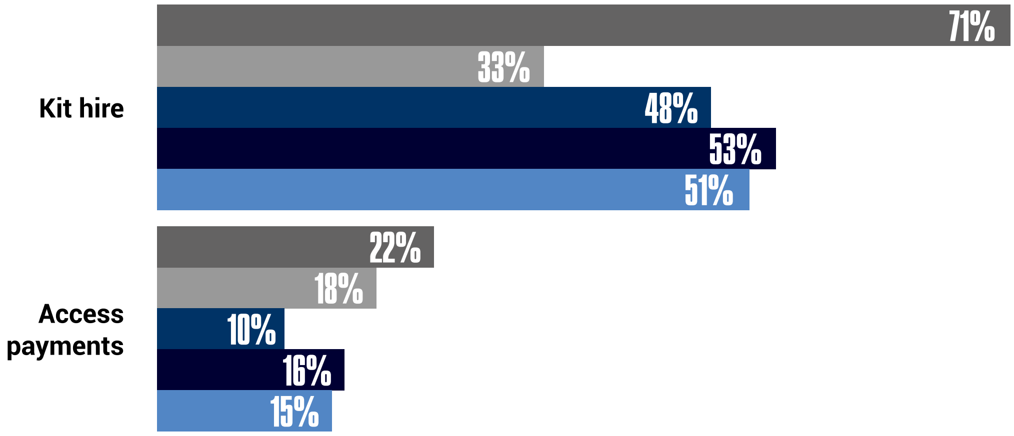
FACTORS AFFECTING COST

Since our first Cost of Docs survey in 2016, **we have followed the rise and fall of the most significant spending areas for documentary production (Q30)**. Most costs have been pretty static across the last four years, but there are exceptions. These exceptions appear to relate to the creation of ‘high end’ documentary production, such as editors, studio costs and soundtrack creation. This may relate to the response to question 29 (page 44) which shows there is an increasing trend towards cinematic release, as opposed to TV broadcast being the primary motivator for respondents seeking an audience for their work. It follows that the bigger the screen, the more advanced the visual and audio technology, the higher the spec required by the commissioner or distributor.

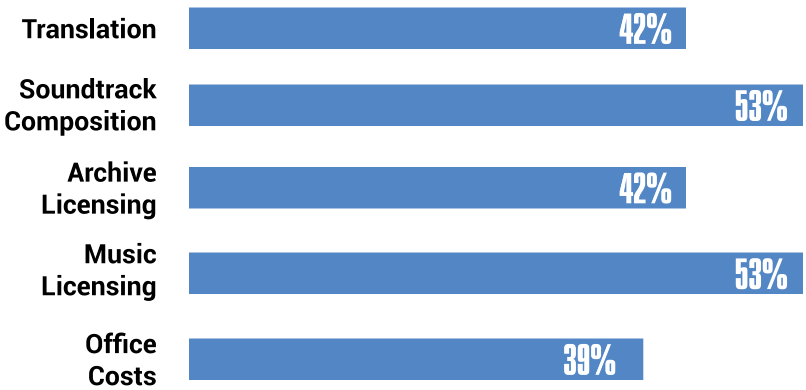
Subsequently, editor hire has continued to rise year or year and has seen an 8% increase since 2020 to 60%. The other two largest categories are also aspects of post-production, namely music licensing and soundtrack composition (both 53%). Whereas aspects of production, such as kit hire, travel and access payments have all decreased since the last survey.

The two interesting anomalies are the marginal decrease in animation (15% down to 11%) and the corresponding increase in dramatic reconstruction (9% up to 11%). These are both production techniques for showing what is difficult or impossible to film. Unsurprisingly, the increase in dramatic reconstruction corresponds to an increase in talent costs (23% up to 24%), as actors, unlike protagonists need to be paid. Although animation software has made it a more accessible option to many, it is notoriously time-consuming and therefore proportionally expensive. This is despite a public buzz around animated documentary such as *Flee*, which won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance 2021 and was nominated in the categories for Best Animated Feature and Best Documentary Feature at the Oscars 2022.


International Travel
62%
70%
42%
61%
44%
Undercover Filming
14%
13%
6%
12%
11%
Animation
No data
No data
10%
15%
11%
Fixed rig "fly-on-the-wall"
10%
5%
5%
5%
3%
Editor hire
No data
39%
48%
52%
60%
Reconstruction / drama
12%
4%
9%
9%
11%
Talent costs
25%
12%
14%
23%
24%
Studio costs
20%
20%
14%
16%
21%
2016
2017/18
2019
2020
2021/22

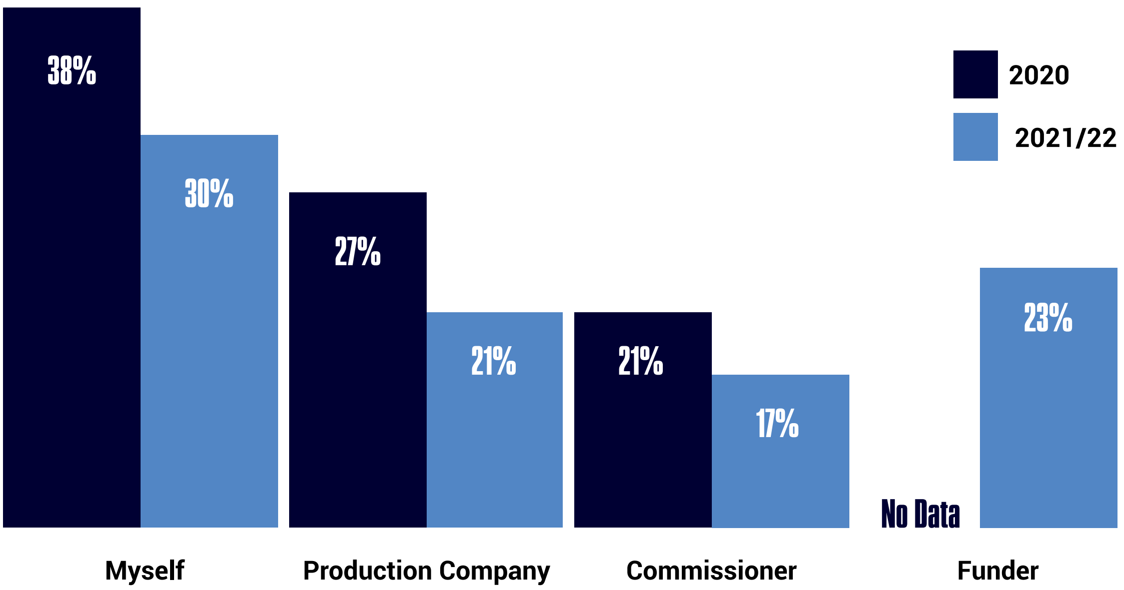


This year we added more categories to include translation costs, soundtrack composition, music and archive licensing and office costs.



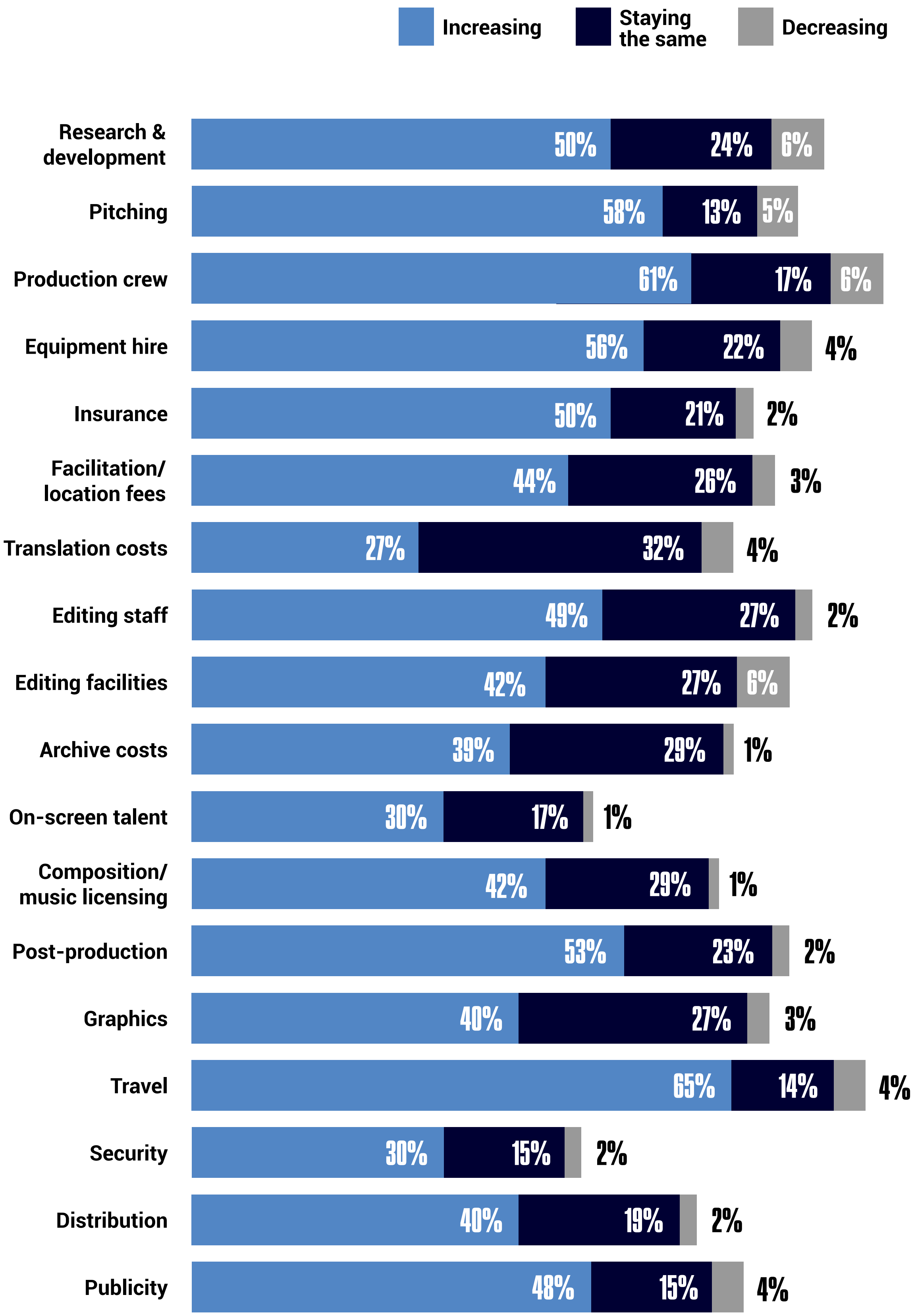
Next, **we asked respondents who had paid for the majority of elements in the previous section (Q31)**. 30% of respondents answered that they had paid for the most significant spending areas for documentary production themselves, in comparison to 38% in 2020. Although this figure had dropped by 8%, it is telling that the biggest contributor to documentary production is through self-funding. The verbatim comments attached to this response show how much the documentary maker is expected to fund up-front, even when they have a commissioner on board. One respondent said: *"Commissioner paid 15% deposit and remainder on completion so I had to cover costs initially via* *my own company."* Often it seems that these costs are never recouped: *"I paid it all for the shoot and edit of the trailer, but because my documentary wasn't commissioned, I didn't make the film."*

A significant drop year on year is the decrease in funding from the commissioner (21% down to 17%). This international trend appears to be opening a gap that other funders are struggling to fill. In 2020, we did not have a category for external funders' contributions. It will be very interesting next year to see if this category accounts for a larger slice of the pie.



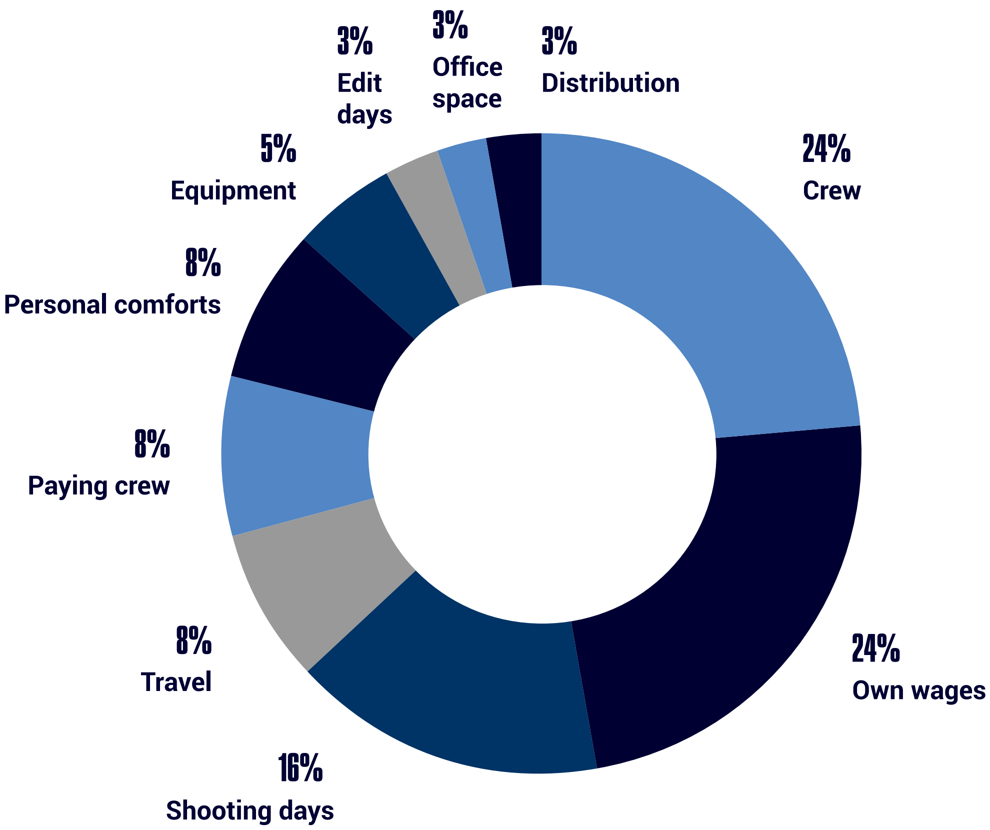
INCREASING & DECREASING EXPENSES

We also asked respondents to estimate which budget items cost them more year on year, which stayed the same and which were cheaper (Q36). Of the vast majority of increased prices, the biggest leaps in expenditure were for crew costs, travel, pitching, equipment hire and post-production. There were only three items in the cheaper category. They were on-screen talent, translation and security. The net result for another year running is that the cost of documentary production continues to climb.


Increasing
Staying the same
Decreasing
Research & development 50% 24% 6%
Pitching 58% 13% 5%
Production crew 61% 17% 6%
Equipment hire 56% 22% 4%
Insurance 50% 21% 2%
Facilitation/ location fees 44% 26% 3%
Translation costs 27% 32% 4%
Editing staff 49% 27% 2%
Editing facilities 42% 27% 6%
Archive costs 39% 29% 1%
On-screen talent 30% 17% 1%
Composition/ music licensing 42% 29% 1%
Post-production 53% 23% 2%
Graphics 40% 27% 3%
Travel 65% 14% 4%
Security 30% 15% 2%
Distribution 40% 19% 2%
Publicity 48% 15% 4%

COST CUTTING

We wanted to find out which elements, if any, they had cut back on in order to reduce costs in the making of their documentaries (Q37). The most common responses at 24% related to the filmmaking crew and cutting back on personal wages, sometimes foregoing a personal salary entirely. There was an increase in the number of filmmakers taking on multiple roles (self-shooting and learning to edit) and cutting back on the overall number of crew members. 8% of respondents also admitted to cutting back on paying crew. Another large area where respondents were cutting back was on the number of shooting days (16%). 3% of respondents also cut back on the number of edit days. Other areas of cost cutting included equipment, distribution, office space and personal comforts. One respondent cut back on living expenses such as food, clothes and entertainment, while another lived on friends' sofas to avoid paying rent.



The quotes below detail what respondents have had to cut back on in order to reduce costs:

"I try to do as much as I can myself - although this generally means it is a slow process."

"I couldn't afford the rent during filming at one point, so was sleeping on friends' sofas. "

"I'm not from a wealthy background so don't have parents with money who can help out like others."

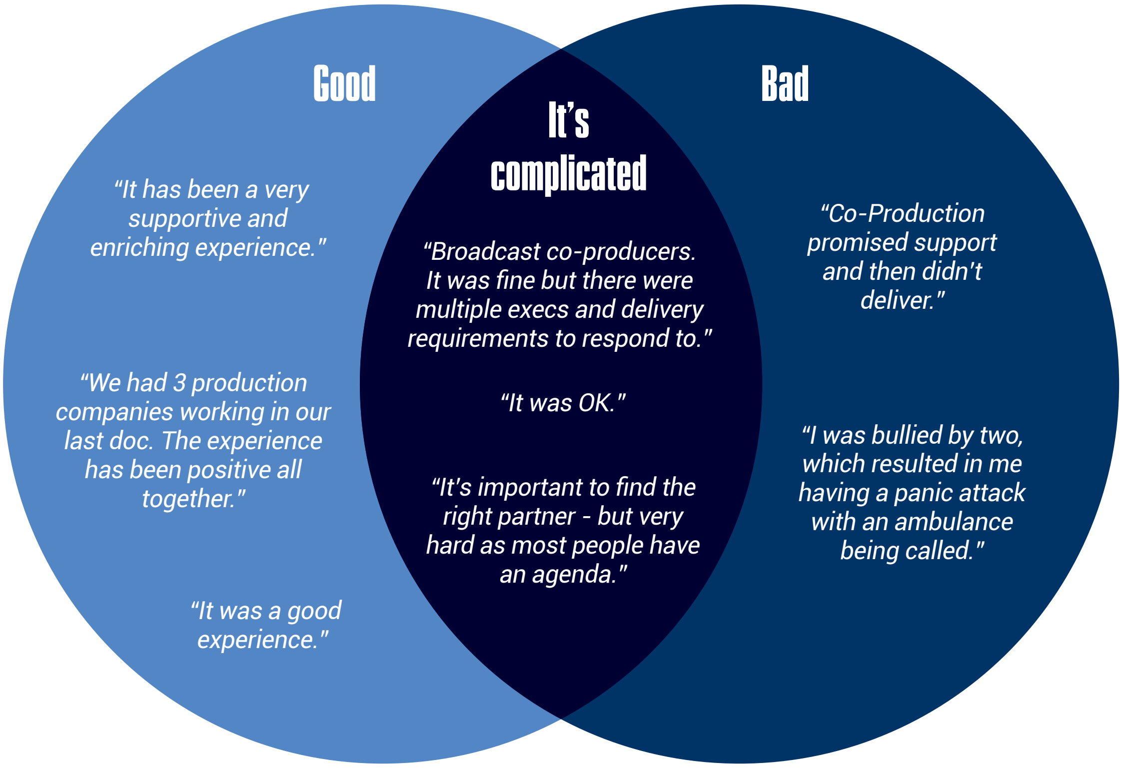
"Cut back on food, rent, clothes, restaurants, lived without automobile for 5 years and reached rough cut where I could afford to rent in India."

"Often it's my own time that doesn't get fully paid for."

"I edited my film for a long time and didn't rent the equipment I needed."

CO-PRODUCERS

New documentary makers are often encouraged by commissioners and mentors to team up with more experienced co-producers who will provide them with ready finance, credibility and market access in return for a share of any profit and, usually, editorial input. Having multiple co-producers on one documentary is common, but **how workable and beneficial are relationships with co-producers (Q25)**?



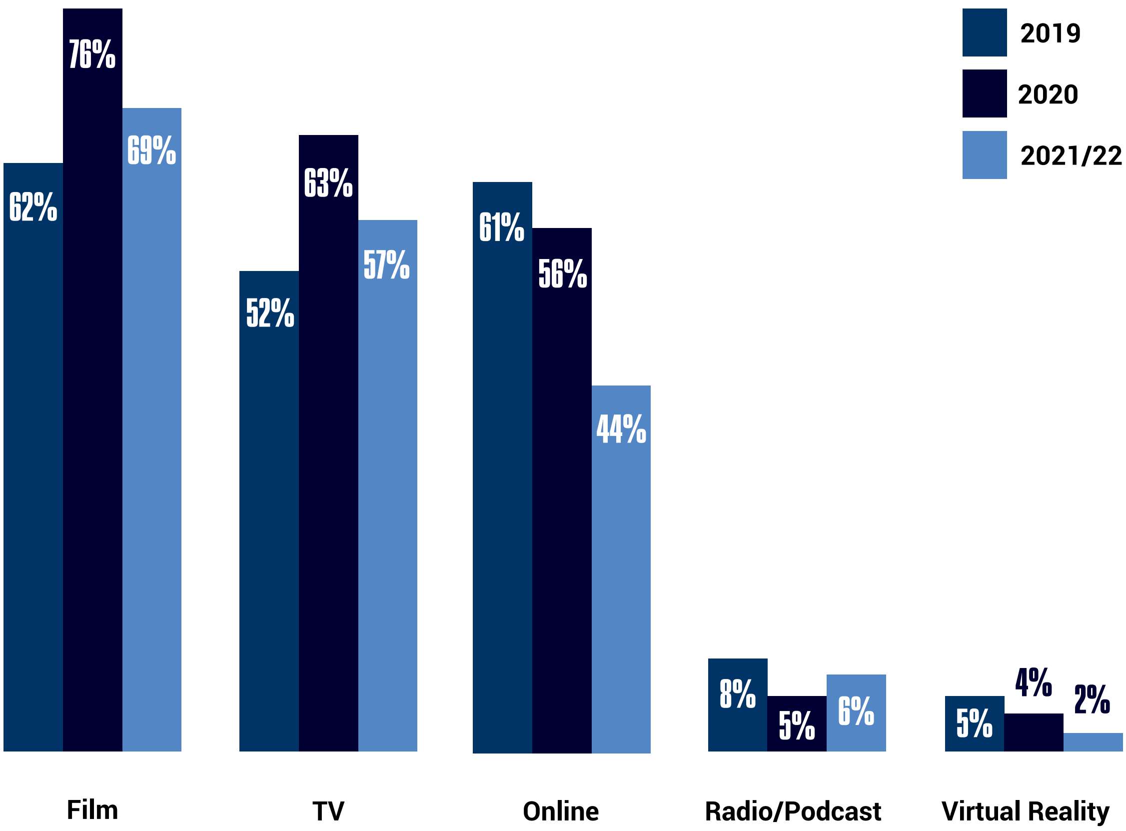
40% of our respondents in 2021 had co-production experience. That's 6% less than in 2020. Of those, the overwhelming majority had a mixed experience similar to the ones detailed above. This year, we received less negative feedback about the experience. However, we were particularly troubled after reading one respondent's comment above, which highlights an area of grave concern. Often first-time, or less experienced filmmakers can be 'bullied' or taken advantage of, without necessary structures in place to support them.

"THERE APPEARS TO BE SYSTEMATIC DISCOURAGEMENT OF INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTION."

THE MARKET

DOCUMENTARY MEDIUM

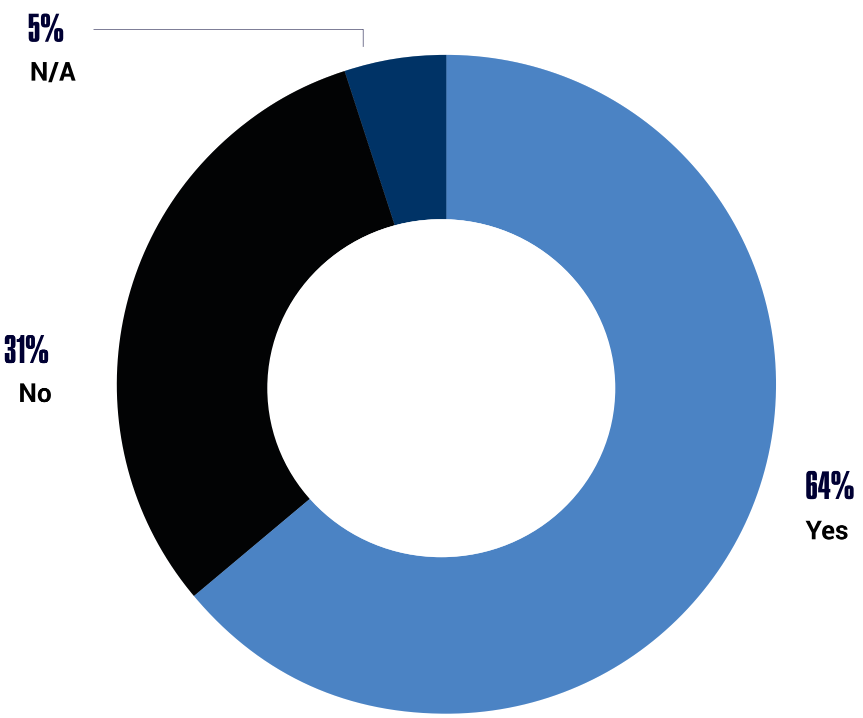
As in previous surveys, **we asked respondents for which market they usually made documentaries (Q5)**. 69% responded that they worked on film documentaries. These are usually 70-to-90-minute films designed primarily to be viewed on a cinema screen. Film has seen a 7% decrease on last year. The numbers making documentaries designed primarily for TV screens has also dropped year on year by 6%, alongside those making online content which has dropped by 12%. In contrast, we have seen an increase in the number of respondents making podcasts or audio documentaries. Perhaps this is evident of rising costs pushing filmmakers to experiment with alternate, less costly mediums.



HAS YOUR DOCUMENTARY BEEN BROADCAST?

Our next question **asked whether respondents had ever worked on a documentary that had been broadcast (Q28)**. 31% answered no (36% in 2019 and 29% in 2020), while a majority of 64% answered that yes (46% in 2019 and 62% in 2020), they had made docs that had been broadcast - on channels including BBC, Channel 4, CBC, PBS, Al Jazeera, TRT, SBS and National Geographic. These figures show a positive increase in the number of respondents finding a television audience for their documentaries year on year.

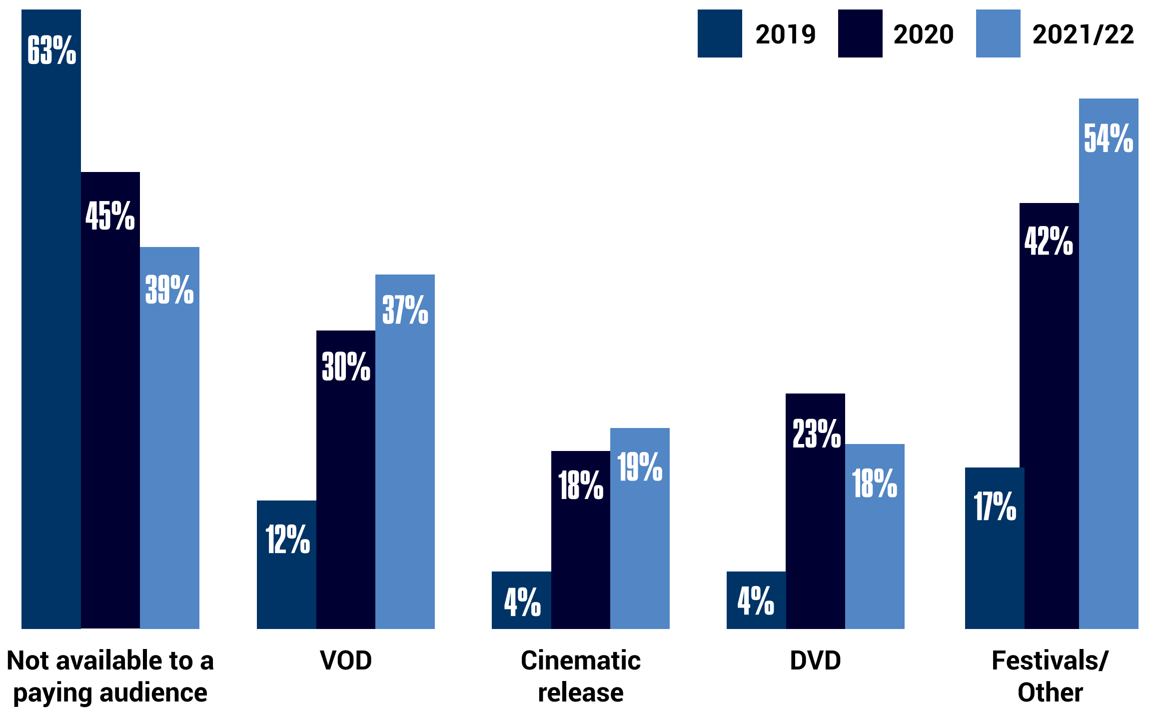
The top broadcasters, in terms of the number of specific mentions in answer to this question were UK based public service broadcasters BBC and Channel 4. With two specific mentions of the BBC Four international film documentary strand, Storyville. Netflix was mentioned numerous times, alongside Canadian broadcaster CBC and American public service broadcaster PBS. There was also a mention of the British free-to-air community channel, Together TV.



HAS YOUR DOCUMENTARY FOUND AN AUDIENCE?

The follow-up question asked respondents whether a documentary that they had worked on had been shown to a paying audience (Q29). 39% responded that no, their documentary had not been shown to a paying audience, another significant decrease from 45% in 2020 and 63% in 2019. 54% responded that their documentary had screened at film festivals, a 12% increase from 2020 and 37% increase from 2019. 37% of respondents had worked on a documentary that was subsequently made available on a video on demand platform, while just 19% had worked on a documentary that had received a cinematic release. The only decrease we have seen in 2021 is documentaries that have been made available on DVD and Blu-ray, which is not a surprise given that the rise of technology and online streamers. All in all, this is a significant improvement on last year's figures, suggesting that the majority (61% in 2021 compared to 45% in 2020) of our respondents were able to find a paying audience for their latest documentary.

However, these statistics suggest that, despite a big upsurge in the number of documentaries being shown at festivals, this does not translate to an equivalent increase in the number of documentaries that are being picked up by other markets. It would be interesting next year for this survey to delve into the onward journey of the finished documentary to ascertain how many are getting the sales and distribution deals that will eventually make them profitable.



PITCHING

HOW HELPFUL ARE PUBLIC PITCHES?

Another new question that was introduced in our 2019 Cost of Docs survey focused on the value of public pitches and forums (Q26). This year, 58% answered that they had never participated in a public pitch at a festival market or forum (61% in 2019 and 60% in 2020) - while 39% answered that they had (33% in 2019 and 36% in 2020). Again, the experience of those who attended pitches fell roughly into three groups: those for whom participating in a public pitch made all the difference to their project; those who did not get concrete funding but who may have received marginal benefits from the pitch and those who felt that public pitches were a waste of time and energy. Below is a selection of quotes, beginning with those who are pro-pitches and ending with those who are not:

"We won some funding. Without this funding we simply would not have been able to make the film."

"It helped me shape the project more in my own head. Through meeting people and pitching at CPH:DOX the film was commissioned by Storyville."

"After presenting at San Sebastian, we sold broadcasting rights to a TV station. With that money we manage to finish the film."

"It helped launch me as a filmmaker and did lead to funding. It also led to a lot of admin that was fruitless."

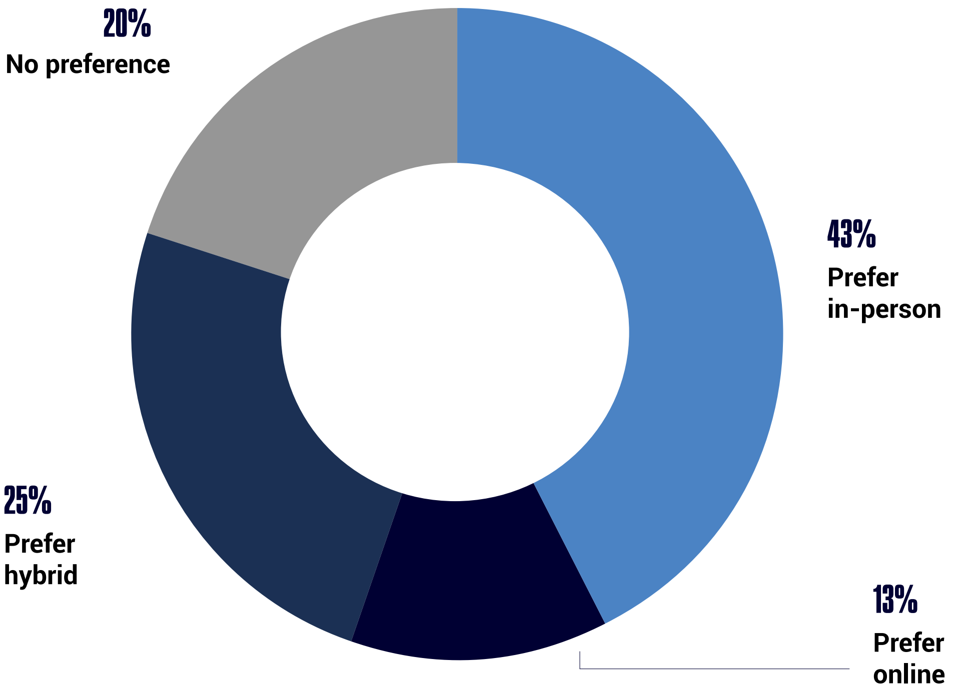
"There was a lot of advising and masterclasses but no funding."

"We had lots of positive meetings but no one was willing to put money down."

"I don't pitch films, waste of energy."

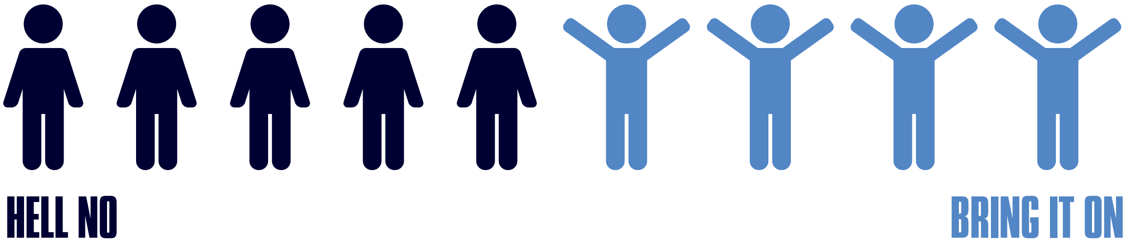
VIRTUAL PITCHES & EVENTS

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, many pitching forums and workshops have been hosted in a virtual space. **We asked our respondents if they have taken part in any virtual pitches or events (Q46).** 56% had still not taken part in any, whereas 44% of respondents said that they had. **We also added a new question on their preference between in-person and online pitching forums (Q47).**



A significant 43% of respondents preferred pitching in-person, as opposed to only 13% who preferred to take part online. 25% opted for a hybrid compromise and 20% had no preference. When asked last year **how likely, on a scale of 1-10 they were to recommend a move towards virtual pitching forums and events in the future**, over half of the respondents (57%) recommended the move online, whereas this year, the figure has decreased to only 43%. This year's data and the below comments, suggest that filmmakers have tired of pitching online and are craving face to face interactions and networking.

On a scale of 1-10 how likely are you to recommend a move towards virtual pitching forums and events in the future (Q48)?



Compared to last year, more verbatim responses to online pitches and festivals were negative, with only one respondent suggesting a move towards online events due to their inclusivity. One respondent commented that hosting festivals online threatens the future of distribution and may have a huge impact on a film's financial return.

"Bring them online. It makes them at least more inclusive, and helps those outside London."

"It's as much about building a network as the pitch. You can't do that virtually."

"Online festivals are the end of any hope of distribution and income from films."

"My film premiered online (sad face). How do I know what I've not made, who I've not met, etc."

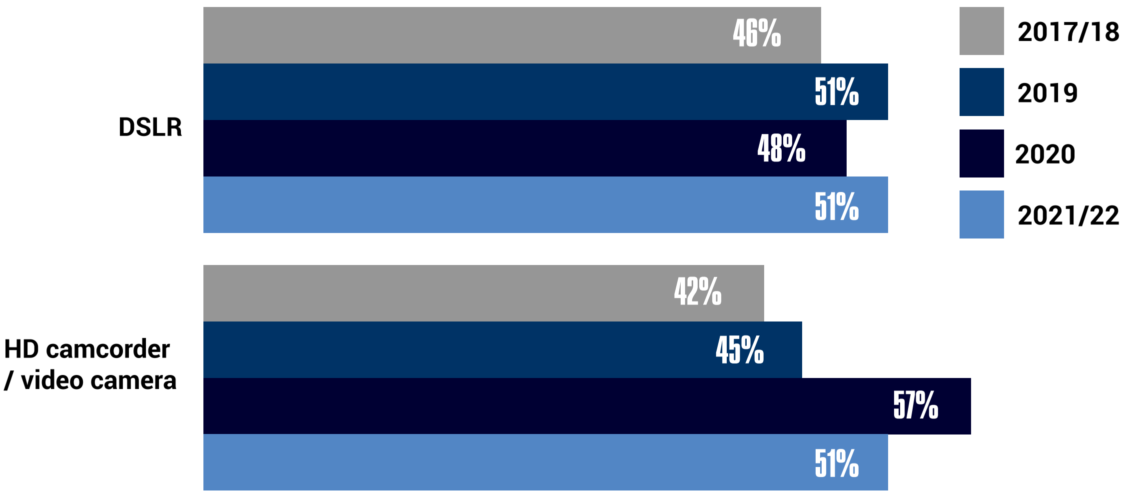
"The networking at these is not just the pitch, it's the gathering after where you really meet people."

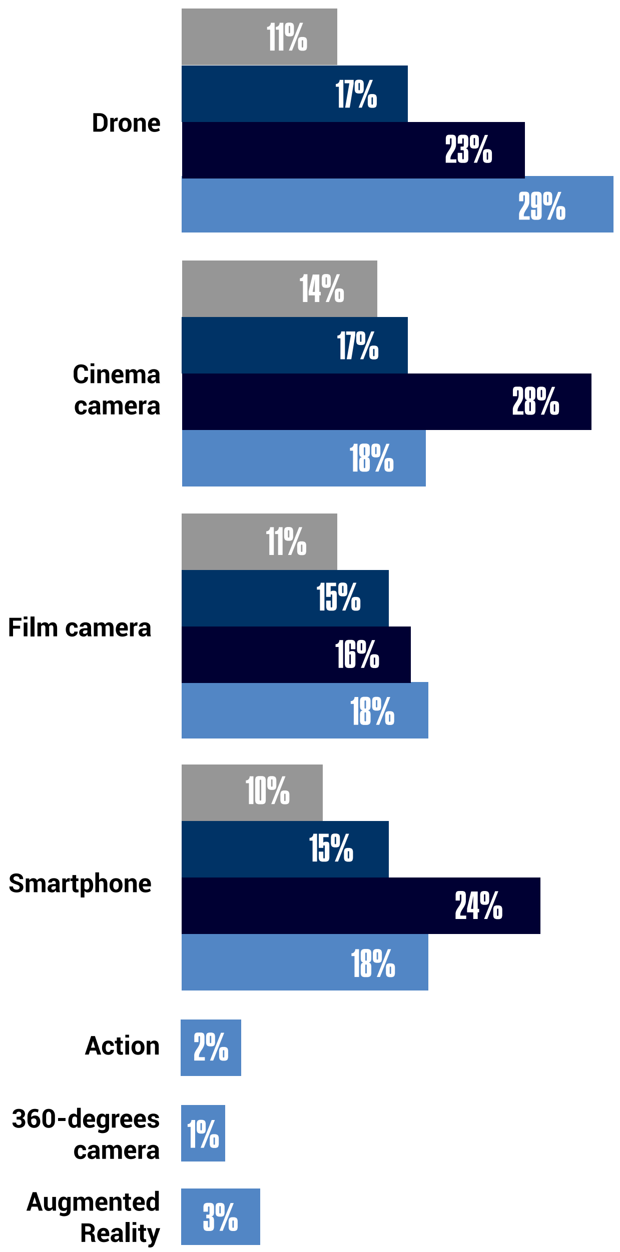
“THE MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN HIT THE HARDEST BY COVID. MUCH CARE MUST BE TAKEN TO WORK TO GAIN TRUST AND ACCESS TO THESE COMMUNITIES.”

EQUIPMENT

CAMERAS

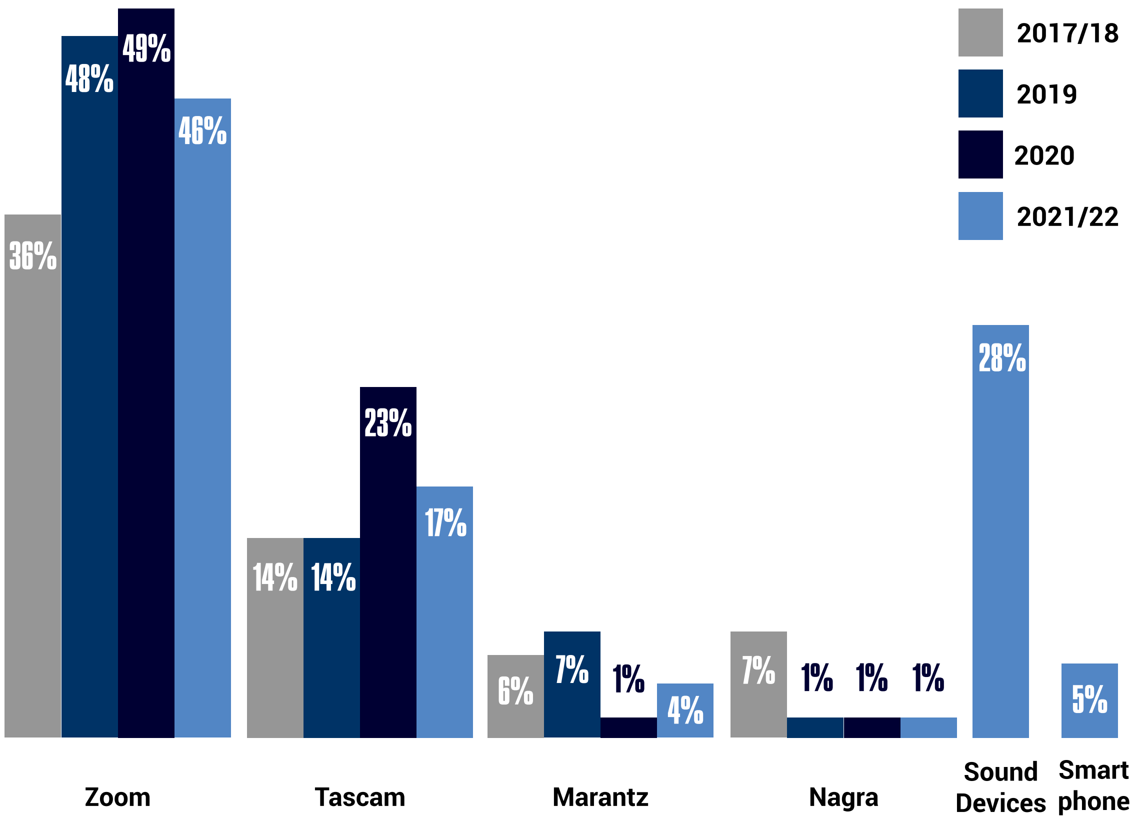
As in previous years, the Cost of Docs survey provides a good opportunity to find out more about the most popular equipment used by documentary filmmakers. **First we asked respondents to tell us what their go-to camera was (Q32)**. This year, the camera of choice is both the HD camcorder/ High-quality video camera and DSLR (51%). The results of this question also demonstrated a continued increase in the use of drones and film cameras since 2018, whereas there was a decrease in the use of cinema cameras and smartphones. As with last year's results, some of these findings may correlate to the increase in documentaries being made for theatrical release, which require high-quality footage for the big screen and also the higher technical specification that broadcasters are tending to require. Though costs continue to rise, the decrease in the use of smartphones is interesting, following their increased popularity since 2019. The increase in smartphones being used to record audio (see next page) could suggest that respondents are choosing to cut costs in the audio department instead. This year, we added three new options: action, 360-degrees camera and augmented reality. As technology develops over the next few years, it will be interesting to see how these figures change.




Drone
11%
17%
23%
29%
Cinema camera
14%
17%
28%
18%
Film camera
11%
15%
16%
18%
Smartphone
10%
15%
24%
18%
Action
2%
360-degrees camera
1%
Augmented Reality
3%

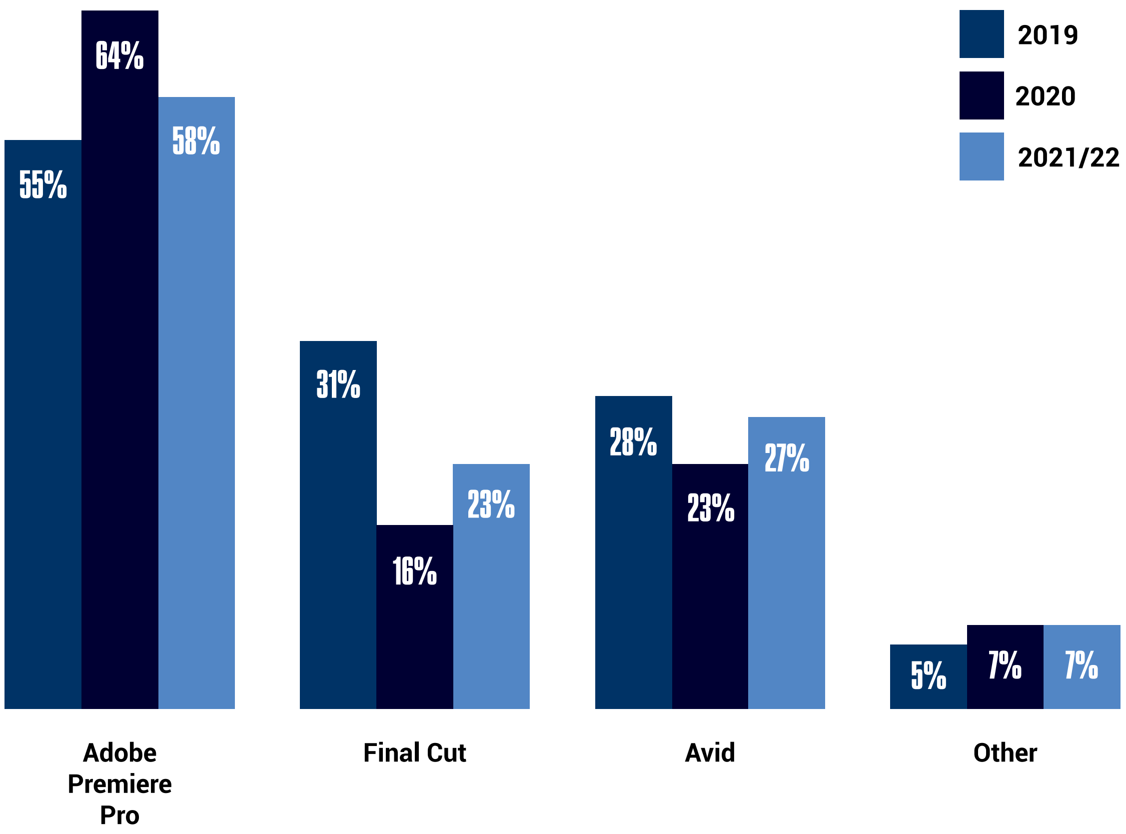
AUDIO

In addition to the most popular cameras used by documentary filmmakers in the production of their work, **we were also interested to know more about the preferred audio equipment that is being used to record sound (Q34)**. The most popular choice year on year is the small and portable Zoom recorder, used this year by 46% of respondents. The 4 track H4N costs under £200, while cheaper models include the H1. The second most popular and new option in this year's survey was Sound Devices (28%), which may account for the decrease in respondents opting for both the Zoom and Tascam. The Marantz and Nagra were again the least frequently used. The high-priced Nagra, retailing at roughly £800 and the Marantz proved the least affordable choices for respondents. This year we also included Smartphone as an option (5%), suggesting that respondents are again opting for cheaper and more accessible equipment.



EDITING SOFTWARE

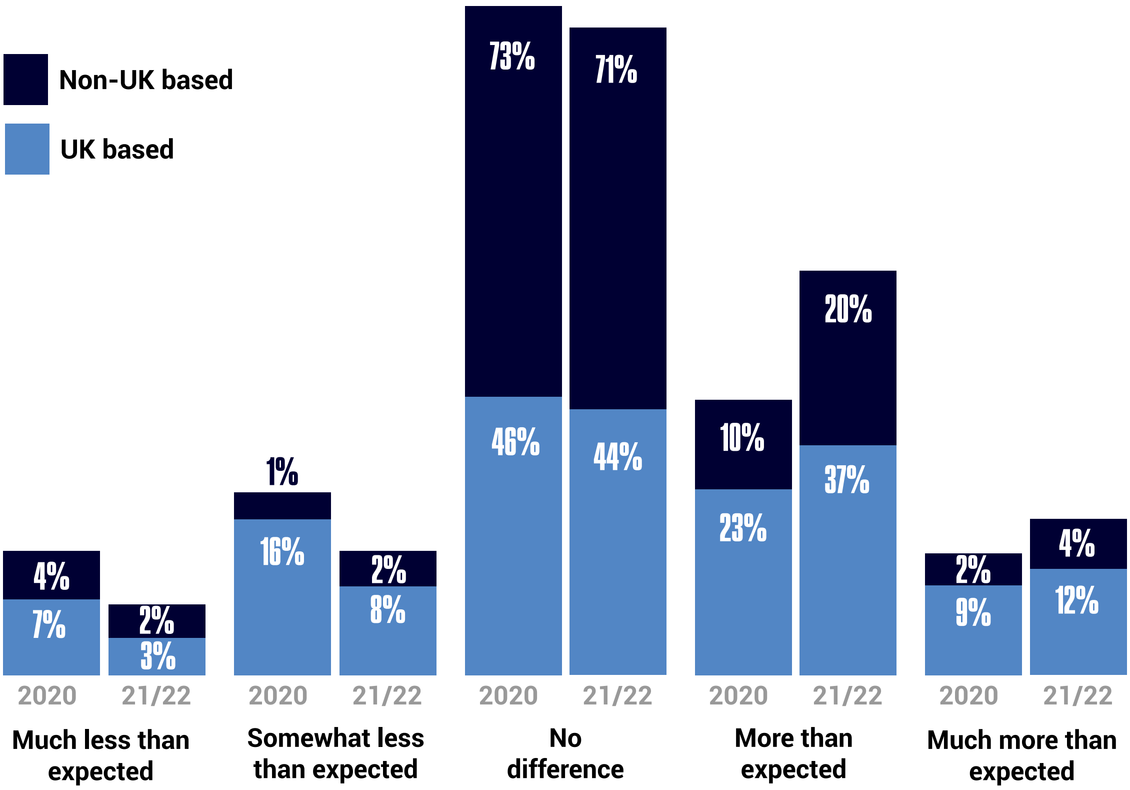
Finally, **we asked respondents to select which editing software they used on their most recent documentary film (Q35)**. For the third year running, the results put Adobe Premiere Pro in the clear lead as the most popular choice, with 58% of respondents selecting this option. However, the number has dropped by 6% since last year. The second most popular choice for editing software, with 27% of respondents selecting this option, was Avid. This year we saw an increase in the use of both Avid and Final Cut. Of the others, we had numerous respondents opting for Da Vinci Resolve and iMovie.



BREXIT

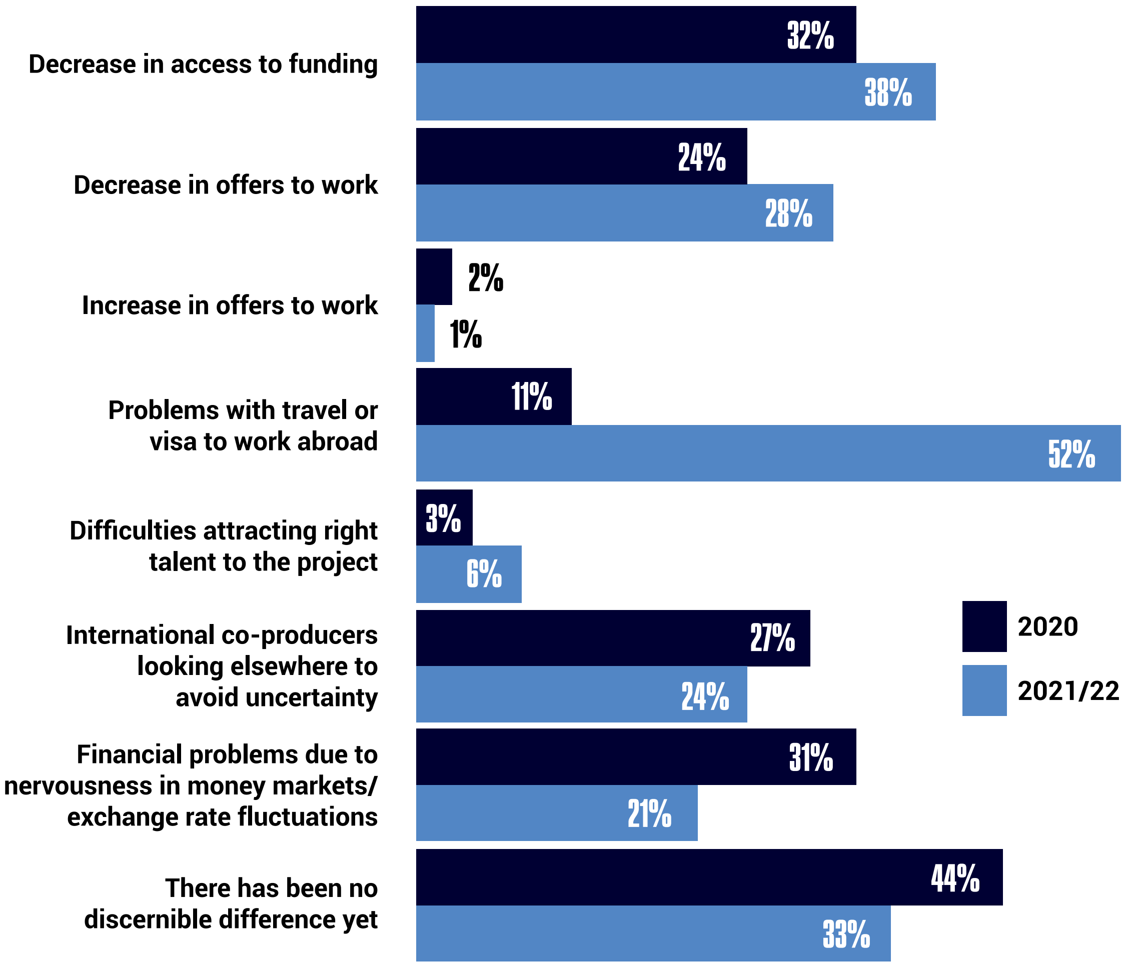
IMPACT OF BREXIT

This question asked respondents to comment on how Brexit has impacted their careers as documentary makers, since the last survey (Q41). It has become clear that whilst the effects of the pandemic were felt immediately by our respondents (see page 55), the effects of Brexit have taken longer to filter through and are being felt by non-UK respondents to a significant degree, as well as those who are UK-based. The key finding here is that 15% more UK-based respondents are claiming that Brexit has affected them more than anticipated (23% to 37%). However, the percentage of non-UK respondents has doubled in the categories for being affected 'more than expected' (10% to 20%) and 'much more than expected' (2% to 4%). In the verbatim comments, one non-UK based respondent said of the newly imposed border controls, that *"it will be more difficult to film in UK, if not impossible."*



THE EFFECTS OF BREXIT

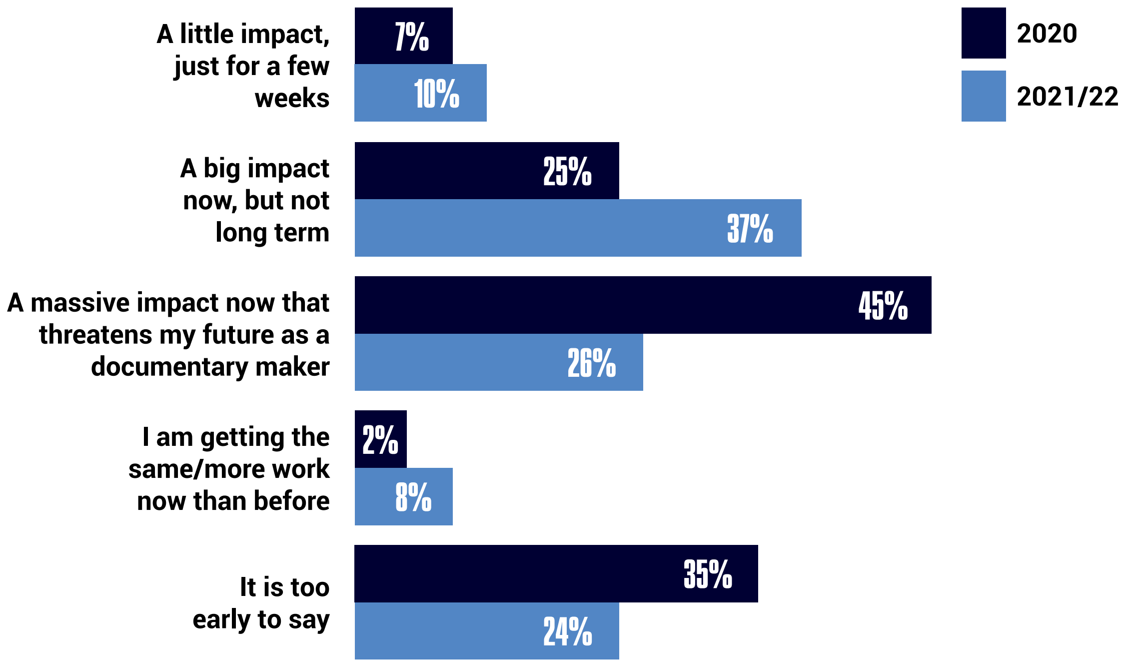
Next, we looked to find out what specific areas of documentary filmmaking have been affected by the impact of Brexit (Q42). Britain officially left Europe on 31st January 2020. Compared to earlier expectations on the effect of Brexit on our respondents, the most significant issue has been the startling impact on travel and visas. In 2020 only 11% of respondents claimed this was a problem. Now the figure has leapt nearly five-fold to 52%. The only issues that have proved to be less of a concern than anticipated are the availability of international co-production deals (from 27% to 24%) and fears around exchange rate fluctuations (down from 31% to 21%). Interestingly, in 2020, 44% of respondents had seen no discernible difference. Two years on, that figure dropped by 11%, confirming that the impact for many respondents is only now being felt.



COVID-19

IMPACT OF COVID-19

We asked what impact, if any, COVID-19 is having/will have on our respondents' ability to continue as a documentary maker (Q44). Compared to responses on the impact of Brexit, the impact of COVID-19 tells a very different story. In 2020, for example, nearly half of respondents (45%) thought that the pandemic would affect their careers to the point where being a documentary maker was no longer viable. Now that figure has dropped by 19% to 26%. Conversely, whereas in 2020 only 7% of respondents thought that COVID-19 would have a minor or temporary impact. This figure has now risen to 10%, with more than four times the number of respondents saying that they are getting the same, if not more, work now than they were before the pandemic (2% up to 8%). Although the general trajectory of responses shows that COVID-19 has not been the disaster feared, nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents still think it is too early to call.



Below are a number of verbatim comments from respondents to the impact of COVID-19 question. It should be born in mind that they were written when some parts of the world, such as South Korea, were still heavily restricted by COVID-19 regulations.

"It may not threaten my future, but it will shape it considerably."

"Access to subjects is more difficult."

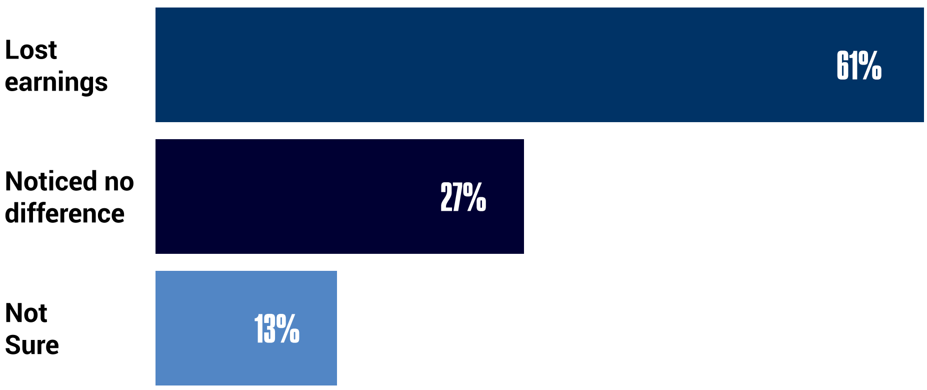
"Difficult to film as normal, so hard to make the type of films I want to make."

"The most vulnerable communities have been hit the hardest by COVID-19. Much care must be taken to work to gain trust and access to these communities."

It is worth noting, from the last quote, that concern over the impact of COVID-19 was not limited to the detrimental effect on the respondents' careers. For some it encompassed concern that vulnerable individuals and communities were still self-isolating. The fear here was that access to important stories would need to be handled differently in the post-pandemic age.

FORECASTED LOSS OF EARNING DUE TO COVID-19

This question asked respondents if they had experienced a loss in earnings due to the impact of COVID-19 (Q45). A significant 61% said yes, they had. Only 27% said that they had noticed no difference. Although the previous response reveals that the impact of COVID has this far being less than feared, there have been examples of deep distress. For example, one respondent told us that after being offered a $24,000 grant (after six months of meetings and pitches), it was reversed during the first month of lockdown. Others commented that they had lost from 50% to 100% of their earnings since the last survey.



"COMMISSIONERS' INTEREST IS SKEWED TOWARDS CELEBS AND INDUSTRY NAMES – IF YOU AREN'T EITHER IT IS PRETTY IMPOSSIBLE."

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

INSIGHTS INTO RECENT CHANGES IN THE DOCUMENTARY INDUSTRY

As in previous years, we provided free text space toward the end of the survey to encourage respondents to give their views and ideas on the industry (Q38). Although this material does not lend itself to statistical analysis it is an opportunity to gain a flavour of what documentarians are privately thinking in different cultures and nationalities across the globe.

"I am a woman over 50 and want to see more people like me represented."

"The programmers all seem to move like a herd and pick the same type of film, with films seeming more like show and tell feel to them, shaped around self-help language, rather than an actual documentary or thinking of what a wider audience wants to actually watch. I think they need to bring in educational background, if their parents are able to support their income, if they own their own house, can afford a car... things like that."

"Less unpaid labour please."

"The most vulnerable communities have been hit the hardest by covid."

"Documentaries are still sadly seen as a lesser art form."

"Funding remains a huge challenge and threatens to exclude those not from a wealthy background."

"Many people I know are retraining as their own quality of life has vanished and it's so hard to make a living anymore."

“If you don’t have wealthy connections or any money to rely on for the dark days it’s so hard to keep going on.”

“Too many people are squeezing documentary filmmakers, contract clauses are abusive.”

“Far fewer resources available, now need to be able to perform a number of different roles and skillsets.”

“Music rights are worse than ever - costs are really expensive and you can’t simply clear, they want to be involved in your film as a producer taking back end.”

MAIN CHALLENGES FACED BY DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS

Following on from the persistent thread that has run through this report and reports in previous years so far, when **asked about the main challenges they faced as documentary filmmakers working today, (Q39)** the majority of respondents agreed that their most significant challenge was financial. 88% of all of the verbatim comments in this section of the survey addressed this issue. Here are a selection:

“The main challenges are financial and the cliquey nature of the industry.”

“A massive gap between the access to funding between developing countries and the West, yet the films compete for the same festival slots.”

“Funding, then distribution are the hardest.”

“It is really hard to grab the story in the perfect time and shoot the important scenes while doing the long procedure of applying for funds at the same time."

"Funding options seem more limited, competition is higher and less funds are willing to bet on emerging or first-time filmmakers."

Of the 12% who raised issues other than finance, the main concerns were diversity, the problem of engaging with commissioners and the eternal problem of motivation and persistence:

"Being a woman."

"Sustainability."

"Commissioners answering emails. Their interest is skewed towards celebs and industry names - if you aren't either it is pretty impossible."

"Getting started and keeping going."

"Main broadcasters only want identikit shows. They have no appetite to make really interesting stuff."

HOW CAN THE DOCUMENTARY INDUSTRY BE IMPROVED?

Following on from the challenging aspects of documentary filmmaking, **we asked respondents to provide suggestions on how the industry could best be improved (Q40)**. Unsurprisingly, the issues respondents wished to be addressed reflected the challenges they themselves were facing. However, these verbatim comments provided more detailed observations on how working practices might be improved. There appears to be growing disquiet about the amount of money a filmmaker needs to spend in order to receive money to make their film. Examples include: application fees for funding awards, festival and forum submissions and related travel, making and updating teaser material to excite the commissioner. Otherwise, the range of responses could be summarised by the last verbatim quote below - *"Fairness, openness and accessibility"*:

"Larger pools of funding available for African filmmakers."

"A better working and more accessible international network for co-production."

"Funders should be giving out sizable grants (i.e. 100K) to less films so that people can complete their films vs giving out small funds of 20, or 30k which are less helpful."

"More women of colour."

"More support for first-time filmmakers from commissioners and funders."

"More women in higher budget productions, more calling out toxic people."

"Fewer true crime series. Someone to challenge the market dominance of the big streamers i.e. stronger, bolder public media."

"Better mental health support."

"More supportive working practices towards mothers."

“Continuation of remote working to facilitate national collaboration.”

“Build a platform for educational distribution that allows filmmakers to control content and make direct profits.”

“Opening things up to alternative modes of distribution.”

“Tackling gender bias. More diversity.”

“More accountability and fairer treatment of indie producers and directors pitching ideas.”

“Continued simplification and synchronisation of application forms across funders.”

“More funding.”

“Support for independent voices outside the broadcast commission world, breaking the power of small cliques who seem to be at the heart of most decision making.”

“Funding for festival applications.”

“Not having endless development/trailers which mean you’ve almost made the film before commission.”

“More PAID internships.”

“Film festivals being more open about if they have invited films to screen there and how that effects the number of films they are taking on.”

“More inclusive programming at festivals.”

“Less favouritism with the commissioners and decision makers so new people get a chance, and it’s not just the huge multi-million pound companies cleaning up.”

“Fairness, openness and accessibility.”

CONCLUSION

We at the Whickers believe that documentary is essential for an engaged, free society. It brings empathy and understanding to a global audience in a way that news coverage alone cannot.

As such, this Cinderella industry must not be allowed to become a hobby for the idle rich, or those backed by investors with a self-serving 'truth' to promote.

This year's survey shows that the existence of documentary is still as precarious and underfunded as ever. Charitable funders are stepping up more, but also making increasing demands in terms of rights and returns on investment. It has also become clear that a two-tier system of documentary making is emerging. On the one hand, there are the chosen few in whom eye-watering amounts of money are invested, with a view to Oscar and Box Office success. On the other hand, are the rest. Important stories that will always struggle to find a voice.

Despite all of this, The Whickers are humbled by the resilience and perseverance of the respondents to this survey, and will give the last word to one of them:

**"Every documentary and story has its challenges.
What's important is to find routes out of difficulties that arise -
I find this my most useful skill."**

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1. What is your role? (Tick all that apply): Director, Producer, Cinematographer, Editor, Production Manager, Executive Producer, Camera Operator, Commissioner, Other (please specify)
Q2. How long have you worked in the documentary field?
Q3. Which of the following best describes your documentary training? Self-taught, Learnt ‘on the job’, Attended short course on documentary, Related undergraduate degree, Undergraduate degree in other subject, Postgraduate documentary qualification, Postgraduate qualification in an unrelated subject.
Q4. Where do you live?
Q5. For which medium do you make documentaries? (Tick all that apply): TV, Film, Online, Virtual Reality, Radio/Podcast, Other (please specify)
Q6. In fewer than seven words, why do you make documentaries?
Q7. Are you currently working on a documentary?
Q8. If you are not currently making a documentary, have you worked on one in the last two years?
Q9. If you have completed a documentary in the last two years or are currently making one, were you/are you... Living off your savings, Working another job, Being supported by family or friends, Living off a student loan, Freelancing on other projects, In a full-time job in production or broadcasting, In a part-time job in production or broadcasting, In a full-time job unrelated to production or broadcasting, In a part-time job unrelated to production or broadcasting, Paying myself a wage from the production fund of my documentary, Not applicable, Other (please specify)
Q10. If you have completed a documentary in the last two years, how long did it take to finish (from development to delivery)?
Q11. Of that period, how many actual days were spent working on the documentary? (Not including time spent on other projects or on jobs outside of the documentary)
Q12. What was the duration of the above completed documentary?
Q13. If you had paid yourself what you consider an appropriate wage for each of these days of work, what would your time have cost?
Q14. Were you paid this amount?
Q15. What percentage of the time spent working on the project were you paid for?

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q16. Was this documentary made for... (Tick all that apply): TV, Film, Festival, Theatrical release, Online, Virtual Reality, Campaign, Love or personal satisfaction, Not applicable, Other (please specify)
Q17. How much was spent on the project? Or if the film in question is not yet finished, what is your total projected budget?
Q18. Have you ever applied for funding from any of the following? (Tick all that apply): A broadcaster, Catapult Film Fund, Chicken & Egg Pictures Accelerator Lab, Cinereach, Creative Europe MEDIA Development: Single Project, Creative Europe, MEDIA Distribution, Creative Europe MEDIA Slate Funding, Derek Freese, Documentary Fund, Doc Society (formerly Britdoc), The Filmmaker Fund, The Fledgling Fund, IDA Pare Lorentz Documentary Fund, IDA Enterprise Documentary Fund, IDFA Bertha Fund, JustFilms/Ford Foundation, One World Media Production Fund, Sundance Documentary Fund, Tribeca Film Institute Documentary Fund, Wellcome Institute Public Engagement Fund, Doha Film Institute, Fork Films, Impact Partners Development Fund, BFI Global Cinema Fund, The Whickers Funding Awards, Private Investor, I have not previously applied for funding, Other (please specify)
Q19. If yes, how much funding did you hope for?
Q20. How much funding did you receive?
Q21. If you were offered funding, what kind of involvement did the funder require?
Q22. If applicable, approximately how many days of work in total including, the editing of teaser material, do you spend on a single funding application?
Q23. Have you used a crowdfunding platform to raise finance for a documentary?
Q24. If you answered yes to the previous question, what percentage of your budget was raised via crowdfunding?
Q25. Have you previously worked with a co-producer(s)? Please briefly comment on the experience.
Q26. Have you ever participated in a public pitch at a documentary film festival forum or market?

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q27. If yes, did this lead to funding for your film? Please comment briefly on how this experience impacted your project.
Q28. Has a documentary that you have worked on ever been broadcast? If yes, where has this documentary been broadcast?
Q29. Has it been made publicly available to a paying audience?
Q30. Of your last completed documentary, did it involve...(Tick all that apply): International travel, Undercover filming, Animation, Fixed rig, Editor hire, Reconstruction/Drama, Talent costs, Studio costs, Kit hire, Access payments, Translation, Soundtrack composition, Archive licensing, Music licensing, Office costs, Not applicable
Q31. Who paid for the majority of the elements in question 30?
Q32. If you used filming equipment, which of the following did you use? Film camera, HD Camcorder or high-quality video camera, Cinema camera e.g. red camera, Drone, DSLR, Action, 360-degree camera, Augmented reality, Smartphone, Not applicable, Other (please specify)
Q33. Which of the above did you use the most? Zoom, Sound Devices, Zaxcom, Tascam, Marantz, Nagra, Smartphone, Not applicable, Other (please specify)
Q35. Which editing software was used? Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro, Avid, Not applicable, Other (please specify)
Q36. If you have previously made a documentary comparable in scale and budget, do you think the following costs are increasing, decreasing or staying the same? Research and development, Pitching - including festival pass, trailer, production, Filming - crew, Filming - equipment hire (incl. lighting, cameras, sound), Filming - insurance, Filming - facilitation fees/location fees, Translation costs, Editing - staff, Editing - facilities, Archive costs, On screen talent, Soundtrack composition/music licensing, Post-production - colour grading and sound mix, Graphics, Travel, Security, Distribution, Publicity
Q37. Is there anything that you have cut back on in order to reduce costs?
Q38. Please briefly detail any other insights you have about the cost of making a documentary and/or any changes you have noticed over the time you have spent working in the industry.
Q39. What is the main challenge that you face as a documentary-maker? (e.g. financial; access; finding an audience)

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q40. Which three things would you like to see improve within the documentary film industry and how?
Q41. UK based respondents only, tick the one that applies most closely. In the previous 12 months, since the last Cost of Docs survey, Brexit has impacted my documentary making... Much less than expected, Somewhat less than expected, No difference, More than expected, Much more than expected
Q42. UK based respondents only, tick all that apply. The effect has been... Decrease in access to funding, Decrease in offers to work, Increase in offers to work, Problems with travel or visa to work abroad (Due to Brexit rather than COVID-19 reasons), Difficulties attracting right talent to the project, International co-producers looking elsewhere to avoid uncertainty, Financial problems due to nervousness in money markets/exchange rate fluctuations, There has been no discernible difference yet
Q43. Non-UK based respondents only, tick the one that applies most closely. Britain's departure from the European Union has affected my work... Much less than expected, Somewhat less than expected, No difference, More than expected, Much more than expected
Q44. What impact, if any, do you think the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is having/will have on your ability to continue as a documentary maker? Tick the one that applies most closely: No real impact at all, A little impact, A big impact initially, but not long term, A massive impact that continues to threaten my future as a documentary maker, I am getting the same/more work now than before, It is still too early to say
Q45. In the last 12 months, have you experienced a loss of earnings as a result of COVID-19?
Q46. In light of COVID-19 many pitching forums have been hosted in a virtual space. Have you participated in any of these online forums?
Q47. Which of these options is your preference for pitching forums? In person, Online, Hybrid, No preference
Q48. On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to recommend a move towards virtual pitching forums in the future?
Q49. Please feel free to add any comments about issues you face when making documentaries here:

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q50. Would you be happy for us to include your verbatim comments anonymously in the published report?
Q52. Age
Q53. Gender
Q54. Country of residence
Q55. Ethnic background
Q56. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

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