

Guidelines for production companies and authors engaged as expert consultants or contributors on factual TV programmes.

All producers and authors should endeavour to adhere to good practice and high standards of integrity when making factual television programmes together. To facilitate this, Pact and the Society of Authors have agreed these guidelines for the engagement of authors (and their research) for use as factual sources and/or as contributors in factual TV programmes.

A. Scope of guidance

- a. Scenarios to which this guidance applies:
 - i. Producers conducting research and gathering material to make a pitch to a broadcaster.
 - ii. Producers conducting research or conducting interviews for use in development work.
 - iii. Producers conducting research or interviews for use in a programme commissioned by a broadcaster.
- b. Use of authors in factual programmes:
 - i. Interviews or contributions, either on or off screen, given by the author for potential inclusion in the programme.
 - ii. Research sourced from the written works of authors that may contribute to the narrative arc of the programme.
- c. Scenarios not covered in this guidance:
 - i. Factual programmes that are investigatory in nature, or consist of elements that can be considered investigatory.
 - ii. Programmes focused on criticism and review, or relying in part on criticism and review.
 - iii. Programmes where an option and licence agreement has been negotiated.

B. Good practice for production companies when engaging authors

- a. When contacting an author you should be clear from the outset as to whether you are merely seeking information as background or are intending to use them as a contributor, or use their written work, in a programme.
- b. You should limit the initial contact with authors to discussions surrounding the basis and scope of the contribution you wish them to make. The initial discussions should not in itself be the contribution unless the author consents to this.
- c. You should be clear with the author as to the nature and purpose of the programme you are making and how you intend to use the authors' contribution or written works within it.

- d. You should be clear from the start of the engagement whether, and how, you intend to remunerate the author for their contribution. It may be appropriate to offer authors reasonable travel and subsistence expenses, and a fee can be negotiated if a contribution to the programme is made subject to broadcaster approval.
- e. If any editorial decisions made by you or the broadcaster result in drastic changes to the narrative of the programme which significantly alters the context of the author's contribution/work, the author should be consulted and given the opportunity to reassess their involvement in the programme.
- f. You should make clear from the outset of your engagement what credits or book publicity you can, or are willing to, assign the author in the programme, subject to broadcaster approval (see broadcaster credit guidelines).
- g. You should keep clear and accurate records of any agreements made with the author regarding the use of their work or contributions made to the programme.

C. Good Practice for authors when engaged by production companies

- a. You should query with researchers and producers what stage of development or production the programme is in; how they wish to use your contribution; and if known at this stage how substantial your contribution will be to the overall programme.
- b. At first instance, you should limit the amount of information you share until you feel comfortable with the terms of your involvement moving forward.
- c. You should understand that it is your responsibility to engage in discussions surrounding remuneration, and you or your agent are at liberty to try to negotiate a fee with the producer. If the show is in an exploratory stage of development, you may find it appropriate to negotiate an option fee.
- d. You should understand that providing a contribution will not guarantee inclusion in the finished version of the programme, nor will your work necessarily be credited should your contribution be excluded.
- e. You should be clear with the credit that you wish for yourself or your work to receive in the final version of the programme should your contribution be included.
- f. You should keep clear and accurate records of any agreements made with producers regarding the use of your work or your contribution in a programme.

D. Disputes

- a. If either contributor, expert, or producer feels any stage of the process has been conducted outside the bounds of reasonable good practice, each should attempt to discuss with the other. If this is not possible, or does not prove satisfactory:
 - i. The contributor should write or speak (in confidence) to the Head of Production.
 - ii. The producer should write or speak (in confidence) to the contributor's agent or representative body.