

Section 1 : Getting to Know You

Gender

Female :	57%
Male :	41%
Other :	2%

Age

18-30 :	42%
31-40 :	38%
41-50 :	15%
51-60 :	4%
60+ :	1%

Where do you work?

Home :	83%
Shared Studio :	7%
In-House :	7%
Rented Studio :	3%

How do you create your work?

Mostly digital	51%
Traditional/digital	40%
Mostly traditional	9%

Did you study at university?

Studied another creative subject :	43%
Studied illustration :	38%
Studied non-creative subject :	10%
Didn't go to uni :	8%

These general statistics are very similar to last year's survey results with more female than male, most responders being under 40 and university educated in some way. But with 43% of us studying a different creative subject, can we use those varied learnings to broaden the scope of our illustration work? Again too, a vast proportion of us working from home, which can lead to issues we look at later in the Work/Life Balance section.



Section 2 : Work

What was your illustration work situation in 2018?

Full time illustration work	48%
Full time creative job with part time illustration work	29%
Full time non-creative job with part time illustration work	14%
Student with part time illustration work	8%

How was your workload in 2018?

More than 2017	52%
Less than 2017	27%
Same as 2017	21%

«« As with last year, the majority of people have a growing workload, great. But what of the 27%? I hope the survey results and community discussions can aid people to find more opportunities for a better 2019!

As we see here »» the more traditional avenues are still strong, but I'm also pleased to see 'private commissions' up from 4% last year! I feel this shows the entrepreneurial and independent nature of illustrators, seeking new customers and working directly with the public. They're out there, go get 'em.

Which sector was most of your 2018 work in?

Publishing	27%
Private commissions	18%
Editorial	15%
Advertising	12%
Art prints/exhibitions	8%
Animation	6%
Products	5%
App creation	3%
Packaging	2%
Live art/murals	2%
Textiles/Apparel	2%
Console games	1%

Which one avenue brought in the most work in 2018?

Regular/repeat clients	37%
Social media	36%
Referrals	14%
Self-promo	11%
Paid advertising	1%

Which self-promo tools do you use?

Printed mailers	27%
Email or newsletters	73%

^^^ There's been quite a turnaround here, with 'Self-promo' going down from last year and 'Social media' going up, I was surprised about this at a time when (I thought) people were trying to take more time away from social media, so are you on top of gaining the benefits of your socials? Again, 'Regular/repeat clients' is a strong avenue, so always be sure to be nice and professional and hopefully they'll be back for more.

Section 2 : Work

Where are most of your clients based?

USA & Canada	44%
UK	35%
Another European country	14%
Aus & NZ	3%
Asia & Pacific	2%
Africa	1%
The Middle East	>1%

Are your clients in the same country as you?

Yes	71%
No	29%

How much work comes from an illustration agent?

I don't work with an agent	82%
Half or less of my work comes from an agent	12%
More than half of my work comes from an agent	7%

What are your experiences of working for free?

I have worked for free and never will again	53%
I have never worked for free	23%
I have and it paid off in the long run	15%
I do often and am indifferent to the outcome	9%

Let's talk about agents. I believe there's a myth that you *need* to have an agent, but if you don't, please be assured that you can build a career without one!



Well here's the facts folks, 53% of people proving why we should never be duped into working for free!



Section 3 : Money

Are you confident when estimating fees for clients?

Yes	43%
No	57%

Which of the following do you use to estimate fees?

Based on previous commissions	39%
Based on time required	37%
Asking fellow illustrators	16%
Advice from a professional service	4%
Pricing reference books	4%

^^^ Pricing, now, we can't all be an artist AND a hotshot negotiator! I understand (and use) the top two routes to price myself... but be careful, what if the previous commission was mis-priced? And what if you think a budget is worth your time, but the project runs on longer than expected? There's a change coming, a trend towards talking more openly about fee pricing between ourselves and this is leading to more people developing services to help us reach the correct fee for us and our clients. Keep talking.

Do you ask for a deposit up-front on commissions?

No, I don't ask for deposits	50%
Yes, I get it on most commissions	32%
Yes, I only work on jobs with deposits	11%
Yes, but I don't get it on most commissions	7%

«« Half of us don't even ask! I know some clients aren't able to, but I'm sure it's worth politely and professionally asking.

Do you use hour/day rates?

Yes on all projects	10%
Sometimes	65%
Never	25%

How many invoices were paid late in 2018?

More than half	20%
Half	12%
Less than half	37%
None	30%

Do you earn enough to live sustainably?

No	73%
Yes	27%

^^^ OK team, huddle up. 73% of us don't earn enough to live sustainably. That's sadly up even more from last year. I understand that around half of us are working part-time in illustration, and hopefully some are content in their situation. But there's obviously a large group who need to earn more. There's two sides to this, look at your creative work, is it special *and* commercially viable and is it being seen by the right people? Now look at your business side, are you running a sustainable business, pricing correctly, managing your cash flow and making use of every possible avenue for your particular illustration output? 2019 is the year to get everything straight.

Section 3 : Money

Price range on most individual commissions

Under £249	39%
£250 - £499	28%
£500 - £999	9%
£1000 - £2499	9%
£2500 - £4999	3%
£5000+	1%

Gross annual income for 2018

Less than £9,999	41%
£10,000 - £19,999	19%
£20,000 - £34,999	18%
£35,000 - £49,999	10%
£50,000 - £74,999	6%
£75,000 - £99,999	3%
£100,000 - £149,999	1%
£150,000+	>1%

What other incomes do you have?

Etsy store	21%
Other 3rd party online store	18%
Self-hosted online store	16%
Licensing existing artwork	15%
Teaching	11%
Patreon	6%
Skillshare/tutorials	2%
YouTube	2%
Amazon affiliate	1%

^^^ There's a lot of low-level work being done here, jobs under £250 and 41% of people earning below minimum wage salaries (based on UK figures). If you're going to deal with small budget jobs, you have to aim to pull in a lot of them.

≪≪ Taking the top 3 figures here there's a testament to our indie businesses with 55% of us selling prints/products online!



Section 4 : Work/Life Balance

Do you balance client and personal work?

Yes	48%
No	52%

Which of these would benefit you/your work?

More exercise	64%
More relaxation	46%
More sleep	41%
More art classes	41%
More social time	40%
Part-time help	25%
Full-time help	4%

Do you regularly meet up with other illustrators?

Yes and it's important for me to do so	28%
Yes but it's not of great importance	6%
No, but I wish I did	60%
No, I don't feel the need	6%

Do you feel you have anxiety or confidence issues that effect your career?

Yes	74%
No	26%

If you have any mental health issues, have you spoken about it on social media?

Yes	24%
No	75%

Which of these should we write/talk about more?

Mental health support regarding self-confidence issues	59%
Mental health support regarding financial issues	54%
Improving physical activity	33%
Improving general wellness, meditation etc	29%
Improving social life	26%

«« This is exactly the same as last year. To the 52%, do you want to be doing more personal work? How can you make that extra time in the day? For me at least, personal work has always been the fuel behind my career and has brought in many new opportunities.

«« Similar to last year, one thing to do, step away from your desk and look after yourself!

«« This is great! Proof that those who do, benefit, and those who don't, want to. Even if you're shy (hello me) try your very best to add 'socialise with illustrators' to your regular routine!

^^^ We had similar results last year, and although it's shocking, it did spark a lot of discussion across the industry, people did want to help, and people were widely reassured that none of us are alone. But we need to build on it, more resources to help those who need it, more private messages to check on our friends. You don't need to speak publicly, that's perfectly cool, but you can always seek out or share support, we're a network, you're not alone.

Section 4 : Work/Life Balance

How balanced are the positives/negatives of social media on you?

100% positive	7%
75% positive / 25% negative	36%
50% positive / 50% negative	45%
25% positive / 75% negative	12%
100% negative	>1%

«« This is erring on the positive, especially considering most survey respondents will be regular social media users. But anyone having difficulties with it, consider using less social media channels, only use what makes you feel good.

Do you feel motivated to be a better artist?

Yes	96%
No	4%

Do you feel motivated to be a better business?

Yes	89%
No	11%

^^^ Overall this is fantastic, the vast majority are keen to improve both sides of their illustration practise, and with that motivation in hand can ensure that they build a better, more creative and profitable business. Now, go do it.

