

I am one of the founder members of the [TV-Wrap campaign](#) which the Guardian picked up in 2005 - nearly 15 years ago to the day! That began a small but telling revolution in the way employers treated new entrants to the industry.

I have today sent this to the Treasury Sub Committee, in response to their request for submissions.

I am a veteran of the broadcast sector. What has been allowed to happen to a very highly skilled workforce is incredible - particularly when that workforce generates most of the content which makes the creative industries one of the biggest economic drivers in the country.

Just about every "normal" production has been shelved with immediate effect. On top of that, most freelancers know that there won't be any/much work in the winter months and rely on being busy from March onwards. So not only are they not earning but they have no resources either. Most earn well when they're working and their outgoings will be based on steady work over many years. So this is disastrous.

Most of these people would have been staff at one of the broadcasters 30 years ago. It suited the broadcasters to make them all "redundant" and hire them back - no sick pay, no NI, no staff pension. So they're not at all comparable to most self-employed people because they don't (and can't) work unilaterally. They have to be part of a crew/team.

So the truth is that the broadcasters/commissioners know their actions are causing enormous hardship - not deliberately but there is a chain. The indies they commission also know who they were projecting to hire (and in many cases had hired, and confirmed). The indies will be in terrible difficulties too, let's not forget: this is not of their doing.

So what industry freelancers are now asking for is that the broadcasters set up an emergency fund for freelancers whose work has completely dried up. They can, as a body, ask for government support, but they can make this happen.

The BBC is continuing to pay its staffers, which is lovely, except some of them are paid A LOT. How about setting up a fund which takes a percentage of those salaries and diverts them into a freelance fund?

If they don't, and if this crisis continues for months (as seems quite likely) most freelancers will not earn this year. That is not sustainable. If they want a workforce when they do get underway again, then they need to figure out a way of allowing them to survive. It's simple really - and it's vital for them as well as the workforce. The skills they stand to lose are very hard won and will not be easily replaced.

Yours sincerely

Benetta Adamson