



Salary Guide.

2021.





Hello.

Thank you for downloading our FREE salary guide.

Over the course of the last few months, we have had hundreds of responses to our industry-wide survey.

Designers from the likes of Dyson, Samsung, Shark Ninja and many others have got involved. Agency owners to design directors have also taken the time to share their take on 2020.

This - combined with interviewing for the podcast & interacting with designers during our live webinars 'Design Truth Live' - has provided us with a unique insight into the current landscape.

So let's begin...

(If you want to go straight to the salary stuff, scroll down to page 6.)

Who are we?



Brad Harper is a design recruiter, nearly seven years in the game but pretty new to speaking in third person.

Frustrated by the lack of community in Industrial Design in the UK, Brad co-setup Design Truth during lockdown to share perspective and bring the industry together... challenging the recruiter stereotype along the way.

He has found ~~candidates~~ humans new homes to the below:



*You often see Brad ranting about folios with an Estrella at Design Truth Live.

Who are we?



Drew Kendrick currently heads up product development for a health & wellbeing startup Cambridge Sleep Sciences.

He has over 15 years of experience with work that has made it to market in Medical Devices, PPE & Safety Equipment, Toys, Sports Equipment & more.

With a thirst for the bleeding edge, Drew is incredibly passionate about Industrial Design and is our industry voice of reason.

Bluefoam. Guitars & Mountainbiking. In that order.

Our Survey.

The aim of Design Truth is to keep Industrial Design connected.

Our survey tackled five huge talking points from 2020, providing the platform to share insight, lessons learnt and individual challenges along the way.

You can listen to us talk through the full results in the Christmas Special of the pod with Wyn Jones (Head of Design @ Entia) & Jordan Burns (Head of Product & Manufacturing @ Namene Solar)

- + Define 2020 for you, your career or your business in one word
- + What are your main takeaways from working from home? Would you take a job OR hire someone completely remote based on your experience?
- + Tell us a little bit about the trends you have noticed over the last 12 months? (This could be using different bits of software, certain clients being busier than others, the standard of industrial design podcasts drastically improving...)
- + Is Design Education fit for industry?
- + What are your predictions for 2021?



Salary Guide - UK.

2021.

0-2 years



Year 0-2

We all remember our humble beginnings.

Our first entry on the ladder.

For the sake of too much granular detail, we've packaged this up as the early inroads to your career.

You notice after 2 years of craft, the portfolio is in better shape and hopefully you might have some product to market.

London: £23,000 - £30,000

Bristol: £21,000 - £28,000

Cambridge: £22,000 - £28,000

Oxford: £22,000 - £28,000

Other: £20,000 - £26,000

Freelance: £150 - £200 per day

*The lower figure is where you are most likely at in Year 0.
The higher figure is where you are most likely at in Year 2
Freelance depends on a variety of factors, but 175 is your average.

Things to consider:

- + You are now after 2 years in a much better shape for salaries to increase.
- + Certain employers do pay more, however expect potential stagnation in years 3-4. Your next move could be a sideways one financially.
- + Certain product verticals, such as medical, will demand slightly higher salaries.

3-6 years



Year 3-6

At this point you either speak only through NDAs, or start to drop the ball on your design instagram page as work takes centre stage.

Stereotypically, you are now a safe pair of hands.

Now you are at a place where you feel a creative comfort with your craft, but opportunities will arise in all different shapes and sizes.

London: £30,000 - £48,000

Bristol: £26,000 - £42,000 (this will rise!!)

Cambridge: £28,000 - £48,000

Oxford: £26,000 - £42,000

Other: £24,000 - £35,000

Freelance: £200 - 350 per day

*The lower figure is where you are most likely at in Year 3.
The higher figure is where you are most likely at in Year 6
Freelance depends on a variety of factors, but 275 is your average.

Things to consider:

- + Salary should never be your main priority, but this will become more of a focus. We all have bills to pay.
- + What you start to see now is these ranges expanding, particularly in the design hubs. The most common number on our survey was **£32,000**.
- + A time to think about becoming a specialist? Go in-house, agency, startup, overseas? Make yourself more well-rounded.
- + Remote working / hybrid working is more likely to be on the table from this point onwards.
- + There is a huge medical focus to Cambridge, so whilst salaries are similar to London, the diversity of roles is not.

6-10 yrs (Senior/Principal Design)



Year 6-10

Congratulations, you have the t-shirt.

You are facing some new choices here. Where do I go? Does the opportunity internally match my ambition?

Is it time to do something new, think about management, but I also might have other things to consider?

Family. Mortgage. How many years have I got left before the youth mobility visa runs out for Oz?

In busy times, the world is your oyster.

London: £42,000 - £70,000

Bristol: £35,000 - £55,000

Cambridge: £40,000 - £65,000

Oxford: £35,000 - £55,000

Other: £28,000 - £45,000

Freelance: £350 - 500 per day

*The lower figure is where you are most likely at in Year 6.
The higher figure is where you are most likely at in Year 10
Freelance depends on a variety of factors, but 400 is your average.

Things to consider:

+ As stated before, certain product verticals like medical, electric vehicles, certain domestic appliances brands pay well.

+ Whilst base salaries can be high in startups, what it lacks can be a benefits package, comprehensive pension etc. It all factors into this swing you are seeing. The BIG focus is shares, however they can quite quickly become worthless.

+ Cambridge is predominantly medical.

+ The most common number from our survey was **£50,000**

+ Whilst these numbers will look high for some, it is nothing in comparison to what you can earn at our digital counterparts.

Design Manager



Design Manager

Management.

You have been thrown in as you have been around the design block a few times, or it just seemed the logical next step to you.

Welcome to meetings about meetings, budgets, endless speculative approaches from recruiters and two new words in your vocabulary: stakeholder management.

London: £42,000 - £70,000

Bristol: £35,000 - £55,000

Cambridge: £40,000 - £65,000

Oxford: £35,000 - £55,000

Other: £28,000 - £45,000

Freelance: £400 - 600 per day

* Freelance depends on a variety of factors, but 500 is your average.

Things to consider:

+ Management can come before 6 years. Again, there is no granular detail here.

+ I would argue Principal designers earn as much as managers, as it takes a company of a certain size to facilitate that kind of hire. You would associate it with a bigger player in the market.

+ I would associate the higher end of this scale to corps, and the lower end to SMEs that have a manager and a few juniors.

+This role can be less about hands-on design, but more about facilitating and nurturing the team.

Design Director



Design Director

You have made it.

You leave Keyshot for the new kids on the block, but there's a lot on your plate.

The key here is your ability to demonstrate the value of design, and some will pay a handsome sum for it.

With roles of this nature rare, many contemplate a career in 'consulting' - even when they laughed at the idea 6 months prior.

London: £65,000 +

Bristol: £55,000 +

Cambridge: £65,000 +

Oxford: £55,000 +

Other: £50,000 +

Freelance: £650 +

*Freelance depends on a variety of factors, .

Things to consider:

+ Job titles are ambiguous. At this point you could be a Head of Product Development, Head of Design, VP of Design, CDO.

+ One thing to note is that at this point, it's beyond salary. There is so much more at play here with bonuses, shares, incentives. It would be wrong of us to dig deep into that.

+ There can only be one of these in the entire business.

+ We have found work for a VP in London within consumer electronics at something like £180,000 per year. You start to see exceptions to the rule when you can demonstrate unparalleled value to a business.

+ The most common number on our survey was **£60,000**

Salary Guide - Australia.

2021.

Who are we?



Paul Surrige is an ex-engineer turned recruiter, having been involved at the heartbeat of our industry for over 30 years.

His legacy older than some agencies, what Paul does not know about design is not worth knowing.

Having spent the last 3 years working for RHL in Sydney, Paul has found designers work on all corners of the planet, and is incredibly excited by the future with Australia bringing more manufacturing to the country, with 2021 a time for huge investment.

When not working (which his wife Ilse can vouch for is very rarely...) you often find Paul out at sea, although will vouch that the first coffee in the morning now hardly touches the sides.

paul@rhl.com.au

The formula.

✘ Sydney

Salaries are highest in Sydney. With living costs comparable to London, it is the most expensive city in Australia. Expensive for a reason though: an awesome place to be.

✘ Melbourne

Melbourne is a growing hub, but salaries still sit at 10% lower than Sydney. An artsy hub & tremendous vibe.

✘ Other

Like always, there is life outside the big cities. In certain product verticals like medical, salaries will still be comparable to Melbourne, although again 5-10% lower in other areas.

0-2 years



Year 0-2

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Our first entry on the ladder.

For the sake of too much granular detail, we've packaged this up as the early inroads to your career.

You notice after 2 years of craft, the portfolio is in better shape and hopefully you might have some product to market.

Sydney: \$50,000 - \$65,000

Melbourne: \$45,000 - \$60,000

Other: \$42,000 - \$55,000

Freelance: c\$35 per hour

*The lower figure is where you are most likely at in Year 0.
The higher figure is where you are most likely at in Year 2
Freelance depends on a variety of factors

Things to consider:

+ AUD to GDP = 1 to 0.55

+ Industrial Design in Australia is far more all-encompassing than in the UK. Greater focus on design for manufacturing for example.

+ Most employers will want you to be in the country as a sign of investment before sponsoring.

DESIGN TRUTH

3-6 years



Year 3-6

At this point you either speak only through NDAs, or start to drop the ball on your design instagram page as work takes centre stage.

Stereotypically, you are now a safe pair of hands.

Now you are at a place where you feel a creative comfort with your craft, but opportunities will arise in all different shapes and sizes.

Sydney: \$60,000 - \$85,000

Melbourne: \$55,000 - \$75,000

Other: \$55,000 - \$68,000

Freelance: c\$46 per hour

*The lower figure is where you are most likely at in Year 3.
The higher figure is where you are most likely at in year 6.
Freelance depends on a variety of factors

Things to consider:

- + AUD to GBP is 1 to 0.55
- + Medical device design charges a 15% premium
- + You will be most likely be expected to work in the studio on a hybrid basis

6-10 yrs (Senior/Principal Design)



Year 6-10

Congratulations, you have the t-shirt.

You are facing some new choices here.
Where do I go? Does the opportunity internally match my ambition?

Is it time to do something new, think about management, but I also might have other things to consider?

Family. Mortgage. How many years have I got left before the youth mobility visa runs out for London?

In busy times, the world is your oyster.

Sydney: \$80,000 - \$115,000

Melbourne: \$80,000 - \$100,000

Other: \$80,000 - \$95,000

Freelance: c\$65 per hour

*The lower figure is where you are most likely at in Year 6.
The higher figure is where you are most likely at in Year 10.
Freelance depends on a variety of factors

Things to consider:

- + AUD to GBP is 1 to 0.55
- + Medical device design charges a 15% premium
- + You will be most likely be expected to work in the studio on a hybrid basis

Design Manager



Design Manager

Management.

You have been thrown in as you have been around the design block a few times, or it just seemed the logical next step to you.

Welcome to meetings about meetings, budgets, endless speculative approaches from recruiters and two new words in your vocabulary: stakeholder management.

Sydney: \$115,000 - \$140,000

Melbourne: \$100,000 - \$140,000

Other: \$90,000 - \$130,000

Freelance: \$65 per hour +

* Freelance depends on a variety of factors.

Things to consider:

- + AUD to GBP is 1 to 0.55
- + Medical device design charges a 15% premium
- + The most common number on our survey was **\$120,000**

Design Director



Design Director

You have made it.

You leave Keyshot for the new kids on the block, but there's a lot on your plate.

The key here is your ability to demonstrate the value of design, and some will pay a handsome sum for it.

With roles of this nature rare, many contemplate a career in 'consulting' - even when they laughed at the idea 6 months prior.

Sydney: \$140,000 +

Melbourne: \$140,000 +

Other: \$130,000 +

Things to consider:

- + AUD to GBP is 1 to 0.55
- + Medical device design charges a 15% premium
- + The most common number on our survey was **\$150,000**



Thank you for reading

To share your thoughts, insight & observation track us down on the socials or hello@designtruth.co.uk

Never forget to search 'ID Cast' on Apple or Spotify...