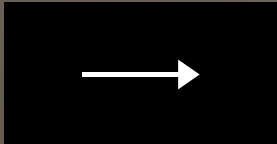


2022

# SALARY GUIDE

I N D U S T R I A L   D E S I G N



# welcome back.

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*It feels slightly strange writing this guide again, as we return for our second year.*

*A time to reflect, but more importantly another opportunity to keep looking forward.*

*The support for Design Truth is still very difficult for me to get my head around, but the messages of salary increases & promotions off the back of this free guide is arguably one of the most fulfilling efforts of it all.*

*I genuinely look forward to breaking away from shared screens in 2022, with Design Truth events across the UK - starting in London as soon as any potential restrictions and unease lift.*

*Let's keep industrial design connected, and see you all very soon.*



**Brad Harper**  
Design Truth: Founder



# the idea behind the guide.

*Clarity.*

*To name a business truth, it is important we try to tell it.*

*The numbers you will see is from many years of experience - hiring across many different industry spaces within industrial design - combined with an end of year survey where the designers anonymously provide such valuable insight and data.*

*You do not need to look very far to see who we work with, and that transparency and respect is what puts us in this unique position to be able to give you the information.*

*This year, we are digging into the detail providing (hopefully) some really interesting analysis on market trends, expectations and some potential discussion points at future Design Truth events.*



# SALARY GUIDE

THE FIRST JOB (UK)



2022



London: £21,000 - £26,000

Bristol: £20,000 - £25,000

Cambridge £21,000 - £28,000

Oxford: £20,000 - £25,000

Manchester: £18,000 - £24,000

Midlands: £18,000 - £24,000

Glasgow: £18,000 - £24,000

Poole: £19,000 - £25,000.

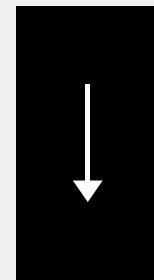
most common response on the survey.



Job Titles

+ (Junior / Graduate)  
Industrial Designer

+ (Junior / Graduate)  
Product Designer



+ Salary tends to level up as your career progresses.

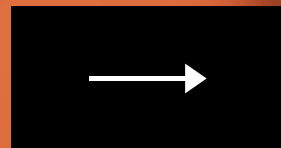
+ You have a lot to bring to the table, and will have skills that those with 20+ years of experience do not.

+ Find an environment (people & projects) where you will learn a great deal. A small design agency is often a good place to start.

2022

# SALARY GUIDE

T H E S A F E P A I R O F H A N D S



Design Truth: Salary Guide '22 - 1/2 years of experience.

London: £23,000 - £30,000

Bristol: £21,000 - £28,000

Cambridge £22,000 - £32,000

Oxford: £22,000 - £28,000

Manchester: £22,000 - £26,000

Midlands: £21,000 - £25,000

Glasgow: £21,000 - £28,000

Poole: £22,000 - £26,000

## Job Titles

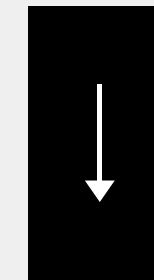
+ Industrial Designer

+ Product Designer

+3D Designer

+ Product Design  
Engineer

+ Design Engineer



most common response on the survey. **+ Certain product verticals (such as medical) pay higher. Cambridge is a UK hub in that space.**

**+ A high starting salary can often be a retention strategy, leaving you to take a sideways (or backwards) jump to move.**

**+ Factor in 'time to market' as it can make your portfolio far richer.**

# SALARY GUIDE

T H E C A R E E R M O V E



2022

**Design Truth: Salary Guide '22 - 3/6 years of experience.**

**London: £30,000 - £50,000**

**Bristol: £28,000 - £48,000**

**Cambridge £30,000 - £50,000**

**Oxford: £28,000 - £45,000**

**Manchester: £28,000 - £35,000**

**Midlands: £25,000 - £39,000**

**Glasgow: £25,000 - £38,000**

**Poole: £26,000 - £36,000**

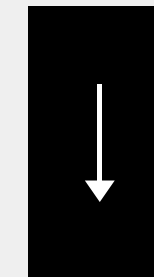
**Job Titles**

+ (Senior) Industrial Designer

+ (Senior) Product Designer

+ Product Design Engineer

+ Design Engineer



**+ The most in-demand design talent is in this bracket.**

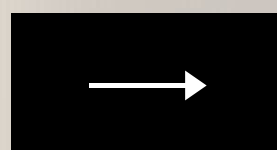
**+ Most common answer in the survey was £35,000. A £3,000 increase from 2021.**

**+ This is a point where careers begin to form, skills sharpen and opportunity is plenty.**

**+ The opening of Elvie's Bristol studio has had a positive impact on local salaries.**

# SALARY GUIDE

T H E F A N C I E R J O B T I T L E



2022



**Design Truth: Salary Guide '22 - 6-10 years of experience.**

**London: £42,000 - £70,000**

**Bristol: £35,000 - £60,000**

**Cambridge £40,000 - £70,000**

**Oxford: £35,000 - £55,000**

**Manchester: £32,000 - £48,000**

**Midlands: £35,000 - £50,000**

**Glasgow: £35,000 - £48,000**

**Poole: £35,000 - £45,000**

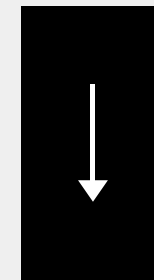
**Job Titles**

+ (Senior / Principal / Lead) Industrial Designer

+ (Senior / Principal / Lead) Product Designer

+ Design Manager

+ Head of Design



+ Careers have now formed, specialisms in place. The big design hubs will begin to pull away.

+ The most common number on our survey was £50,000. There is no change from the previous year.

+ Some have ventured into management at this point, but a Head of Design will only be against a (very) small design structure.

# SALARY GUIDE

T H E S E A S O N E D P R O



2022

**London: £55,000 - £85,000**

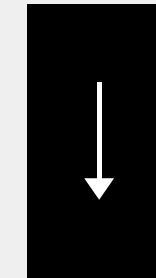
+ Principal / Lead  
Industrial Designer

+ Principal / Lead  
Product Designer

**Bristol: £50,000 - £78,000**

**Cambridge £55,000 - £80,000**

**Oxford: £50,000 - £75,000**



**Manchester: £45,000 - £60,000**

**Midlands: £50,000 - £72,000**

**Glasgow: £45,000 - £60,000**

**Poole: £45,000 - £60,000.**

+ Midlands salaries becoming more competitive, factoring in the demographic of the design scene in the area.

+ There are designers earning north of our top end, but they are superhuman.

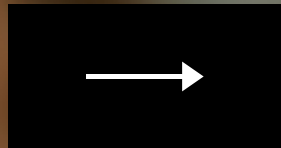
+ A point in the career where freelance can be a compelling option.



2022

# SALARY GUIDE

T H E M A N A G E R



+ Design Manager

+ Head of Design

London: £42,000 - £70,000

Bristol: £35,000 - £58,000

Cambridge £40,000 - £65,000

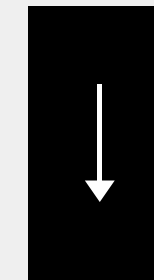
Oxford: £35,000 - £58,000

Manchester: £33,000 - £55,000

Midlands: £34,000 - £65,000

Glasgow: £33,000 - £50,000

Poole: £34,000 - £55,000.



+ Design management is very broad.

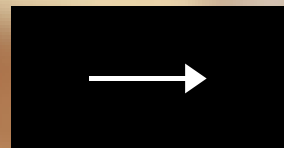
+ The lower end is managing a small team (that might only be external freelance support)

+ Principal / Lead designers earn more than most managers, as typically companies can facilitate that level of hire are of a certain size.

+ Most common number was £40,000. For London, £48,000.

# SALARY GUIDE

THE ONE IN CHARGE



2022



London: £65,000 +

Bristol: £55,000 - £90,000

Cambridge £65,000 +

Oxford: £60,000 +

Manchester: £50,000 - £85,000

Midlands: £55,000 +

Glasgow: £50,000 - £90,000

Poole: £50,000 - £85,000

Job Titles

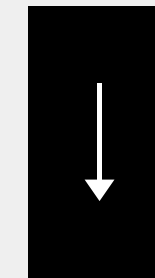
+ Head of Design

+ Design Director

+ VP of Design

+ Chief Design Officer

+ Design Manager



+ Think of the automotive hub of the midlands, medical of Cambridge. You can easily earn £150,000 + at that very top end.

+ Looking for a new role at this level takes a great deal of time, as opportunities are often thin on the ground.

+ Opportunity is global here (both internally & externally), and UK salaries are nowhere close to that of the US, Europe & Asia.

# SALARY GUIDE

THE FREELANCER



2022

# what should I charge?

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*Freelance rates depend on a variety of factors. Sorry.*

*The time it will take, the geography of where you need to be, output required, the (hopefully healthy) state of requests coming through the door, the relevant experience you have.*

*For some, freelance is a conscious choice. Most fall into it & never want to leave. Generally speaking, if the freelancers are picking up work ... it tends to indicate the market is in a good spot.*

*You should be aiming to get £150-200 per day at the start of your design career.*

*If you have some experience, push that to £250-300 per day.*

*6 years + can easily get into the £350-450 per day mark, rising up to the £700/£750 and beyond as we go through the skillset & experience increments.*

*Day rates tend to be higher for shorter contracts.*



2022

# SURVEY INSIGHT

W Y N J O N E S - H E A D O F  
D E S I G N @ E N T I A



# Happy New Year!

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*How was 2021 for you? Challenging, chaotic, growth, tough, stressful, difficult, challenging and adapting were words most chosen by the hundred's of survey responders when describing the last year. (Phew, so it wasn't just me!)*

*Salaries in a global pandemic are always going to cautiously increased, and I'm sure many were thankful to have employment in these uncertain times.*

*The salary expectations of roles were interesting. Many of the respondents, in particular the younger ones, didn't really have an understanding of the ranges for roles in the typical hierarchy of design positions. As they consider a career plan, I feel this guide will be essential in having clear visibility of their potential rewards relative to their development growth.*

*Our digital product design cousins are currently in a boom period of higher salaries, which I feel could be influencing expectations. (Or possibly that industrial designers feel they've been paid less for too long...)*



**Wyn Jones**

Head of Design @ Entia



# Blwyddyn Newydd Dda!

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*The work-from-home situation has been favoured by providing a better work-life balance with reduced commuting, more time for exercise and family being popular advantages. Many enjoyed the responsibility of delivering work remotely and autonomously, which in turn has gained more trust from managers.*

*Not surprisingly, us physical and tangible types would still prefer to be in a studio environment. 25% of respondents said they'd apply for a fully remote design role, which suggests that many have found a transition to home working easier and more suitable.*

*The podcast has really helped connect industrial designers from all over the world to reassure and educate them through down-to-earth, curious and insightful conversations.*

*I'm sure we all agree Design Truth has been refreshing and interesting for us all. The potential is very exciting and I look forward to helping it along on its journey into 2022.*



**Wyn Jones**

Head of Design @ Entia





2022

# SURVEY INSIGHT

B R A D H A R P E R - F O U N D E R @  
D E S I G N T R U T H



KEEPING INDUSTRIAL DESIGN CONNECTED.

DESIGN TRUTH.

# movement & opportunity.

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Starting in the backdrop of a pandemic, furlough, mass redundancies & economic doom - you can imagine some of the tricky questions that come my way from family or friends.

Industrial Design is often an unknown. Good design in it's very nature is often not acknowledged. As Roy Keane would say to a no-nonsense centre-half, "they are just doing their job."

In 2020, I had a designer cry at the end of the phone after redundancy from a business, team & home they enjoyed.

You can not escape that raw emotion & unease.

Thankfully, the skill set & mind set of a designer has never been in greater demand. Even the tax office & the police are actively trying to bring in design minds.

So when I see 23% of industrial designers not getting a pay rise in '21, I think of the 'starting new position' on LinkedIn that dominates my social feed.



**Brad Harper**

Founder @ Design Truth



# movement & opportunity.

---

Opportunity is all around us.

It has always been difficult to enter the industry - to get that foot in the door - but it has also never felt more accessible to build relationships and get in front of those that matter.

'The Great Resignation' is an extreme, but designers up and down the country have taken ownership of what matters to them.

People, purpose & planet.

Expect further movement in 2022. New faces in the studio, new agencies on our directory & new beginnings for so many.

There is a tremendous talent shortage in the UK, with applications outside our waters thin on the ground. It only leads to one thing: more than 23% of industrial designers will be getting a payrise in '22.



**Brad Harper**  
Founder @ Design Truth



# see you in the studio on Monday.

---

75% of industrial designers would be open to applying for a design role if it was in the office five days a week.

Countless meetings with nervous talent acquisition bods talking about hybrid working. It is not 'the thing' that gets a designer invested in the proposition.... sometimes it's an unhealthy distraction.

The future of work might be locked in the metaverse, but for now ... it is see you in the studio on Monday, with not many at pain with it. The 3/2 day split is the 'new normal' ... if we still use that phrase.

Finally, a strong theme throughout was diversity (or the lack of) within our industry.

What is striking is that first-time hiring managers are incredibly self-aware of it's importance. I would be surprised if Industrial Design is still 90%+ white male in the next 3-5 years.

It is not an overnight transformation, but this generation entering management & hiring will play a tremendous part in that change.



**Brad Harper**

Founder @ Design Truth



# Thank You

**Contact us to voice your  
view.**

Brad Harper

[hello@designtruth.co.uk](mailto:hello@designtruth.co.uk)