

Horizon Research

Writers' Earnings in New Zealand 2020

February 2021



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the results of a survey of New Zealand writers' earnings. Invitations to participate were sent to writers throughout New Zealand via publishers and writers' associations. A nett 262 writers nationwide responded to the survey between 10 December 2020 and 19 February 2021, with 226 respondents (81% of the total) answering in December 2020. The survey is therefore referred to as a 2020 survey.

Writer categories and publishing

As in the 2018 and 2016 surveys, the largest groups of writers in the sample were authors of fiction, non-fiction, and children's' books: 59% of the writers who responded to the survey were primarily book authors. In the 2018 survey, 72% of respondents were primarily book authors and in 2016, 55%.

For 92% of those currently working in fiction, this was their primary writing category (98% in 2018, 83% in 2016). Those currently working in non-fiction were less likely to have that as their primary category (41%).

As in 2018, a higher percentage of female respondents than male respondents were writing fiction as their primary writing category. Note that female writers in the sample were less likely than males to nominate non-fiction, plays and academic writing as their primary category.

As in the past two surveys, more writers had work published in each category than were currently writing in it and more writers were working in each category than regarded it as their primary category.

Traditional print publishing has held close to the 2018 level, with the incidence of print publishing at 34% (37% in 2018) and e-book publishing by traditional publishers at 17% (18% in 2018). The ratio of print books to e-books via traditional publishers has held at 2:1.

A nett 37% had self-published in some form in the past year (32% in 2018 and 2016).

Starting writing

On average, the writers in the survey had been writing for 22 years. 60% of the sample had started writing since the year 2000.

Having a passion or love for reading, writing, literature, books or stories was the most stated reason for starting to write (26%). 16% of writers said that they had always wanted to write or had always been writing or creating, while 15% had been inspired to write: by other writers or poets, teachers, family or friends.

Education and development

Education levels were similar to 2018 and 2016, with 76% of the sample having a university degree.

90.5% of writers in the sample - up from 83% in 2018 and 73% in 2016 - had undertaken some form of training, workshops, courses, diplomas, degrees, or received mentoring/feedback from more experienced writers or had been part of informal writers' support groups to assist with their development as writers.

Of those who indicated they had undertaken some form of training in the past, workshops and courses run by writers' centres and other organisations were the main form of education undertaken, as in the previous two surveys.

Mentoring or feedback from more experienced writers and being part of an informal or formal writer's group for peer support and feedback were the other two main forms of training, while the main form of training that writers were still currently undertaking was being part of an informal or formal writer's group for peer support and feedback. Again, these are the same results as in the previous two surveys.

As in the past two surveys, more writers in the sample felt that mentoring or feedback from more experienced writers and being part of an informal or formal writer's group for peer support and feedback were more important in helping them improve their writing.

Time spent writing

The time spent by writers on their "creative occupation as a writer" is still primarily clustered between 2 and 40 hours a week, **with an average of 17.4 hours a week** (compared with 17.7 hours in 2018 and 17.0 in 2016 – given the sample size of these surveys, this can be regarded as "no change").

For this survey an altered formula for average time spent by writers on activities (such as working in an occupation that is unrelated to their writing) has been used to give a better perspective of the average time spent by writers overall. In the last two surveys the average times spent on activities other than "working in your creative occupation as a writer" were reflective of the time spent by those who actually did those activities. The formula used this year takes into account those who do not spend any time on an activity, and is therefore a better reflection of the overall time spent by an "average" writer.

Including their writing activity, and including a new measure of managing the "business" side of writing, which averaged 3.9 hours per week, respondents reported an average of 52.9 hours per week (51.4 in 2018 and 54.3 in 2016).

Respondents reported that they would like to spend an average of 26.4 hours per week on their creative work as a writer: a 51% increase over the time they actually spend, on average. This is similar to the 2018 and 2016 results (25 hours and 50% more than actual).

The need to work to maintain income, domestic/household responsibilities and the demands of another job were again given as the primary barriers to spending more time spent writing (as in 2018 and 2016).

As in 2018, the demands of another job declined once writing time per week exceeded 20 hours per week, while marketing and promotional activities and other tasks associated with writing generally increased as a barrier as time spent writing increased.

Writers' earnings

On average, writers in the survey earned \$49,200 per annum: 1% lower than 2018's \$49,800 and 14% lower than 2016's \$56,900 per annum.

On average, writers earned 33% of their personal income, or around \$16,000 per annum, from their writing (31% and an average of \$15,200 per annum in 2018; 24% and an average of \$13,500 in 2016).

Income earned overseas from writing held at the 2018 level: 23% vs. 24% in 2018, 14% in 2016. In dollar terms. The average amount earned overseas from writing was \$3,800, no change from 2018 (\$3,700).

Overall, 36% said their income from writing had increased in the past 12 months (27% in 2016), while 32% said it had decreased. 30% said their income had remained the same over the past 12 months.

As in 2018 and 2016, royalties were the most common sources of writing earnings, but showed a continuing decrease: from 65% of writers receiving income from royalties in 2016 and 59% in 2018, to 48% in 2020.

Income from self-publishing and Public Lending Rights payments swapped positions: Public Lending Rights payments were being received by 30% of writers, back to the 2016 level and owing to a reduction in the percentage of fiction writers receiving Public Lending Rights income.

As in the past two surveys, half of the respondents said they relied on their partners' income, in addition to any income from writing, and a nett 47% said they relied on having a job.

29% said they relied on National Superannuation; as in 2018, this reflects the age distribution of the respondents, with 31% aged 65 years or over.

The same overall percentage of writers had experienced an increase in their income from their writing in the past 12 months as had experienced a decrease: fiction, non-fiction and young adult literature authors were in this situation.

Copyright Infringement

Overall, 25% of writers in the sample reported having had the copyright of their creative work infringed in the past, a similar result to 2018.

6 out of 10 of the writers who reported having had their copyright infringed – up from 5 out of 10 in 2018 and 2016 – said their work was available on pirate websites/free downloads online. 4 out of 10 said their work was being published/used without their permission or attributed to them.

76% of respondents had not spent any time in the past 12 months in active search to determine if their copyright had been infringed. This included 45% of those who reported that their copyright had actually been infringed at some stage (i.e., not necessarily in the past 12 months).

Those who had searched in the past 12 months had, overall, spent an average of 11.2 hours searching: 17.1 hours, on average, for those whose copyright had been infringed at some stage; 3.5 hours for those whose copyright had not been infringed and 2.5 hours for those who were not sure whether their copyright had been infringed or not.

Overall, 16% of respondents said they had taken some action to enforce copyright (19% in 2018): 52% of those who had identified that the copyright had been infringed (down from 62% in 2018) had taken some action to enforce it, along with 4% of those who had not had their copyright infringed and 5% of those who were not sure.

Copyright and contracts

43% of respondents overall said they had, at some time, contracted or licensed someone else's work (e.g., writing or images) to include in their work. Documentation of the terms were more by the other party than by the writers in the sample.

Terms documented:	%
Terms not documented	14%
The terms of the agreement were documented by me	21%
The terms of the agreement were documented by the other party	41%
Another arrangement	24%

58% of writers in the sample indicated they always retained copyright in their work when signing contracts (62% in 2018, 51% in 2016). The overall total of those who always retained copyright and those who retained it most of the time (i.e., in more than 50% of their contracts) was similar to both 2018 and 2016.

Always retaining copyright was more prevalent among fiction (69%), non-fiction (68%), and young adult literature authors (71%) and playwrights (67%). 16% of fiction and 20% of children's authors said they had never signed a contract relating to their writing.

Although 58% said they always retain copyright, 92% of writers believed they should always retain copyright when negotiating contracts related to their writing. More than two-thirds of writers believed they should always retain other rights, but that may not translate into actual practice as it "depends on the contract".

35% of respondents used a contract advisory service (27% in 2018) – mostly the New Zealand Society of Authors (NZSA) service.

The percentage of writers who indicated that their contracts always included moral rights clauses dropped back to 65% - the 2016 level – while a further 22% said their contracts sometimes did: a total of 87%, similar to the 90% in 2018. As in 2018, 7% indicated that their contracts never included moral rights clauses.

As in 2018, 5% of writers said that their moral rights had been infringed.

61% of writers said their contracts included a reversion clause – a similar result to 2018 (62%; 53% in 2016).

Of the 27% who had exercised the reversion clause:

- 43% had published the work themselves
- 28% had sold the rights to a different publisher

7% of writers reported having to take action against a New Zealand publisher to enforce contract terms. 2% had taken action against an overseas publisher.

53% were aware of the "Creative Rights=Creative Reads" campaign. 29% had seen or heard some of the campaign material or content while 16% were aware of the campaign but had not seen or heard any of the material or content.

Copyright Act review

76% of the writers in the sample had had heard that the Government was reviewing the Copyright Act, up from 56% in 2018.

As in 2018, highest awareness came from those respondents sourced from the New Zealand Society of Authors. In most cases there were multiple sources of information about the review.

As in 2018, only 3% claimed to know a great deal about copyright, and the average rating of their knowledge was exactly the same: 4.4 out of 10.

51% rated their knowledge at 1 to 4 (51% in 2018) and 82% rated their knowledge as 6 or below (79% in 2018).

85% of respondents felt that the New Zealand government does not do enough to inform people about copyright (83% in 2018). Asked what they felt the Government could do, the open response answers were grouped under the following headings:

- Value writers' work and stop the dilution of copyright
- Provide information/updates/workshops/sessions/talks for writers/work with writers' organisations
- Generate public and government understanding of the importance of copyright
- Create an expectation that writers' work is not free
- Raise awareness/understanding of copyright and the issues
- Education
- Enforcement
- Public Lending Rights.

As in 2018, writers' main concern about the Copyright Act review was that they didn't know enough about the issues to be able to comment.

They increasingly fear that users will end up with more rights to their work than the writers themselves and their ability to earn from their work will be further reduced.

60% of respondents wanted the copyright term to be aligned with other countries (i.e., they wanted to have a longer term). Primary motivations for this were leaving a legacy to heirs and international consistency.

40% wanted to retain the current term of the life of the author plus 50 years. Primary motivations for this were accessibility of information, public good, and a lack of desire to leave copyright as a legacy to heirs.

The future

Earning a reasonable income from writing remains the top challenge (as in 2018 and 2016) for writers.

Writers also said (as in both 2018 and 2016) that there were fewer publishers available, or that publishers were inaccessible – getting published is rising as a challenge.

As in 2018 and 2016 the most commonly mentioned thing needed in the future to help them succeed as an author was money/income, followed by “grants” or “funding”. Taken together, these factors were nominated by 49% of those who responded to the question.

Support from publishers/getting published, having more time to write and marketing/promotion continued to be key issues.

REPORT

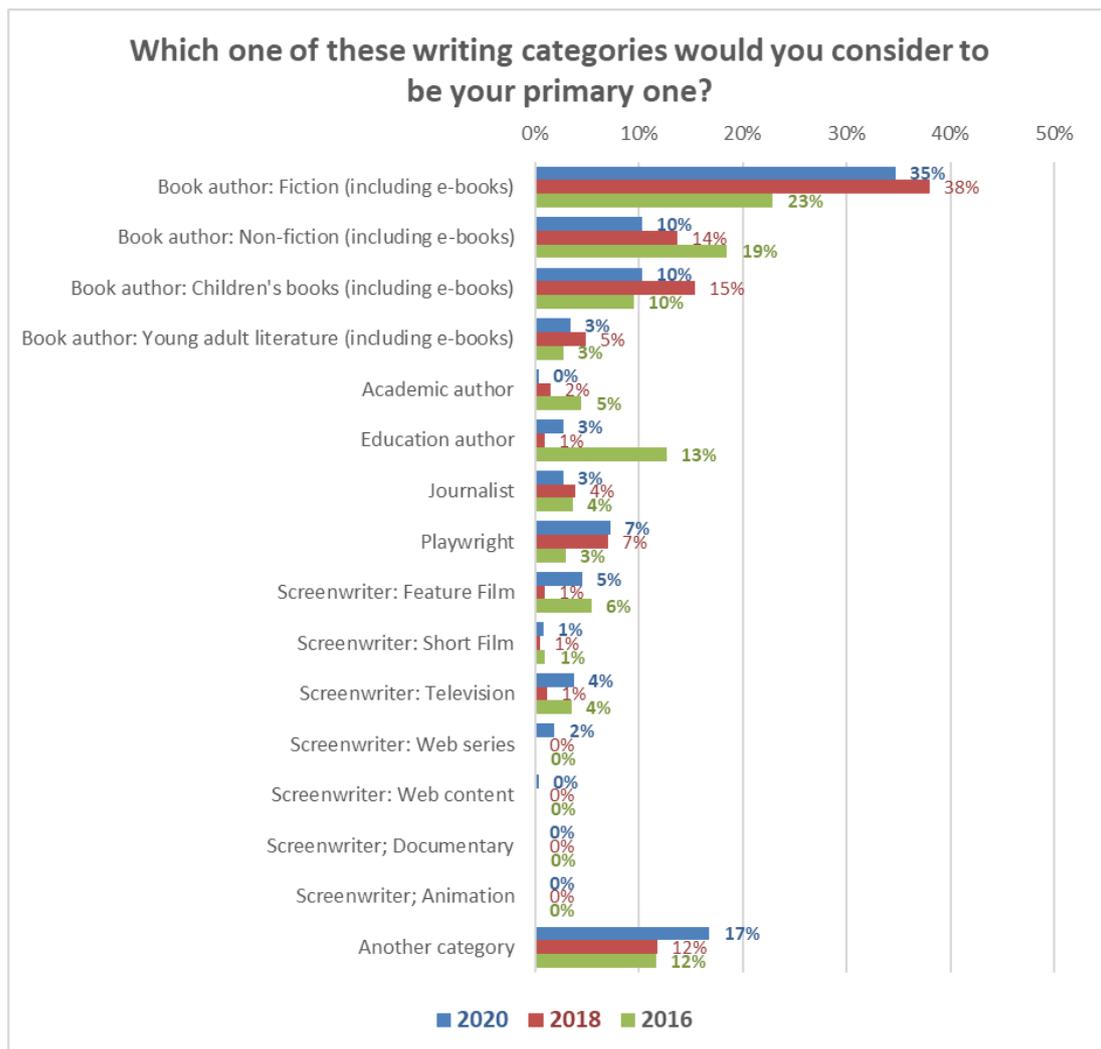
This report is of a survey of New Zealand writers. Invitations to participate were sent to writers throughout New Zealand via publishers and writers' associations. Results are not weighted.

1. Writing categories

As in the past two surveys, the largest groups of writers in the sample were authors of fiction, non-fiction, and children's books. 55% of the writers who responded to the survey were primarily book authors – the 2016 level.

For 98% of those currently working in fiction, this was their primary writing category (83% in 2016). Those currently working in non-fiction were less likely to have that as their primary category (59%).

The pattern was similar to 2018, with a higher percentage of female respondents (37%) than male respondents (27%) writing fiction, a higher percentage of male (20%) than female (9%) non-fiction writers and a significantly lower percentage of female playwrights (4%) than male (13%). More female than male writers were writing children's books (13% female v 9% male).



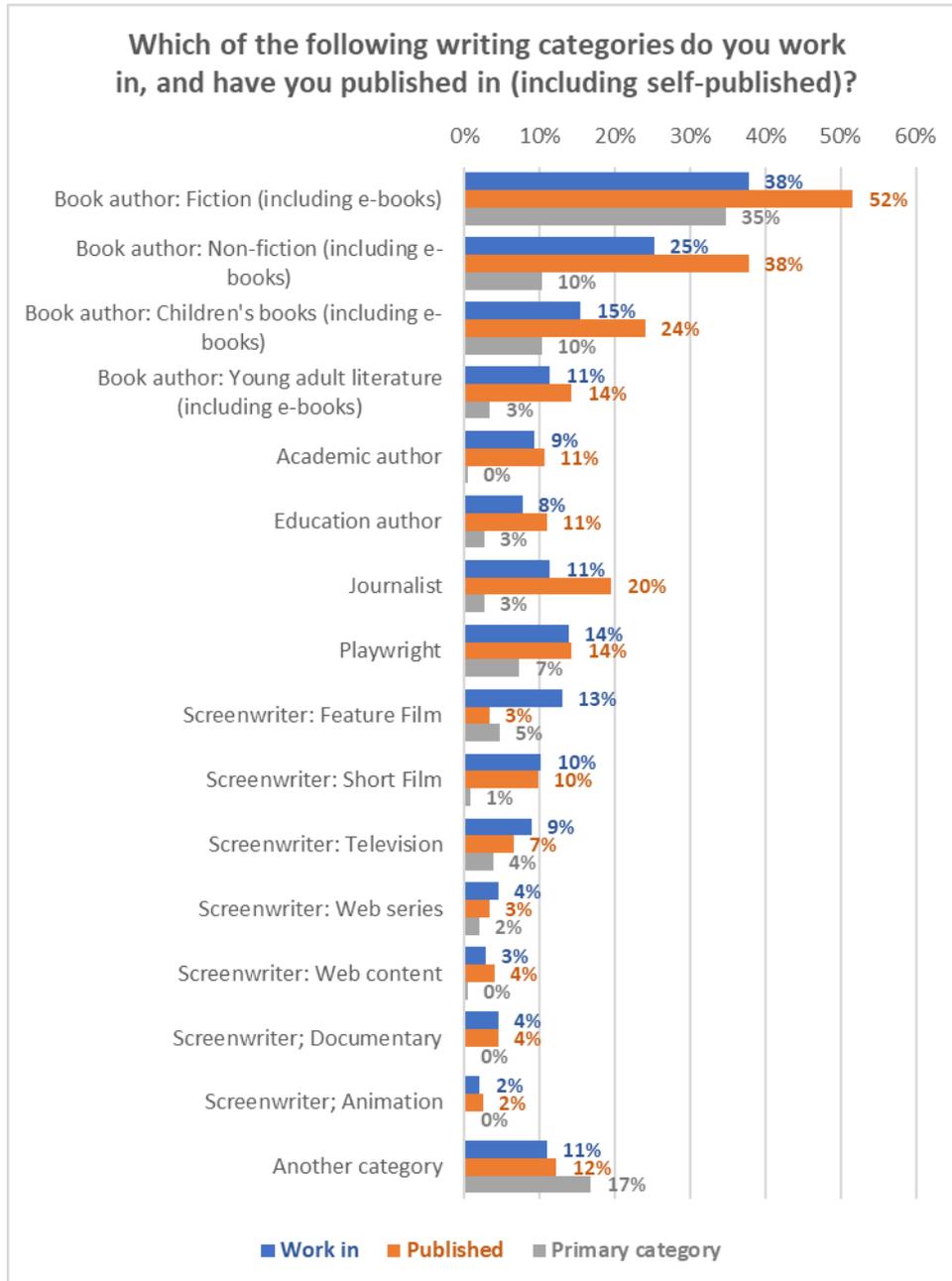
Writing categories given as “Another type” were the following, with poet/poetry again being the most common:

Biography
Book author (2)
Book author fiction and non-fiction
Children's picture books for counselling purposes
Commercial freelance writer
Commercial writer, Non-fiction books, artist profiles, websites
communications
Content writer
Copywriter
Creative Media Production
Fiction, poetry and drama are all equally important in my wage
Freelance writer
I haven't established my category yet
Interpretation writing
Marketing copy and website content manager
Mixed fiction, reviews, non-fiction
Non-fiction (orchestral programme notes) and short stories for an online zine
Poet/ Poetry (12)
Poet and book reviewer
Poet/Academic
Poetry and Fiction Writer
Remote copy editor
Retired Quantity Surveyor with one published novel.
Screenwriter various (television, documentary, short film etc)
Short fiction (short stories)
Short fiction author (2)
Short fiction writer (5)
Short stories in anthologies
Specialist in writing books for beginner readers
Stand Up Comedian
Technical writer
Video Game Writing
Would like it to be e-Audiobooks
Writer of poetry and flash fiction

2. Writing categories and publishing formats

2.1 Writing categories

As in the past two surveys, more writers (except for screenwriters) had work published in each category than were currently working in it and more writers were working in each category than regarded it as their primary category. The results are illustrated in the following chart.



There was significant cross-over between categories - for example 26% of those working in non-fiction regarded it as their primary category, but 29% regarded fiction as their primary – but less cross-over from those working in fiction, 55% of whom regarded fiction as their primary category while only 5% regarded non-fiction as their primary category and 7% regarded children’s books as their primary category

Note the high percentage who had published fiction, non-fiction and children's books in comparison with the percentage who were currently working in that category.

37% of those writing children's books regarded that as their primary category. Only 14% of those writing young adult literature said that it was their primary category: 25% of them regarded children's books as their primary area and 25% regarded adult fiction as their primary area.

2.2 Publishing formats

Traditional print publishing has held close to the 2018 level, with the incidence of print publishing at 34% (37% in 2018) and e-book publishing by traditional publishers at 17% (18% in 2018). The ratio of print books to e-books via traditional publishers has held at 2:1.

The incidence of audio books via a traditional publisher (7%) is also similar to 2018 (6%)

Publishing by independent publishers has also held close to the 2018 level. 16% said they had a print book published by an independent publisher or publishing collective in the past year (19% in 2018). 8% had an e-book published (12% in 2018), and 3% had an audio book published in that way.

Other movements were relatively minor, although performance and/or live reading, and including work in anthology both appeared to be have a small increase.

The incidence of self-publishing seems to have had a small increase, with a nett 37% reporting self-publishing in some form (32% in 2018 and 2016). Of those who had self-published:

- 72% had published a print book
- 55% had published an e-book
- 11% had published an audio book, and
- 29% had self-published in some other form (e.g., poem, short story, essay, review).

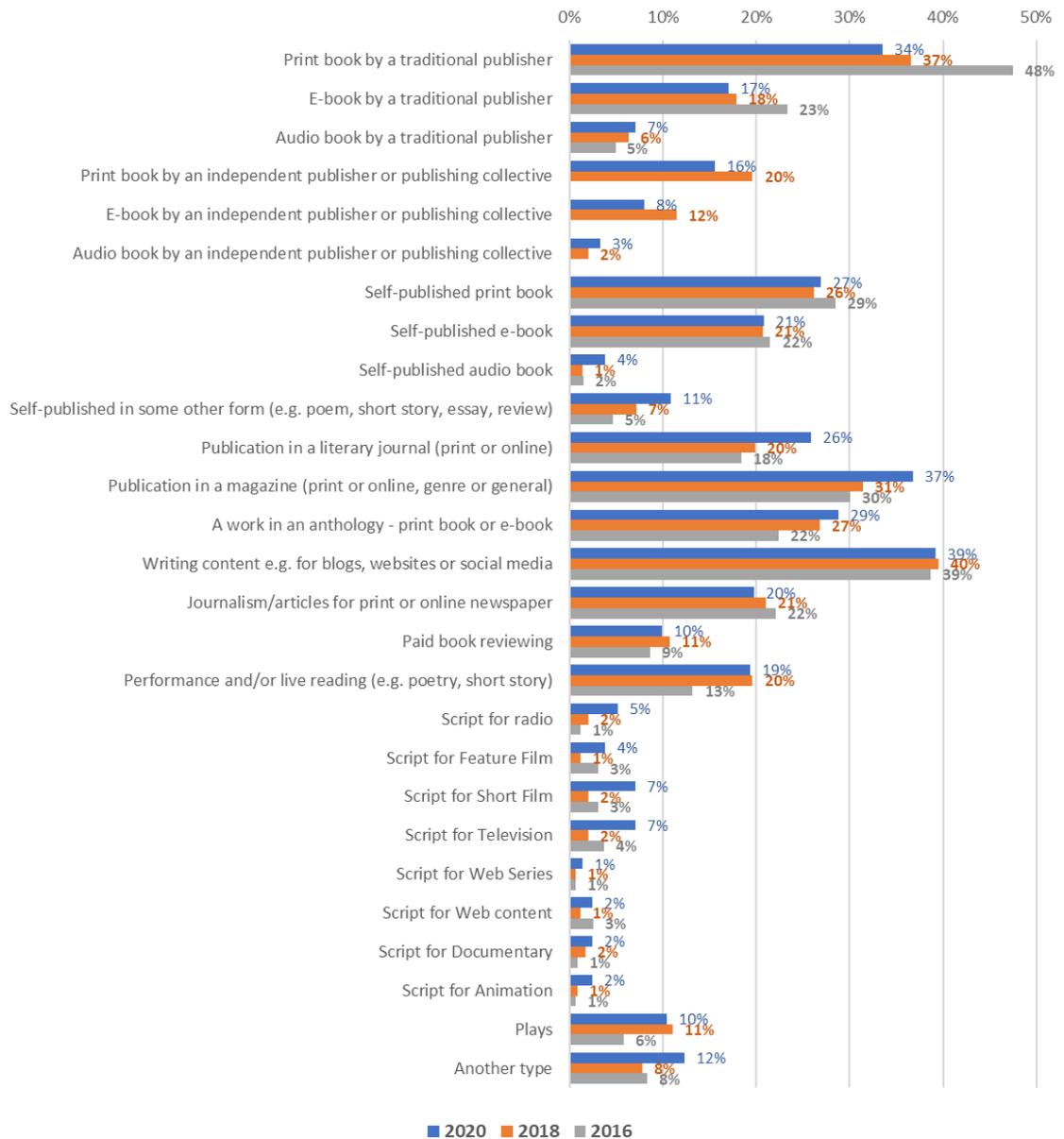
Book authors were the most likely to self-publish.

Writing content (e.g., for blogs, websites or social media) was the most common way to be published, with nearly 4 out of 10 writers reporting they had work published in that format.

As in 2018:

- Close to half of those who had published in printed book form with a traditional publisher had also published in e-book form with a traditional publisher
- Academic and education authors largely published/released work in print book and/or e-book form with a traditional publisher or published in a magazine.

During the past year, in which of the following formats have you had work published or produced?

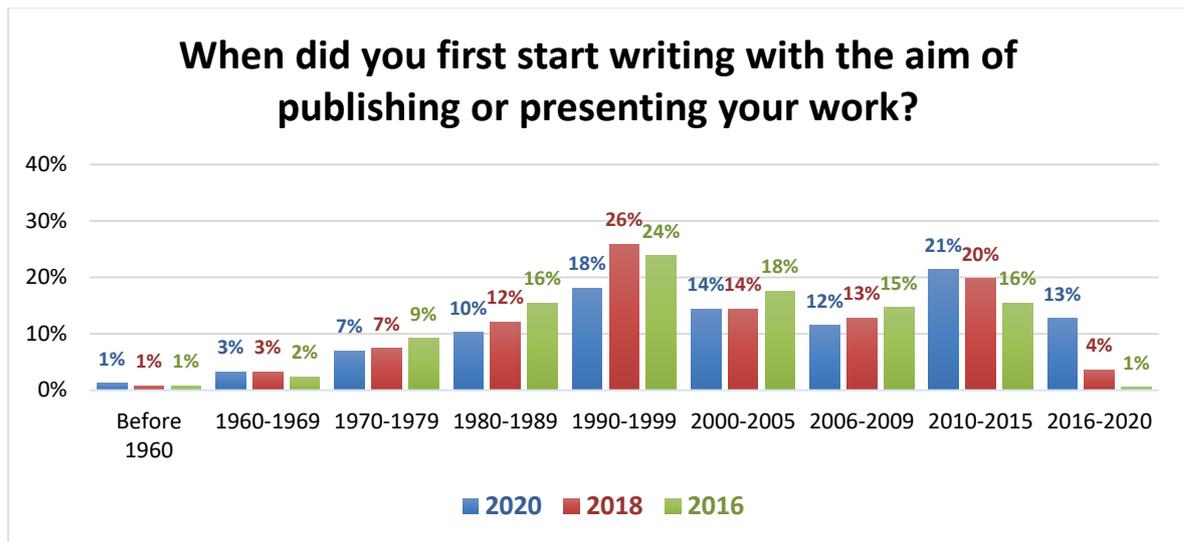


“Other types” nominated included short stories, musical plays, poetry online, creative media production, biographies, poetry writing workshops, poem broadcast in shopping mall, poems on display in art exhibition and game writing.

3. Starting writing

For the past two surveys, the average number of years for which the writers in the survey had been writing was 18. In this survey, respondents reported an average of 22 years.

60% of the sample had begun to write since the year 2000. Note that of the writers who started writing in the peak 1990 to 1999 period, the number still writing appears to have declined by 30%.

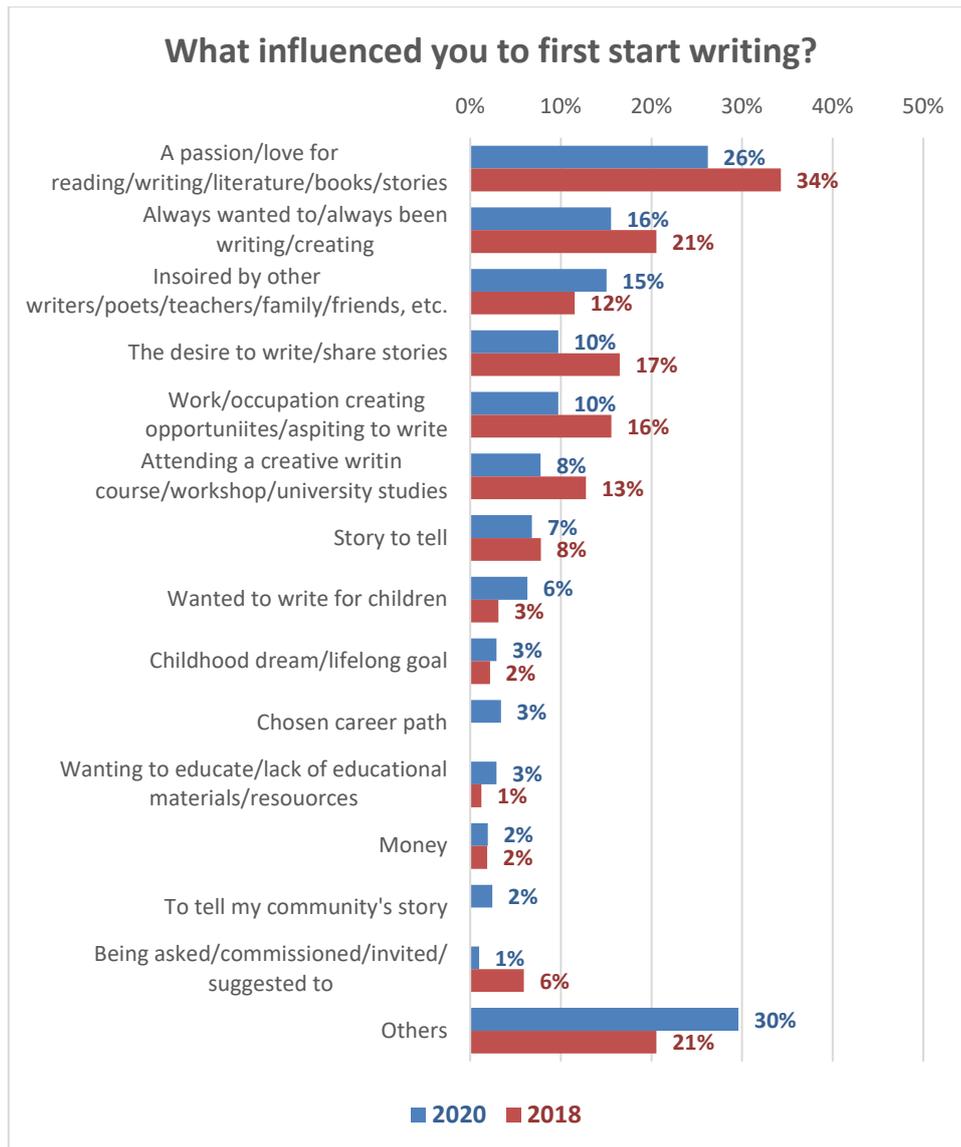


A passion or love for reading, writing, literature, books or stories was again the top influence for respondents to begin writing (25%), but at a lower level than in 2018.

16% of writers said that they had always wanted to write, or had always been writing or creating (21% in 2018). 15% said they were inspired to write by others (other writers, poets, teachers, family, friends, etc.,).

Note that 2% of writers said they started writing to tell their community's story.

As in 2018, only 2% of writers in the sample said they were influenced to first start writing for financial reasons.



A selection of comments follows illustrating the main topics:

- A passion/love for reading/writing/literature/books/stories:**

“I loved reading and I wanted to create my own stories for other people to enjoy.”

“I wanted to write the stories, instead of interpreting and producing others’.”

“It’s a compulsion, I have no choice. I love films and I want to make them.”

“I learned that I was good at it, and I really enjoyed the process and the feeling that comes from people reading and enjoying what I wrote.”

“My love of reading and of theatre, film and television.”

“Love of words/ideas. Seeing the different “flavours” in European countries and their oral history and wanting to capture that flavour of NZ in oral histories.”

- **Always wanting to/always been writing/creating:**

"I have always written stories for as long as I can remember therefore the inspiration has come from within.

"I have always written since I was a child. It was how I communicated with my mother who has a mental illness, and it is how I entertained my family and friends."

"Wrote since I was young."

"I've been writing as long as I can remember."
- **The desire to write/share stories:**

"Wanting to share aspects of my life's work with others and to understand my life story including that of the Holocaust. To change the world (or aspects of it)! I have written many articles and reports as well-unpaid."

"Had no choice - had to write."

"Desire to tell the story. Love of literature. English teaching. Story demanded to be told. To save the history and share issues of social change with readers."

"Not seeing New Zealand protagonists or LGBTQ protagonists in the fiction that I liked to read and realising that no one was going to write the stories I wanted to read unless I did."

"All the stories in my head, and the need to share them."
- **Inspired by other writers/family/poets/teachers etc.:**

"Children's books, films, comics and highly creative teachers influenced my writing career from childhood. I've been an arts practitioner my whole life. I started writing novellas, poetry and playscripts during my childhood in the 1970's. My parents supported my desire to become an artist, and then a playwright and screenwriter. My primary, secondary and tertiary education throughout life has focused on scriptwriting, poetry and the arts."

"Success during my school days. The work of Margaret Mahy inspired me - I always thought I was her character Harry in 'The Tricksters', the 'secret writer'."

"I won an award at the 2016 Cambridge Cooney Short Story Competition; then was awarded a Mentorship through NZ Society of Authors."

"Owen Marshall."
- **Attending a creative writing course/workshop/university studies:**

"I discovered creative writing in high school (had a story in my head, decided to write it down and have never looked back). I loved writing so much that I did a degree in English in the hopes of one day getting published, so my degree was when I started taking it more seriously."

"Studied playwriting as part of a Theatre degree at uni."

"I took a creative writing course with the NZ Institute of Business Studies."

"I have always been a writer (educational) but it wasn't until a life-long desire to write a novel connected with an opportunity to undertake a writing course that I began to consider myself as a creative writer."

- **Wanting to write for children**

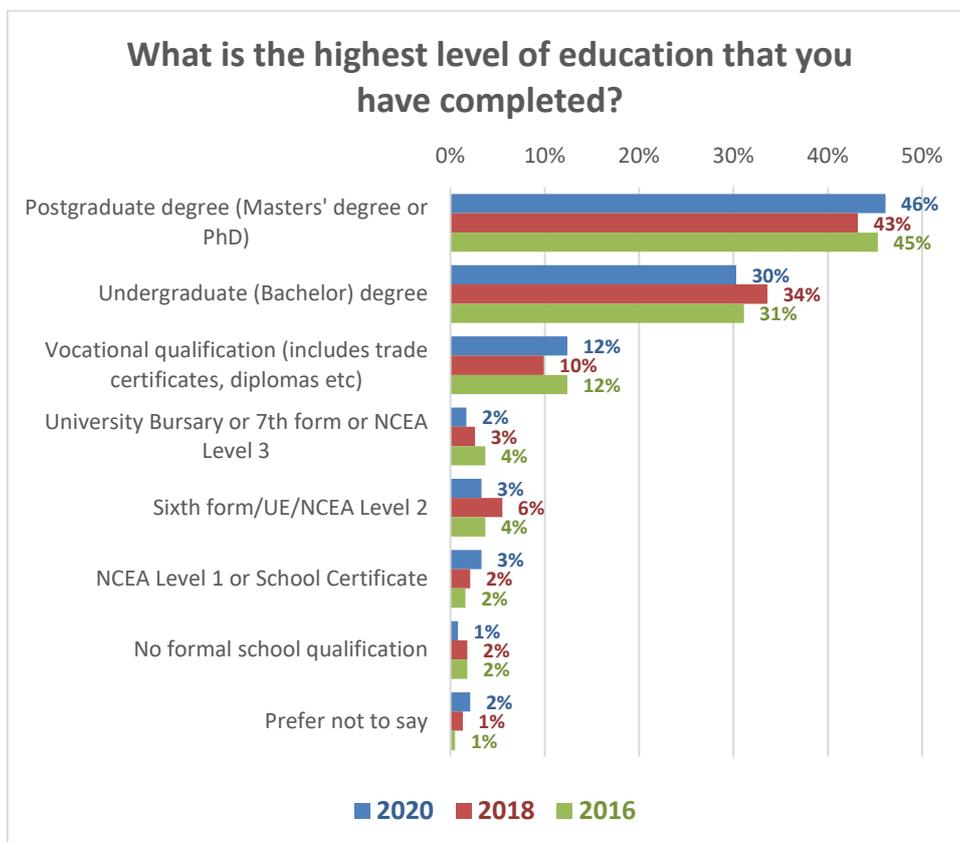
"The pressing need to provide interesting books for beginners: books that were real stories each with a problem and a satisfying conclusion. I began with stories that used fewer than 20 different words. These stories were very different from the "Look, Janet, look" style of the 1950s."

"I have always been a writer - first as a journalist and then in corporate communications. But I decided I wanted to write children's books when my children were born and I started reading a lot to them."

"Awareness of importance of stories and books as my four children grew up. Life-long love of reading, eclectic tastes. Awareness of a new interest in local children's publishing being promoted by Margaret Mahy, Elsie Locke and others."

4. Education and development as a writer

Education levels were similar to 2018 and 2016, with 76% of the sample having a university degree.



90.5% of writers in the sample - up from 83% in 2018 and 73% in 2016 - had undertaken some form of training, workshops, courses, diplomas, degrees, or received mentoring/feedback from more experienced writers or had been part of informal writers' support groups to assist with their development as a writer.

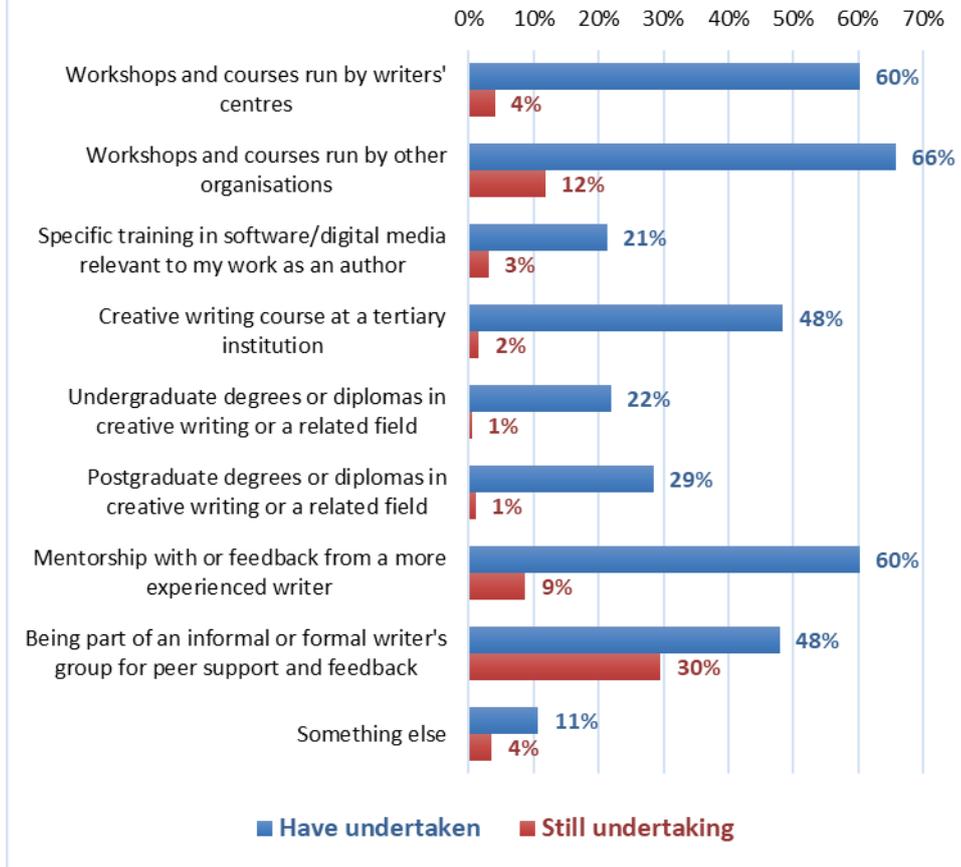
Of those who indicated they had undertaken some form of training in the past, workshops and courses run by writers' centres and other organisations were the main form of education undertaken, as in the previous two surveys.

Mentoring or feedback from more experienced writers and being part of an informal or formal writer's group for peer support and feedback were the other two main forms of training, while the main form of training that writers were still currently undertaking was being part of an informal or formal writer's group for peer support and feedback. Again, these are the same results as in the previous two surveys.

Note that:

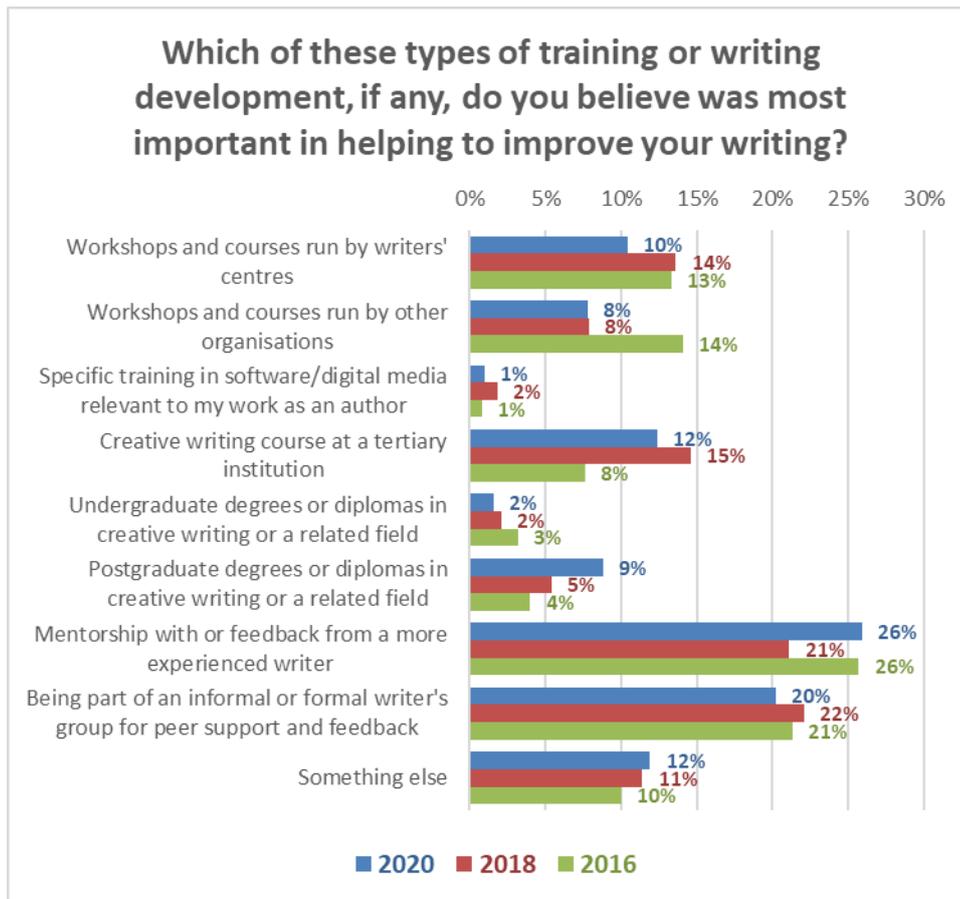
- 60% of writers reported attending workshops and courses run by writers' centres – up from 55% in 2018 and 52% in 2016
- 66% of writers reported attending workshops and courses run by organisations other than writers' centres – slightly down from 70% in 2018 but still above the 63% from 2016
- Attendance at creative writing courses at tertiary institutions increased to 48%, up from 43% in 2018 and 35% in 2016
- There was again a small lift in the percentage of writers receiving mentoring and feedback from a more experienced writer: 60% compared with 57% in 2018 and 51% in 2016
- On average, writers had undertaken 3.7 different forms of training – a similar result to 2018.

Thinking about your development as a writer, what training have you ever undertaken or are you currently undertaking?



“Something else” included website seminars and information, reading, life coach, Oturehua writers retreat, writing group, working in the film and tv industry doing continuity, editor feedback, peer feedback, “The Artists Way” by Julia Cameron (self-guided learning) and informal feedback from peers, editors and publishers.

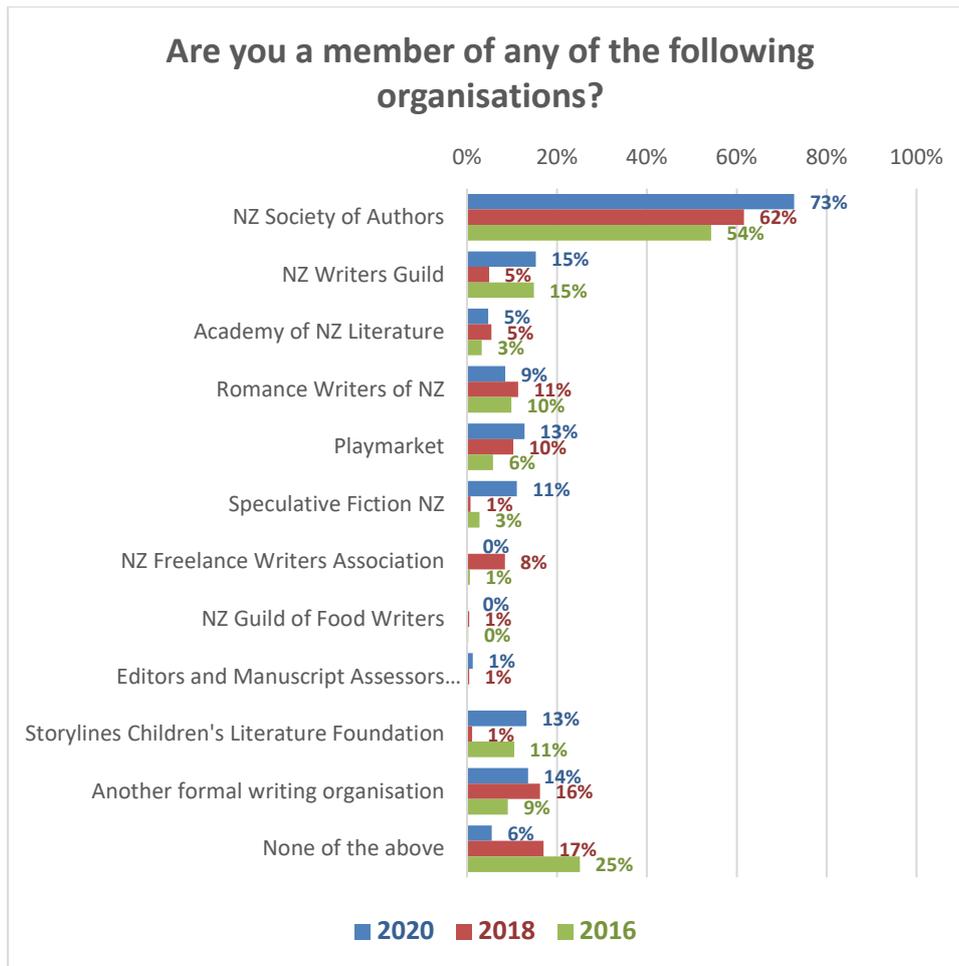
As in the past two surveys, more writers in the sample felt that mentoring or feedback from more experienced writers and being part of an informal or formal writer’s group for peer support and feedback were more important in helping them improve their writing.



“Something else” included Information on websites and in books, festivals, critique groups, NZSA mentorship, online writing courses, online writing communities. books on writing craft, comparing the sub-edited version of my articles against my original version, direct feedback and trialling with target audience, working as a writer/communications professional for ten years, Whitireia diploma in publishing and theatre course at tertiary level.

As indicated in the following chart, participation was down from those who were not members of any of the listed writers’ organisations. Over 70% of the writers in the sample were members of NZ Society of Authors.

While the total number of writers participating was less than in 2018 and 2016, the proportion of members from other writers’ organisations was similar to 2018.



6% were not members of any organisation. On average, writers who were members belonged to 1.5 different organisations.

As in the past two surveys, book authors were most likely to be members of the NZ Society of Authors, with around 65% of children’s book authors and 78% of young adult literature book authors also being members of Storylines Children’s Literature Foundation.

Academic and education authors were more likely to be members of the NZ Society of Authors, unlike the 2018 results, where they were more likely to not be members of any writers’ organisation. The majority of screenwriters belonged to the NZ Writers Guild and the majority of playwrights belonged to Playmarket.

5. Time spent writing

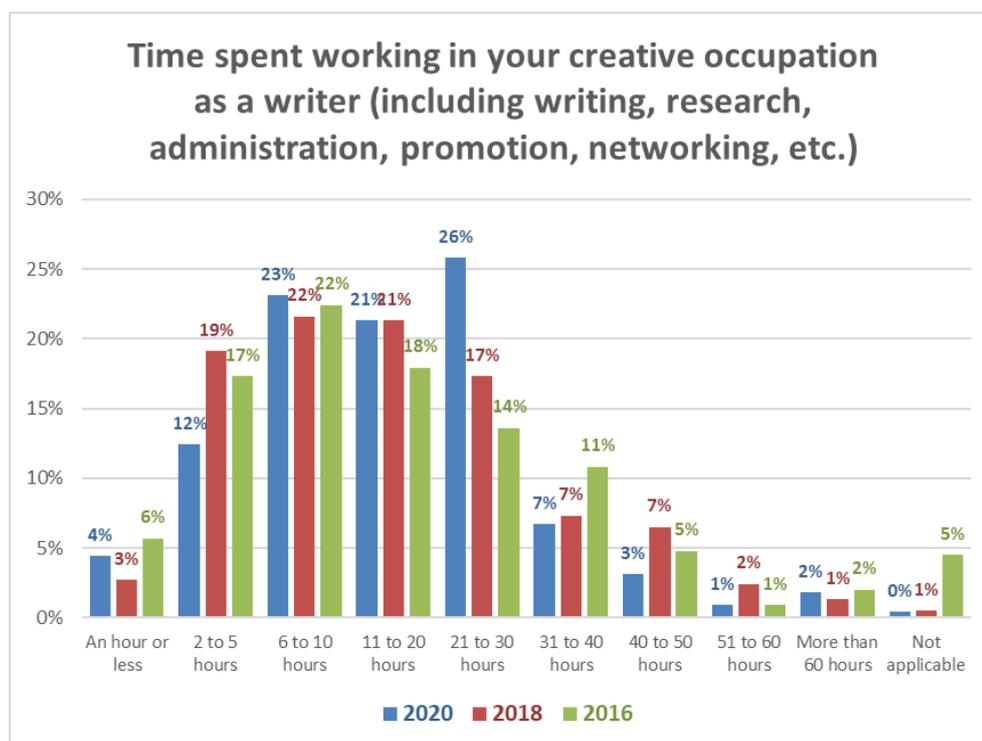
5.1 Average time spent writing

As in 2018 and 2016, and in order to gain an understanding of the allocation of working time by writers to their writing activity, respondents were asked to say how much time each week they spent on average on:

- Working in their creative occupation as a writer (including writing, research, administration, promotion, networking, etc.)
- Working at another occupation which used their skills as a writer (including editing, teaching creative writing, proofreading, writing advertising copy, journalism, book reviewing, etc.)
- Working on creative work in another creative field not related to their writing
- Working at another occupation that unrelated to their writing and unrelated to a creative field
- Studying or undergoing training
- Voluntary or unpaid work

Time spent was recorded using hour ranges. Weighted averages gave approximate average times for each activity.

The following chart shows that, as in 2018 and 2016, the time spent by writers on their “creative occupation as a writer” is still primarily clustered between 2 and 40 hours a week – a wide range - with an average of 17.4 hours a week (compared with 17.7 hours in 2018 and 17.0 in 2016 – given the sample size of these surveys, this can be regarded as “no change”).



Average time spent writing, working, studying or volunteering is shown below. Note that for this survey an altered formula has been used to give a better perspective of the average time spent by writers overall. In the last two surveys the average times spent on activities other than “working in your creative occupation as a writer” were reflective of the time spent by those who actually did those activities. The formula used this year takes into account those who do not spend any time on an activity, and is therefore a better reflection of the overall time spent by an “average” writer.

The 2018 and 2016 results have been recalculated using this new formula.

Overall (and on average), writers spend as much time working at another occupation that is unrelated to their writing and unrelated to a creative field as they do working in their creative occupation as a writer.

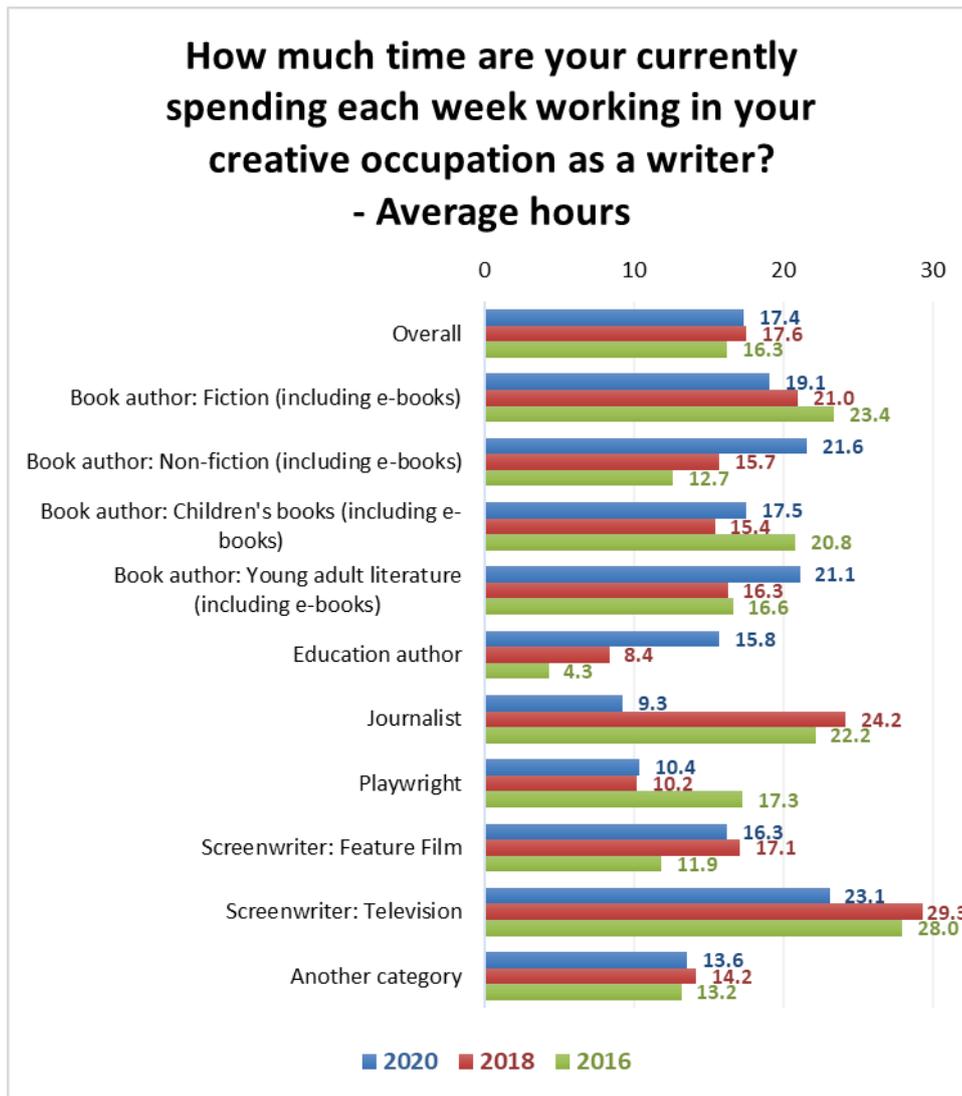
Time spent:	2020 Overall average hours per week	2020 % of total time	2018 Overall average hours per week	2016 Overall average hours per week
Working in your creative occupation as a writer (including writing, research, administration, promotion, networking, etc.)	17.4	33%	17.6	16.3
Working at another occupation which uses your skills as a writer (including editing, teaching creative writing, proofreading, writing advertising copy, journalism, book reviewing, etc.)	9.1	17%	9.4	9.9
Working on creative work in another creative field not related to your writing	5.6	11%	4.4	4.8
Working at another occupation that is unrelated to your writing and unrelated to a creative field	10.3	19%	12.9	15.9
Total working	42.4	80%	44.3	46.8
				4.3
Studying or undergoing training	1.6	3%	1.9	3.2
Managing the "business" side of writing (does not include the actual writing)	3.9	7%		
Voluntary or unpaid work: arts organisation	2.3	4%	1.7	4.3
Voluntary or unpaid work: non-arts organisation	2.7	5%	3.4	
TOTAL	52.9	100%	51.4	54.3

The following chart shows the overall average hours per week in each activity for all writers overall, **compared with the average hours for those who actually undertake an activity.**

Time spent:	2020 Overall average hours - All respondents	2020 Average hours for only those who undertake the activity
Working in your creative occupation as a writer (including writing, research, administration, promotion, networking, etc.)	17.4	17.4
Working at another occupation which uses your skills as a writer (including editing, teaching creative writing, proofreading, writing advertising copy, journalism, book reviewing, etc.)	9.1	12.2
Working on creative work in another creative field not related to your writing	5.6	9.9
Working at another occupation that is unrelated to your writing and unrelated to a creative field	10.3	17.2
Studying or undergoing training	1.6	3.9
Managing the "business" side of writing (does not include the actual writing)	3.9	4.2
Voluntary or unpaid work: arts organisation	2.3	4.1
Voluntary or unpaid work: non-arts organisation	2.7	5.5

Note that “managing the ‘business’ side of writing” was not included in 2018 and 2016.

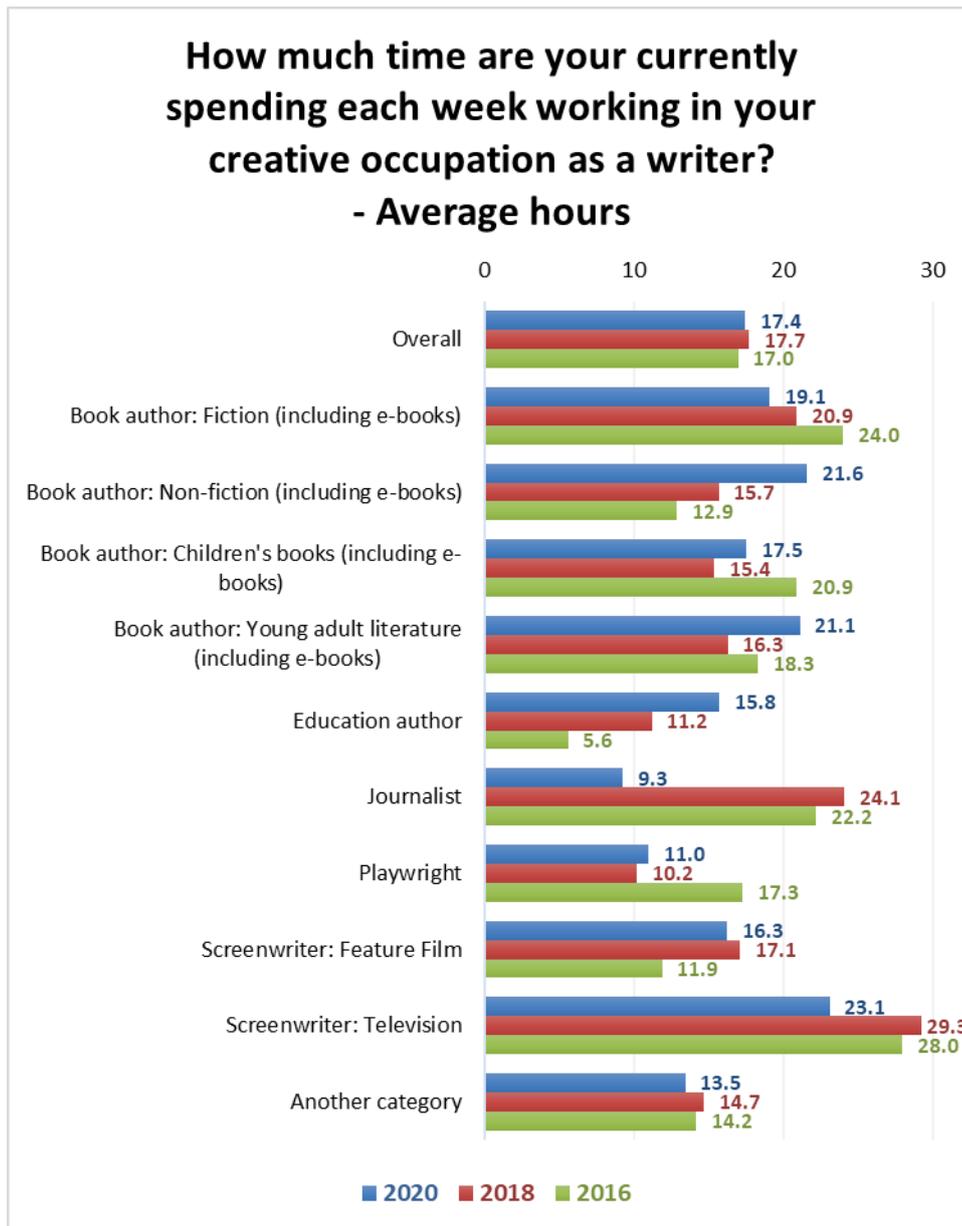
Authors of adult fiction, non-fiction and young adult literature, and television screenwriters tended to spend more time working in their creative occupation as a writer than average. Authors of children’s book spent an average amount of time on their writing; writers in all other categories tended to spend below average time on writing each week.



By primary writing category¹:

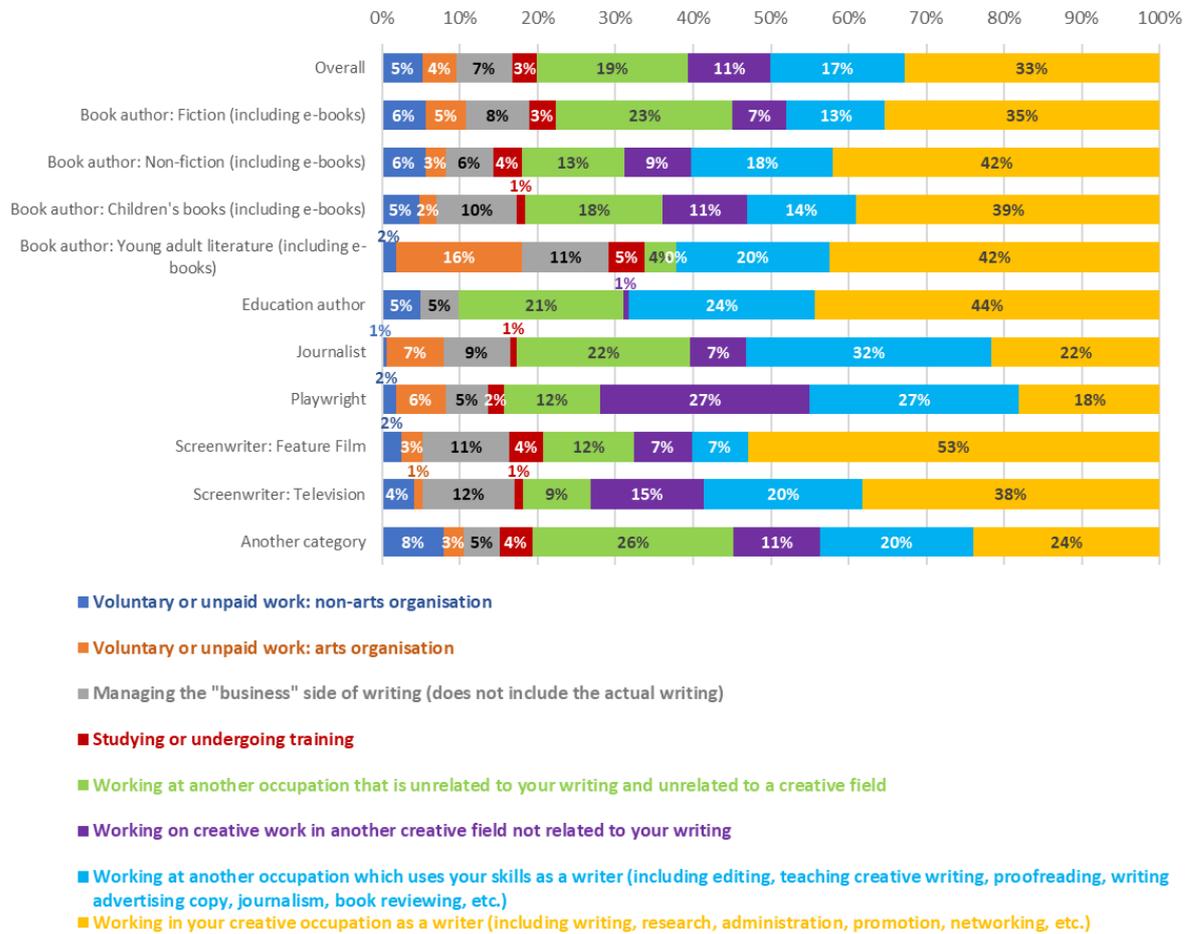
- The apparent decline in fiction authors time spent working in their creative occupation as a writer is not statistically significant.
- Non-fiction authors, authors of young adult literature and education authors had an increase in average time spent working in their creative occupation as a writer. Children’s book authors also show an increase in comparison with 2018 but the increase is not so marked and should probably be regarded as “no change”.
- Journalists and television screenwriters had a decrease.

¹ Screenwriter and academic author categories which had only a few respondents are included in “Another category”.



The average percentage of time spent by writers in each primary writing category is shown in the following chart.

On average, how much time would you currently spend each week on these activities?
- Percentage of total time



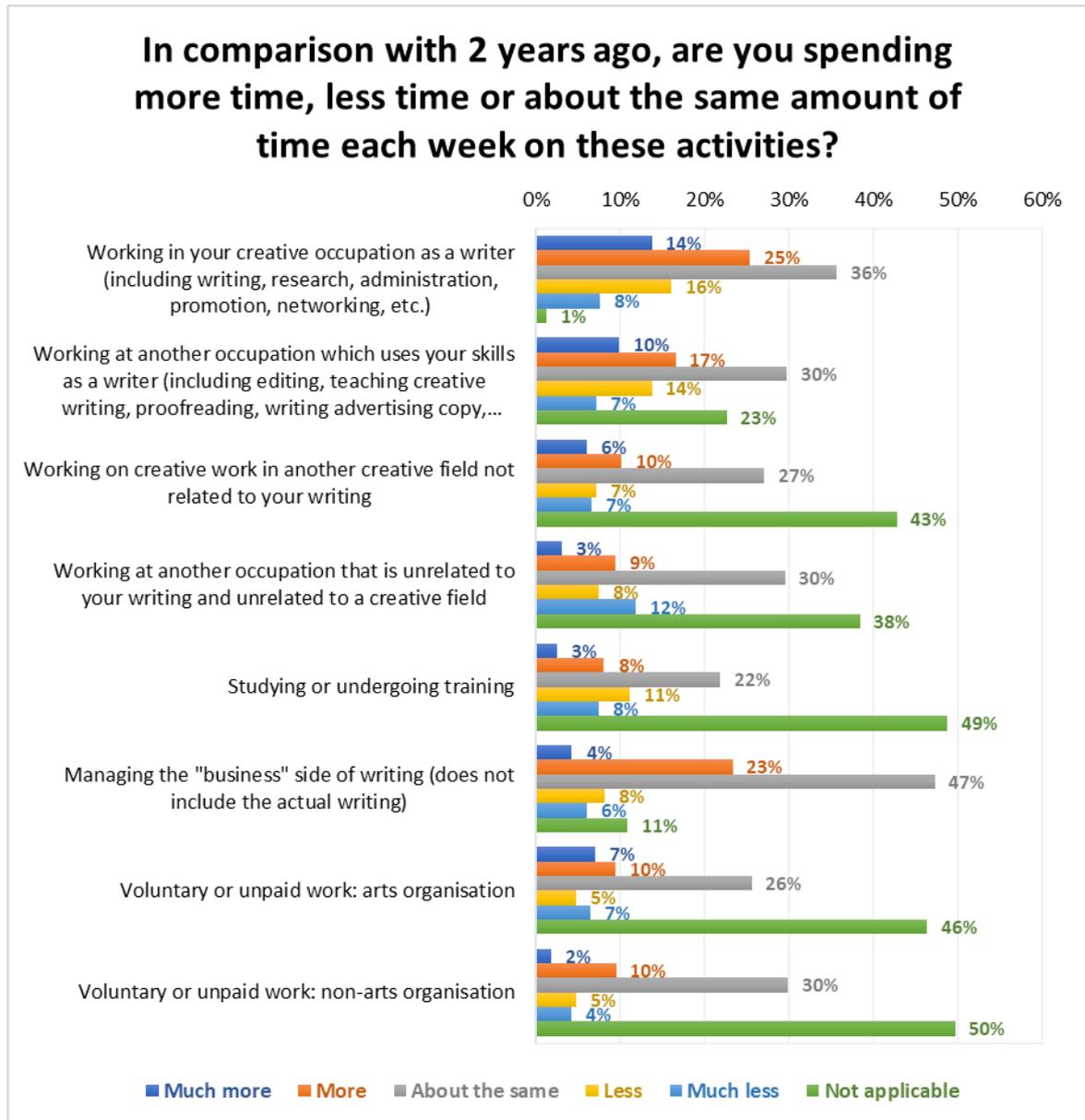
5.2 Change in time spent writing

In addition to asking how much time was spent each week on the various activities, respondents were asked if they were now spending more or less time on those activities than 2 years ago.

As in 2018, the writers responding to the survey overall had spent largely the same amount of time on the different activities measured as two years ago. This is demonstrated in the following chart. However, there were differences between the various writing categories:

- Fiction writers were spending marginally more time working in their creative occupation as a writer, marginally less time working in other areas and more time doing voluntary or unpaid work.
- Non-fiction writers were spending marginally less time writing, more time studying/training and in voluntary or unpaid work, and slightly more time managing the “business” side of writing.

- Writers of young adult literature were spending more time working in their creative occupation as a writer, more time working in another writing occupation or creative field and more time managing the “business” side of writing.

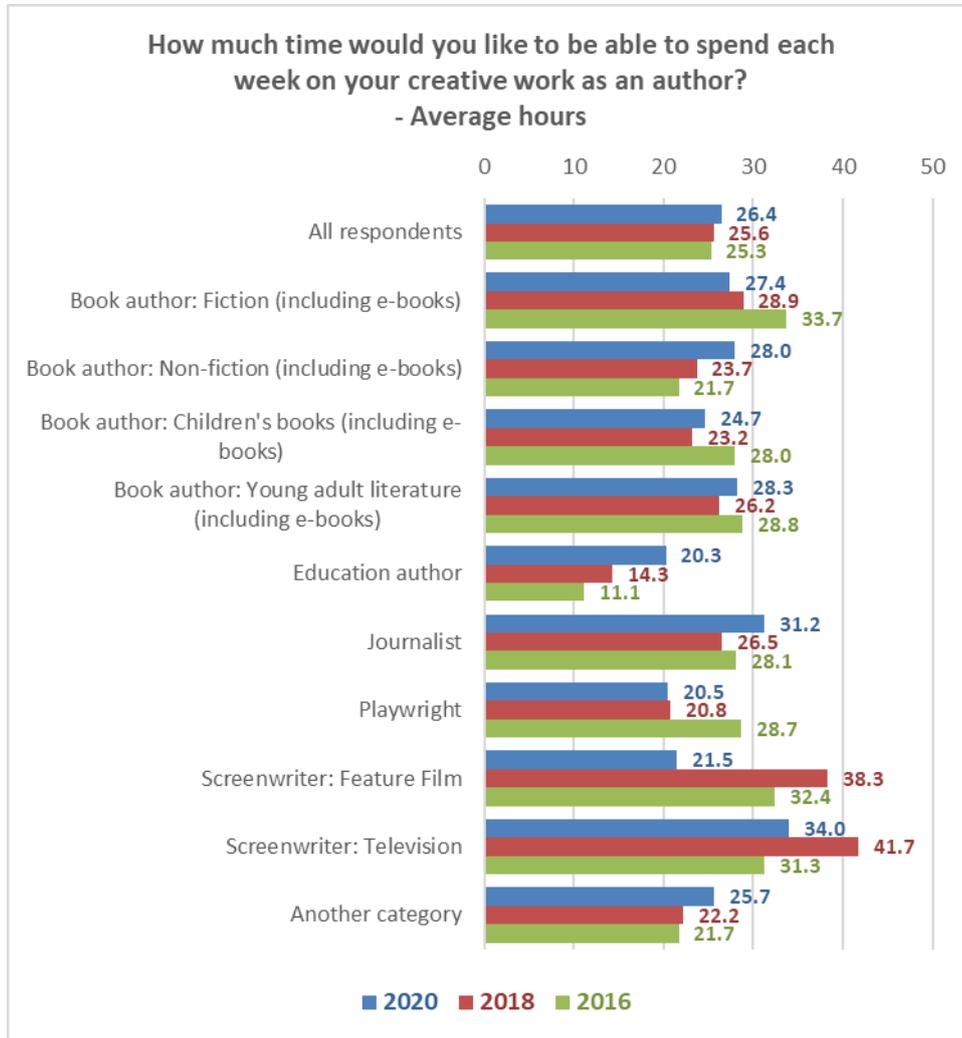


As previously noted, writers were spending an average of 17.4 hours working in their creative occupation as a writer. Compared with 2018:

- The average hours spent among those who say they are spending “about the same” amount of time working in their creative occupation as a writer is 19.3 hours - similar to 2018 (20.8 hours) and up from 17.5 hours in 2016. Those who were doing “About the same” were largely (70%) writing from between 6 hours to 30 hours a week and averaging 19.3 hours.
- Those who say they are spending more time are averaging 17.2 hours. This is similar to 2018 (17.6 hours) and 2016 (17.9 hours). Only 2 respondents who reported working between 51 and 60 hours in the creative occupation as a writer said they were spending more time writing in comparison with 2 years ago.
- Those who say they are spending much more time in their creative occupation as a writer averaged 22.5 hours per week, similar to 2018’s 22.1 hours (27.7 hours in 2016). 71% of this group were currently writing for between 6 and 30 hours per week.
- Writers doing “Less” writing averaged 14.0 hours per week, slightly more than 2018 (12.0 hours) and 2016 (11.3 hours).
- 88% of those writers reporting doing “Much less” writing were currently writing for less than 20 hours per week. Their average of 9.0 hours was above the 2018 result (5.1 hours) and the 2016 result (4.5 hours).

5.3 Preferred time to spend writing

Asked how much time they would like to spend each week on their creative work as an author, respondents reported an average of 26.4 hours – similar to 2018 (25.6 hours) and 2016 (25.3 hours)

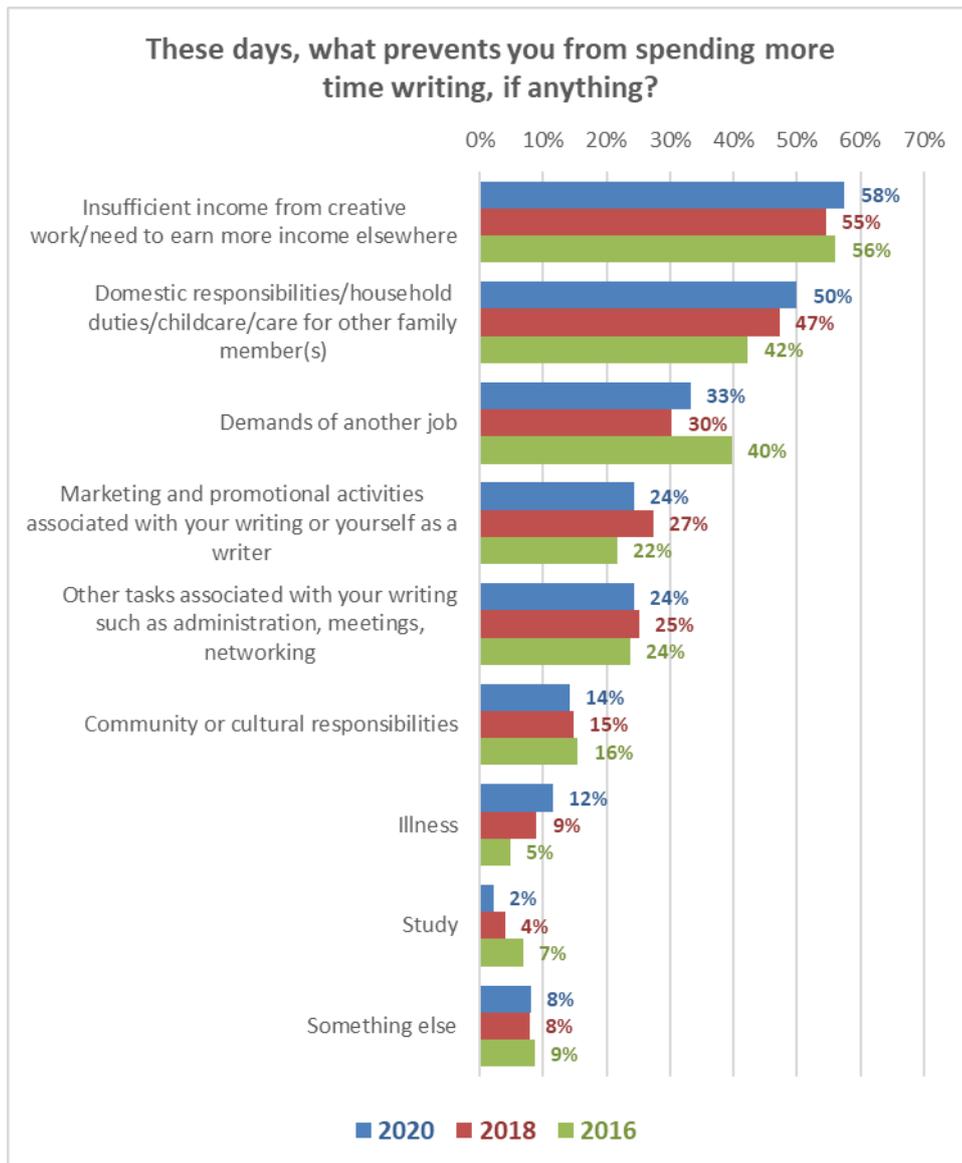


Across the writing categories, there was little change from 2018, the largest one being for feature film and television screenwriters.

5.4 Barriers to writing time

Writers were again asked what they felt the barriers were to spending more time writing. Results were similar to 2018 and 2016.

Female writers selected 2.2 barriers, on average (2.3 in 2018), and male writers 2.1 (up from 1.6 in 2018). As in 2018, insufficient income was more of a barrier for female writers than male writers.



Insufficient income from writing and a need to earn more income elsewhere was a barrier regardless of hours of writing, but declined as education qualifications declined in level.

As in 2018, the demands of another job declined once writing time per week exceeded 20 hours per week, while marketing and promotional activities and other tasks associated with writing generally increased as a barrier as time spent writing increased.

Domestic/household responsibilities declined when hours spent writing exceeded 30 hours. In 2018, domestic/household responsibilities were a barrier regardless of time spent writing.

Other tasks associated with writing (such as administration, meetings, networking) became a more substantial barrier when time spent writing exceeded 50 hours.

“Something else” included managing chronic health problems and disability, managing a football team, fatigue from working a full-time job, lack of progress with agenting/further publishing, lack of publishing opportunities, more work spent on funding applications relating to creative writing, getting old and having less energy to spend on writing, reluctance of publishers to take on NZ fiction, “recently retired, will continue to write but currently happily in recovery mode”, audiences not interested in plays and “I am 89, run my own household and need a nap every afternoon”.

6. Writers’ income

Using income bands, respondents were asked to give their personal and household incomes. Weighted average figures detailed in this section of the report were calculated using the mid-points of these income bands.

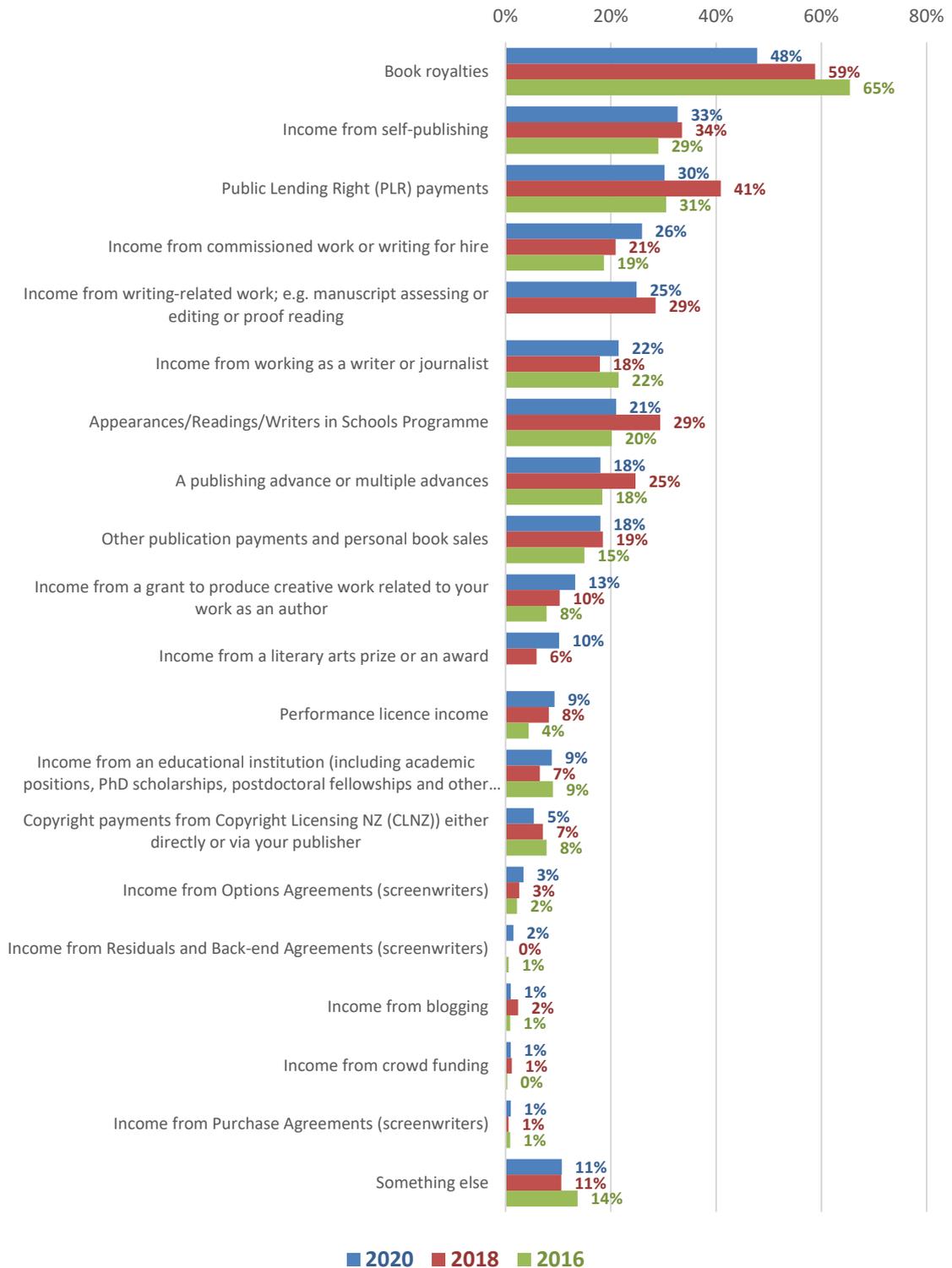
6.1 Source of writing earnings

Respondents were asked how they had received income from their writing during the past financial year. As in 2018 and 2016, royalties were the most common sources of writing earnings, but showed a continuing decrease: from 65% of writers receiving income from royalties in 2016, though 59% in 2018 to 48% in 2020.

Income from self-publishing and Public Lending Rights payments swapped positions with Public Lending Rights payments being received by 30% of writers, back to the 2016 level and owing to a reduction in the percentage of fiction writers receiving Public Lending Rights income.

In other respects, the percentage levels of the various income sources were similar to 2018.

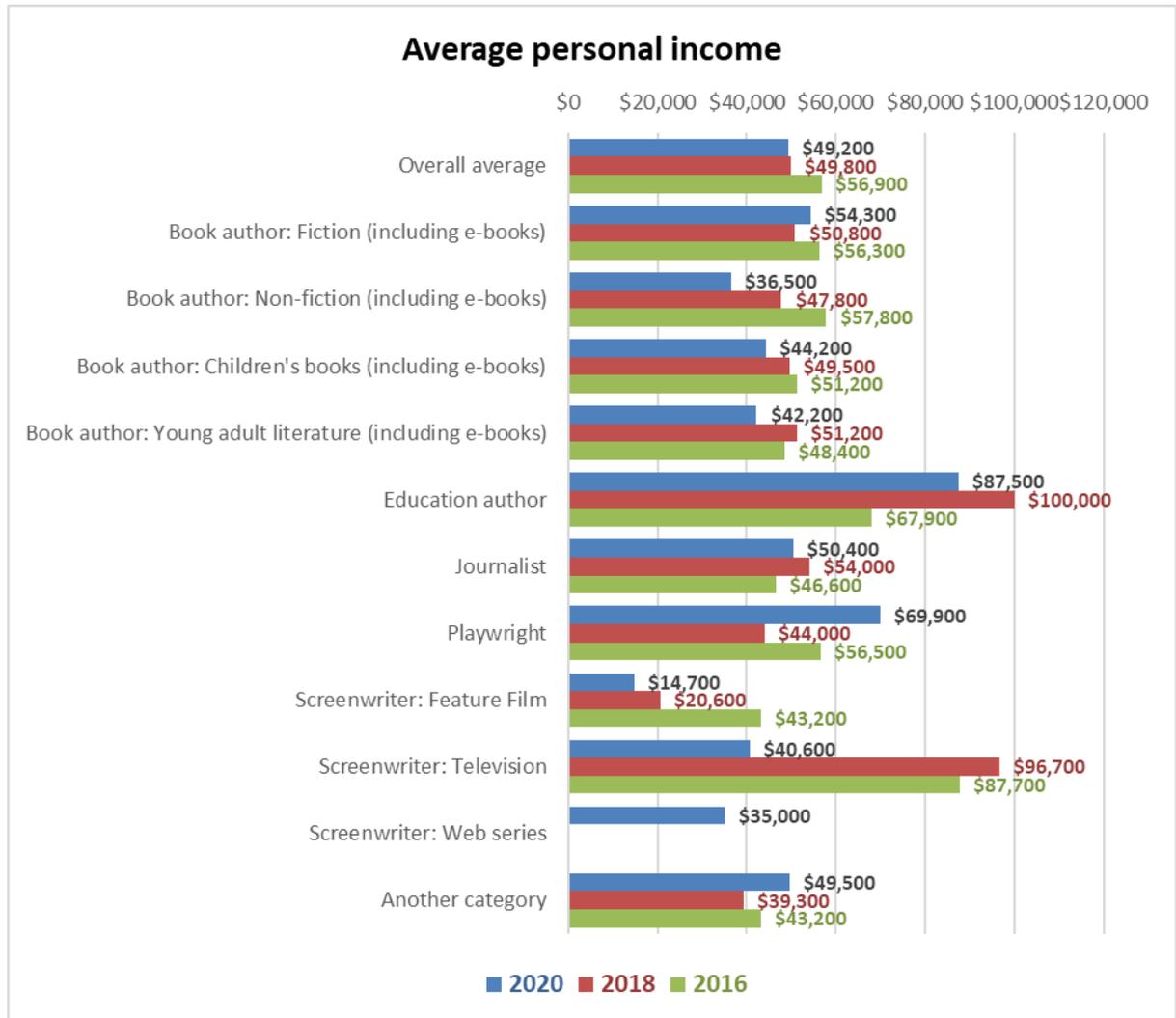
In what ways did you receive income from your writing during the past financial year?



6.2 Personal and household incomes

On average, writers in the survey earned \$49,200 per annum²: 1% lower than 2018's \$49,800 and 14% lower than 2016's \$56,900 per annum.

Female writers in the sample had total personal incomes 5.5% below male writers in the sample. This is an increase on 2018 when the disparity was 27.5%.

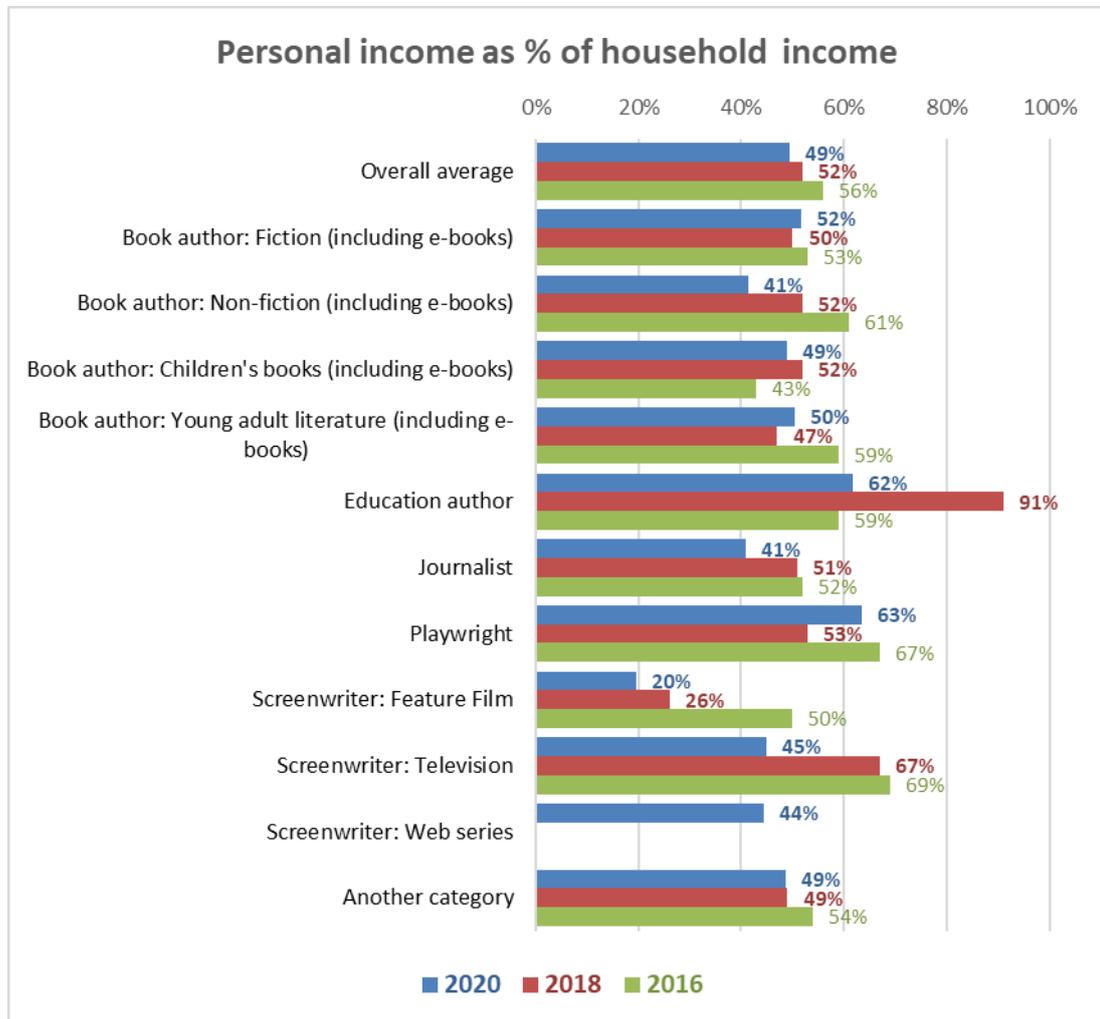


Overall, writers' average personal incomes were 49% of their average household incomes. Male writers' personal incomes were 55% of their household incomes (down from 65% in 2018); female writers' incomes 48% (46% in 2018).

As in 2018 and 2016, the survey did not ask specifically whether writers were the sole contributors to their household incomes. However, the average percentages shown in the following chart suggest that:

² Because of the small number of respondents in each category except fiction authors, results for the primary writing categories need to be regarded as indicative.

- Fiction, children’s and young adult book authors are generally equal contributors to household income, and
- Education authors, playwrights and television screenwriters are generally main income earners.

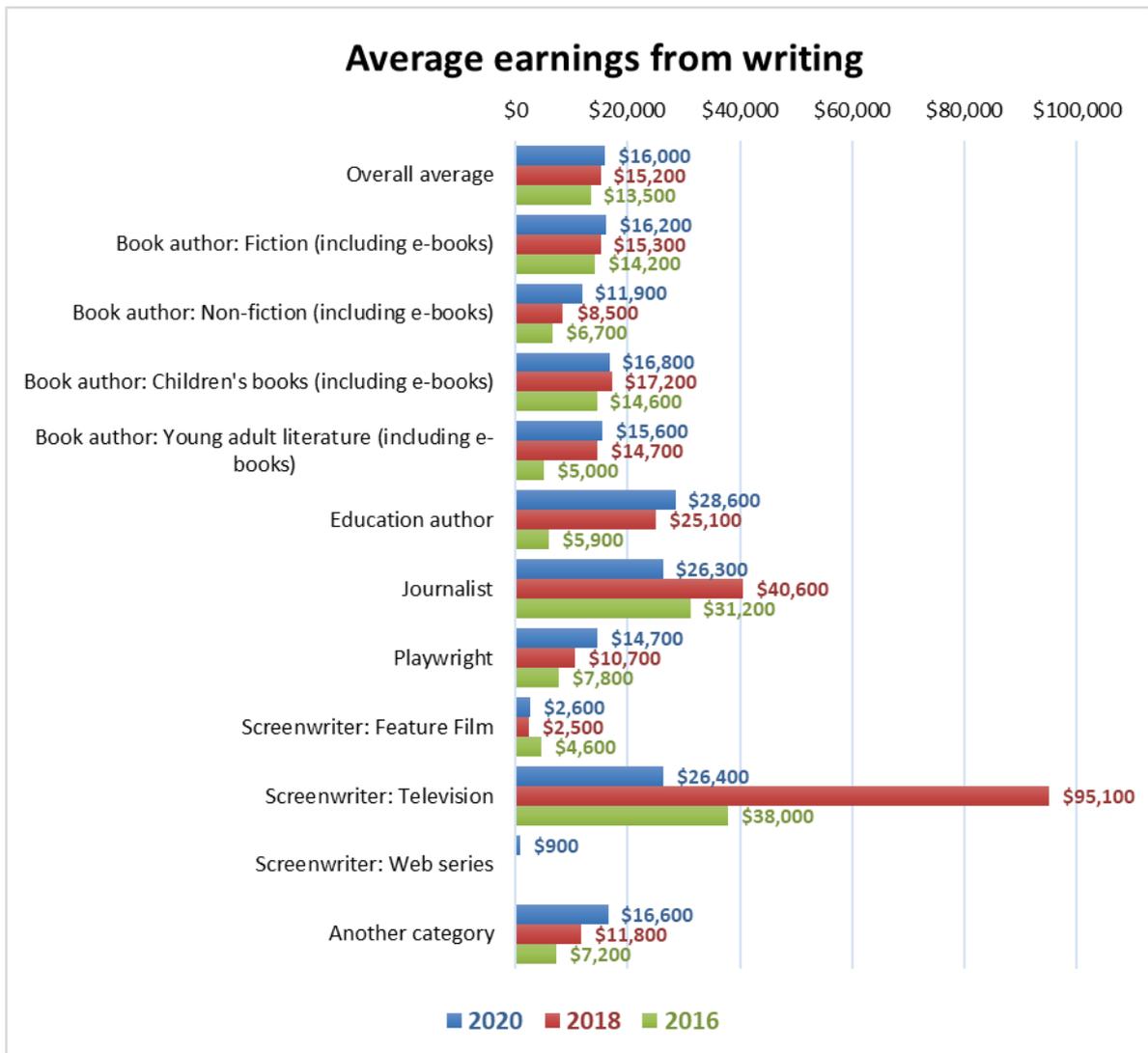


6.3 Income from writing

On average, writers earned 33% of their personal income, or around \$16,000 per annum, from their writing (31% and an average of \$15,200 per annum in 2018; 24% and an average of \$13,500 in 2016). As in 2018, television scriptwriters, journalists and education authors earned the most from their writing.

Female writers earned, on average, \$15,700 from their writing (\$15,400 in 2018, \$13,800 in 2016).

Male writers earned, on average, \$19,700 from their writing (\$10,400 in 2018, \$12,600 in 2016).

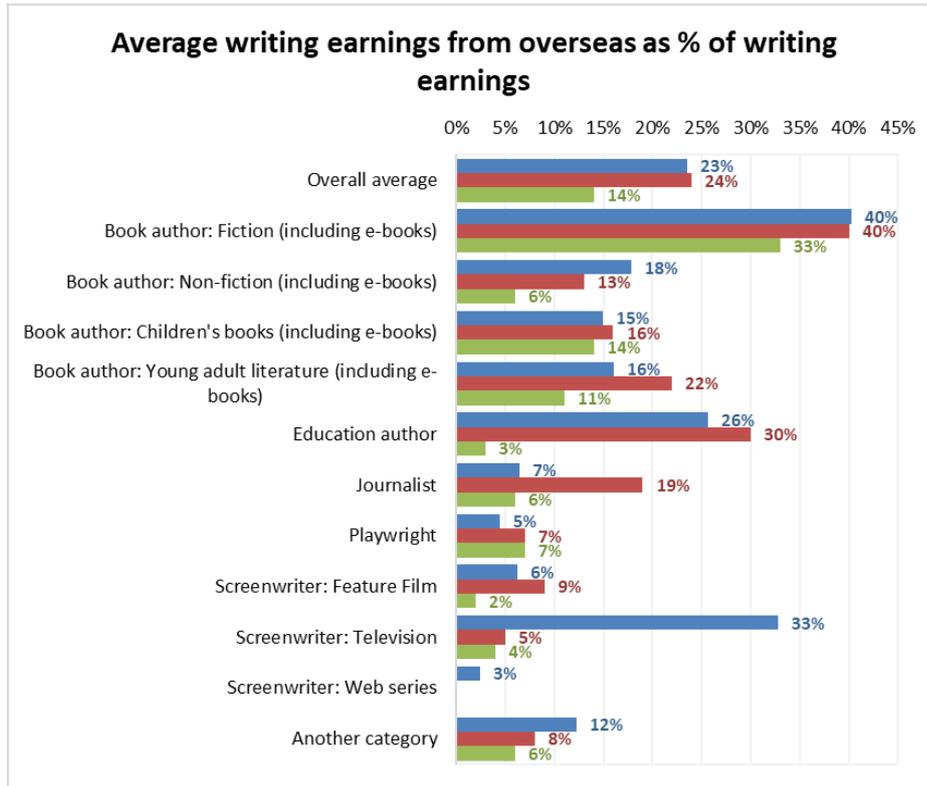


6.4 Overseas income from writing

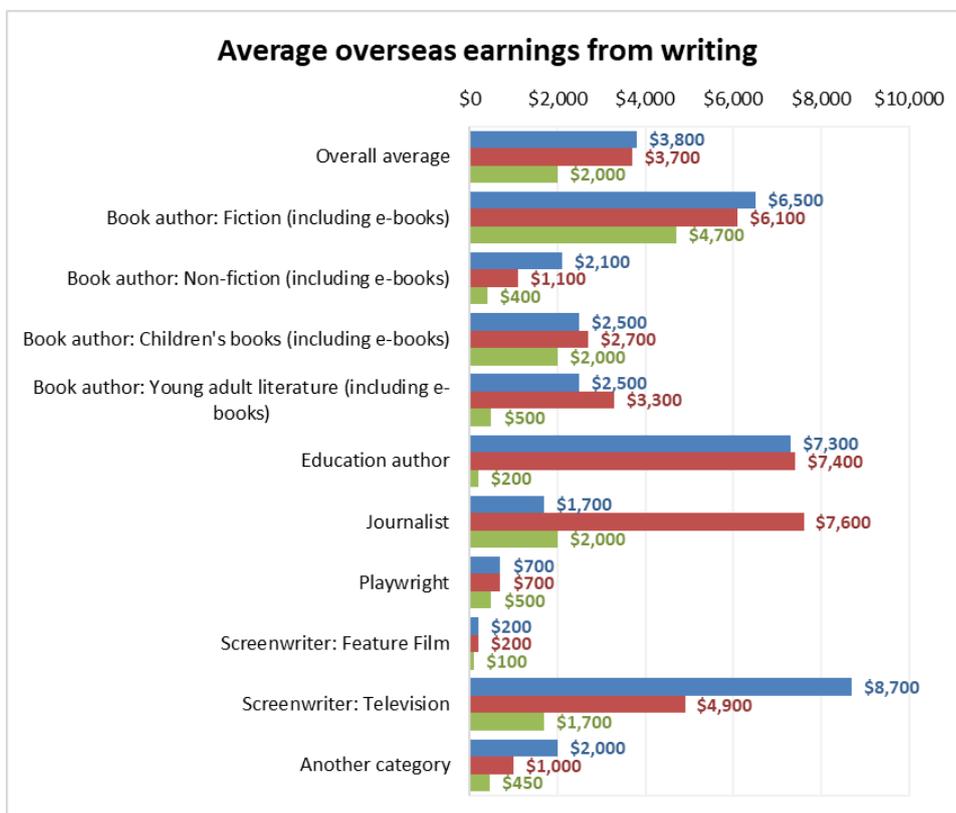
Income earned overseas from writing held at the 2018 level (23% vs. 24% in 2018, 14% in 2016).

Compared with 2016, overseas income constitutes a greater part of all writers' incomes, except for playwrights and television screenwriters. Note the following rises in the following percentages of earnings from overseas:

- 40% of fiction writers income from writing compared with 40% in 2018 and 33% in 2016.
- Non-fiction writers' income from overseas increased to 18% of their income from writing.



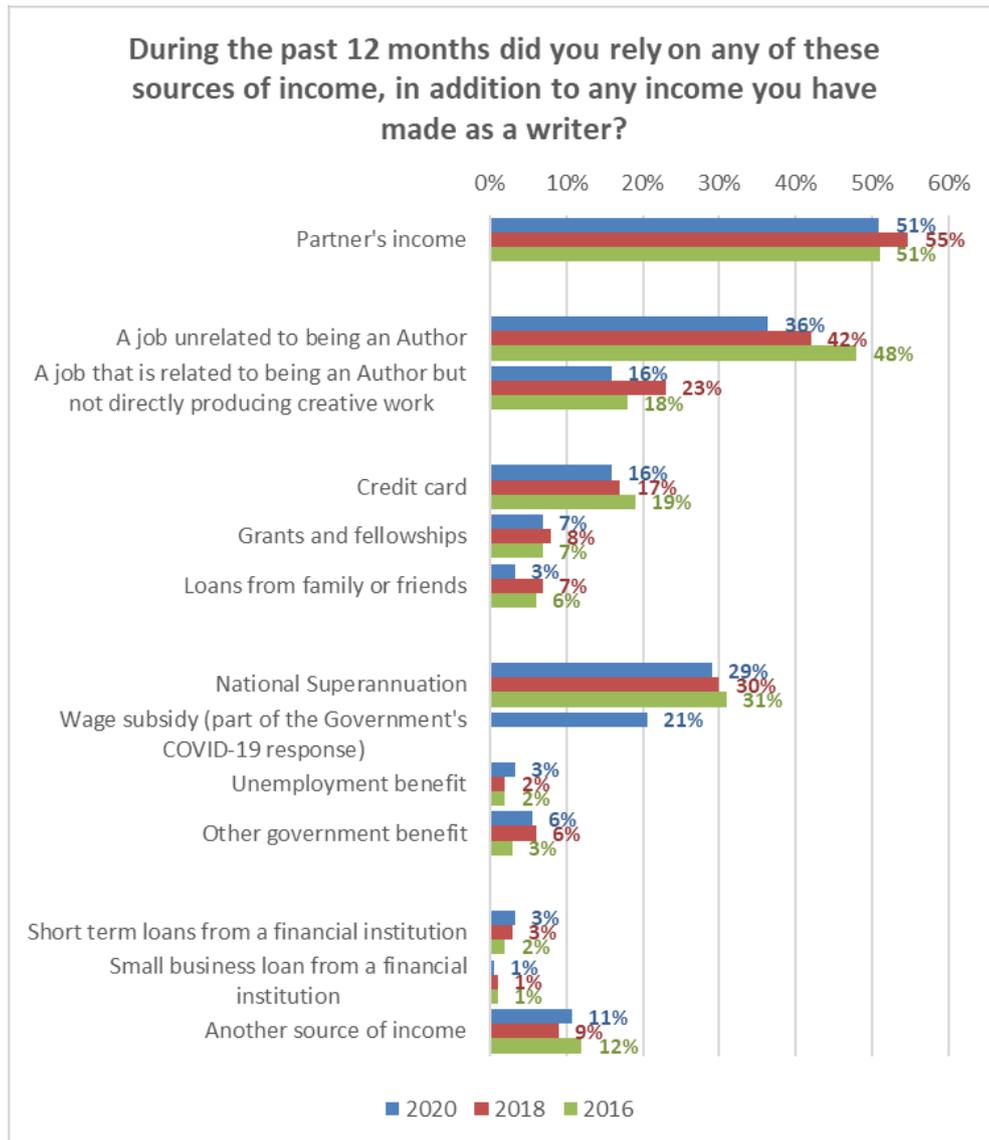
In dollar terms, the average amount earned overseas from writing was \$3,800, no change from 2018 (\$3,700).



6.5 Reliance on other sources of income

As in the past two surveys, half of the respondents said they relied on their partners' income, in addition to any income from writing, and a nett 47% said they relied on having a job.

29% said they relied on National Superannuation; as in 2018 this reflects the age distribution of the respondents, with 31% aged 65 years or over.



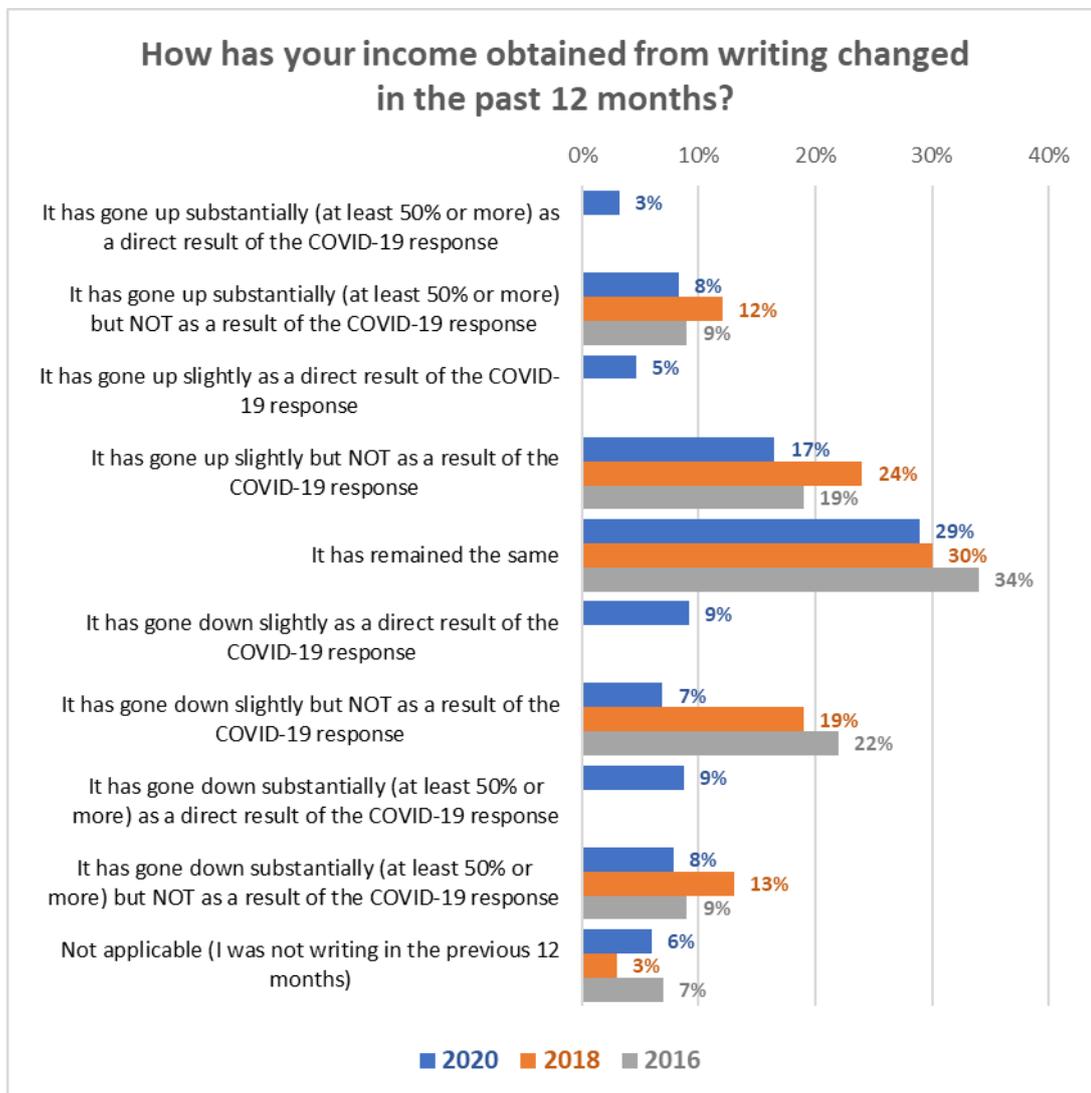
6.6 Change in income

Writers were asked whether their income from writing had changed in the past 12 months.

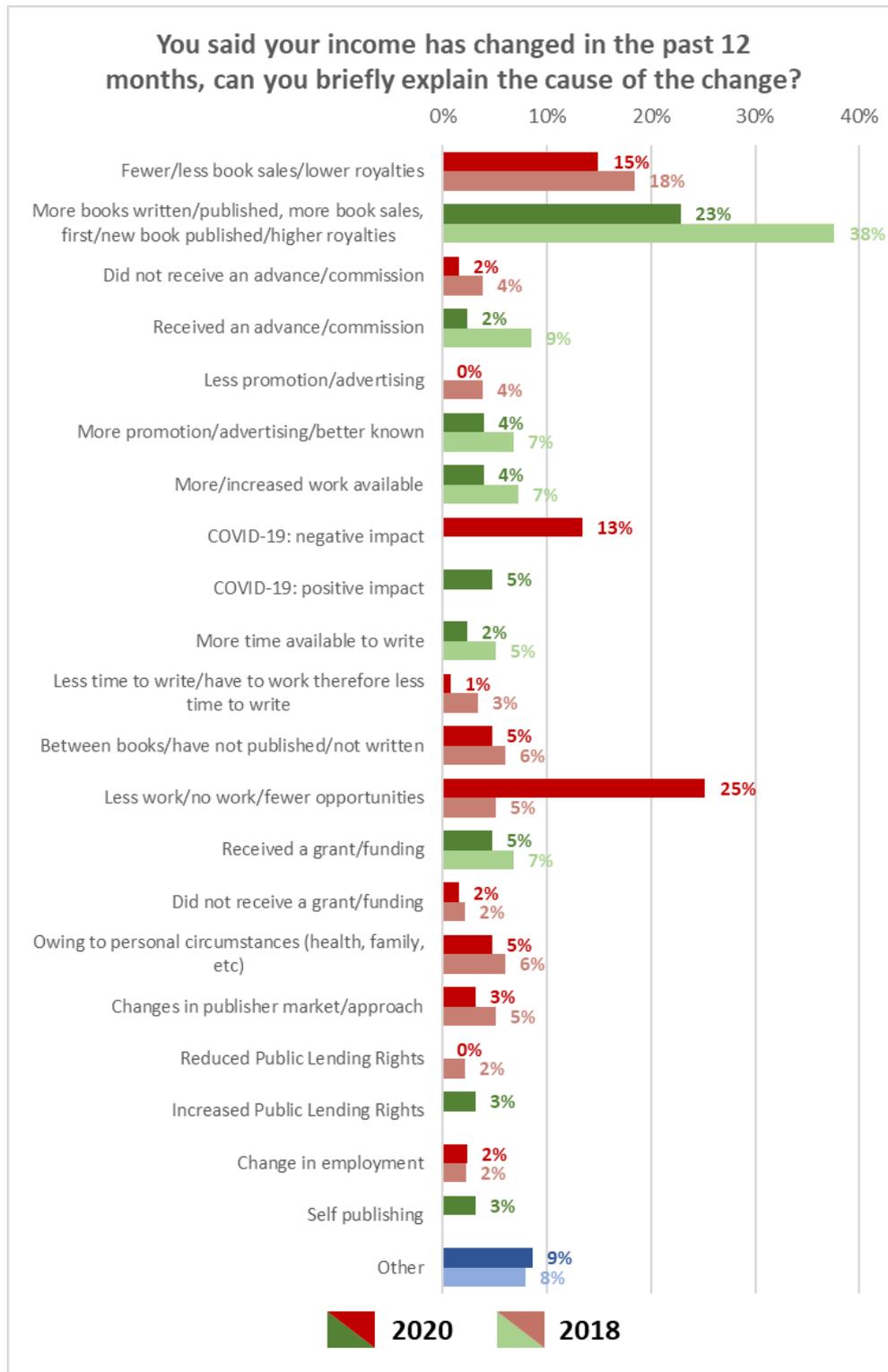
The same overall percentage of writers had experienced an increase as had experienced a decrease: fiction, non-fiction and young adult literature authors were in this situation.

More journalists had experienced an income increase than a decrease, with half of those attributing the increase to COVID-19, while all of those who had experienced a decrease reported that it was as a direct result of COVID-19.

Overall, the COVID-19 response had a negative effect on the income of 18% of writers and a positive effect on the income of 8% of writers. Removing that effect suggests that overall, 25% of writers would have experienced an increase in their income and 17% a decrease.



The following chart summarises the main reasons mentioned for both increases in income from writing (green bars) and decreases (red bars). There is no doubt that the pandemic and lockdowns had a significant negative effect on writers: book events were cancelled, theatres cancelled programmed work, lockdowns affected new book sales, etc.



An illustrative selection of comments under the main topic headings follows:

Decrease in income

- **Fewer/less book sales/lower royalties**

“Did not get the government emergency relief package -- which required applicants could show losses, which was almost impossible for writers to do in the short term as royalty payments are typically received quarterly, or even 6-monthly. Royalties were reduced despite everyone globally consuming arts in lockdown because of all the free 'arts' content available online to consumers. Lots of big 5 publishers gave away books they couldn't sell for free, for example, so smaller presses and self-published work could not compete. Publication of commissioned work / stories which I had written was pushed back due to publisher stress and difficulties with delivery, which meant no payments (since publishers pay on publication) of delayed payments. Many of those projects are still to be realised and I have still not received payment. I have contracts, but no payments. I expect some will wait out the contract, and return the work. Several small presses folded, which meant projects / opportunities closed. Creative NZ and NZ government showed a clear lack of understanding and empathy about the way NZ writers make a living. Only the writers who were already comfortable received support (you had to be making minimum wage and yet it is well known that most writers earn on average \$12,000) and everyone else was hung out to dry. One CNZ advisor even suggested I apply for unemployment benefit -- which would have amounted to fraud, since I wasn't 'looking' for work -- and that isn't how writers find work anyway. Thoroughly disillusioned.”

“Successful series last year, followed up by less-successful series.”

“Royalties from a book diminished a lot.”

“Retail book shops closed and COVID affected group presentations. = no sales.”

“Book came out just before lockdown so sales were negatively impacted.”

“Royalties dropped off, and anthologies and new titles pushed back or abandoned -- authors do not receive payments until the work is published. Have never received an advance. No support through wage subsidy or CNZ top up funds.”

“No royalties received this year.”

- **Between books/publishing cycle**

“I published less writing during 2020 as my teaching work became more intensive and required more time and energy. This resulted in my writing income dropping.

“I left my freelance mag job to write fiction full time, no books released inside 2020.”

“Working on new material in development”

- **Personal circumstances**

“I was not able to supply editorials to the community newspaper during lockdown so did not earn what I would otherwise have earned from writing editorials. The royalties on

my books are getting less each year due to the timeframe since they were published. I also resigned from my editorial writing late last year due to a changing home situation and also so I could focus on my children's picture book writing and self-publishing."

"Retirement from my professional income and my column writing."

"At age 81 am not producing as much work or applying for support."

- **Less work/no work/fewer opportunities**

"I had been running regular travel writing workshops, these stopped due to COVID. No market left for travel writing articles due to covid. Trade published and a self-published book were both due to be launched during lockdown and had to be done online. This affected sales."

"Everything I was working on was cancelled in 2020: publishing, an overseas academic conference with a paper being presented and published, and also a play being produced. It hasn't been good year."

"Had several stories published last year at semi-pro rates but that publication has folded and I haven't had stories accepted at any of the higher paying venues."

"Book events were cancelled due to COVID and travel restrictions. Also, I released a new book and wasn't able to promote it as usual due to COVID. My income suffered due to these issues."

"Fewer stories published with fewer words (per word payment)."

"Lost a couple of freelance contracts."

- **Change in publisher market/approach (5%):**

"One publisher I was working for went bankrupt and my series with them was cancelled. I was not paid for the last 6 instalments in the series."

"Large publishers trimming their lists of NZ books to publish, relying more on sales of overseas titles. "

"Publisher (small press) pulled my books in January 2019 due to lack of sales/reach. Some remaining royalty payments trickling through."

Increase in income

- **More books written/more book sales/first book published**

"Two-book publishing deal with UK publisher, one book published in US."

"Published my first book and working on my second."

"Published debut short story and have started earning royalties, where previously I was unpublished."

"Published by more journals that pay a small koha, receive a higher university stipend."

"Published an extra book."

“My first book was launched in November 2019, so all my earnings (less the advance) have been received over the past 12 months. This includes fees from festivals, schools and other speaking events.”

“More commissions and more writing opportunities based on awards.”

“I produced my second novel, a sequel, and had much more understanding of pre-marketing/pre-ordering, website and Facebook to drive sales. I was able to have volunteers to do invoicing and distribution.”

- **More promotion/advertising**

“New marketing opportunities have widened access to my books.”

“More books published. Better marketing.”

“I self-published my 2nd novel and did pre-sales marketing. I knew much more about marketing and sales than when publishing my 1st novel in 2017.”

“More promotion. More marketing. Good exchange rate.”

- **More work/increased work available**

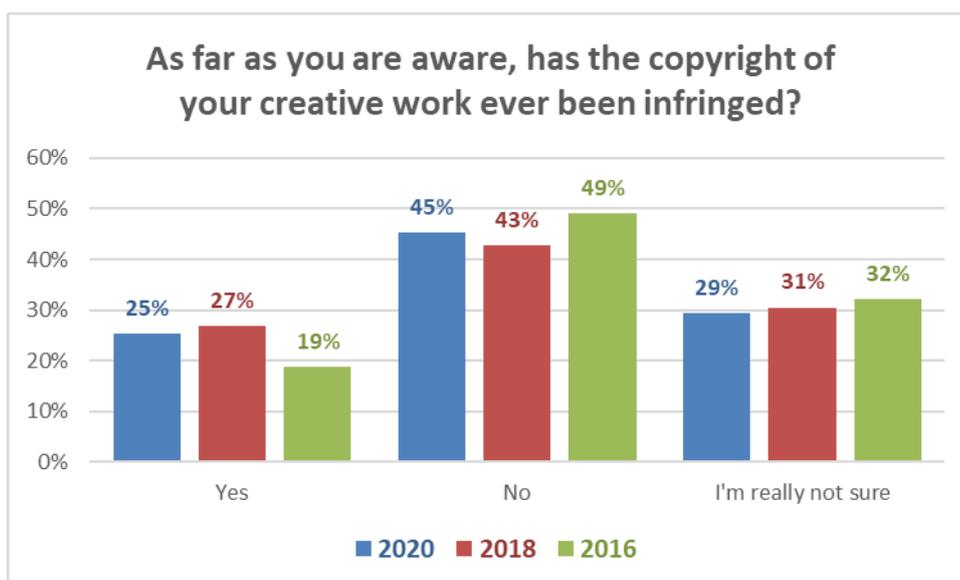
“Two new publishing contracts.”

“I've taken on more web writing work as my book-related income is tiny.”

“I was studying writing fulltime last year. Now I am earning some money from writing.”

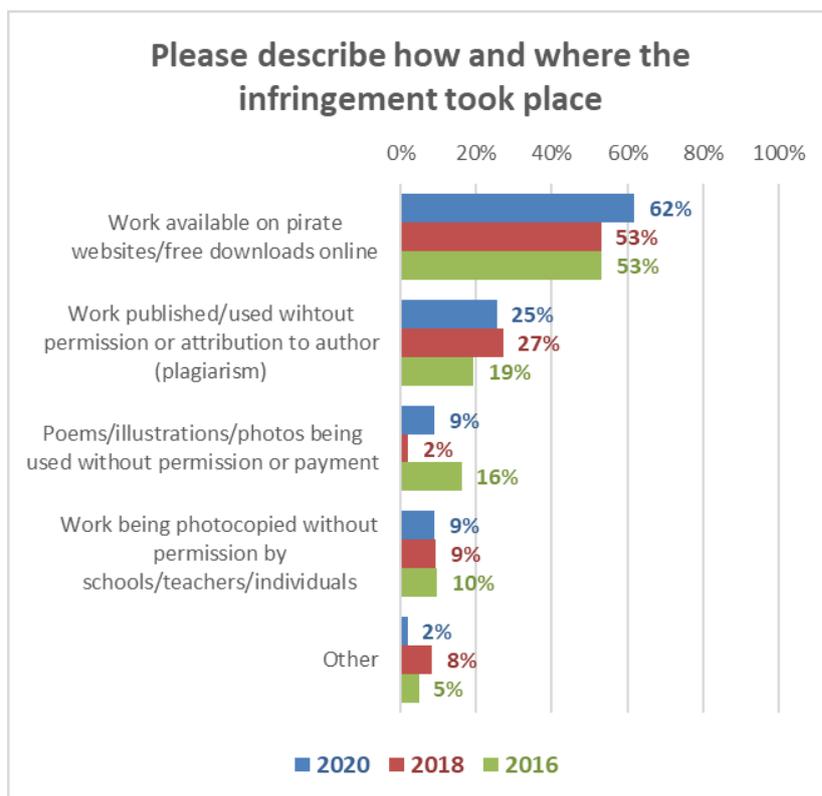
7. Copyright Infringement

Overall, 25% of writers in the sample reported having had the copyright of their creative work infringed in the past, a similar result to 2018.



Those more likely to have their copyright infringed were young adult authors (50%)³, fiction book authors (30%), journalists and feature film screenwriters (both 29%)³. Those most likely to be unsure were education authors (50%)³, non-fiction authors (40%) and television screenwriters (44%)³.

Writers who indicated that the copyright of their creative work had been infringed in the past were asked to describe how and where the infringement took place. As indicated in the following chart, 6 out of 10 of the writers – up from 5 out of 10 in 2018 and 2016 – said their work was available on pirate websites/free downloads online. 4 out of 10 said their work was being published/used without their permission or attributed to them.



A selection of comments under the main topics follows:

- **Work available on pirate websites/free downloads online:**

“Seeing my books on pirate websites.”

“Pirates on a torrent site. I have a google alert that tells me when my author name pops up in searches.”

“Online versions of work copied without permission.”

“Online pirate sites. Authors in my network alerted me to wide scale piracy. Notices were issued but sites reoffend.”

³ Indication: small base

- **Work being published/used without permission or accreditation to author (plagiarism):**

“Two poems published in an anthology without copyright.”

“Rights to film infringed - discovered illegal distribution through the internet.”

“Constantly plagiarised in podcasts.”

“A writer in NZ plagiarised some lines from a short story I had published in the UK and which won an award. I discovered the plagiarised version when I saw it published in the Listener. I contacted the editor and the writer apologised.”

“It has happened numerous times over the years. The worst case occurred when someone in Poland translated a book of mine into Polish and published it under his own name. My publisher decided it wasn't worth pursuing the matter, so he got away with it.”

- **Work being photocopied without permission by schools/teachers/individuals:**

“Local school photocopied whole book - long time ago.”

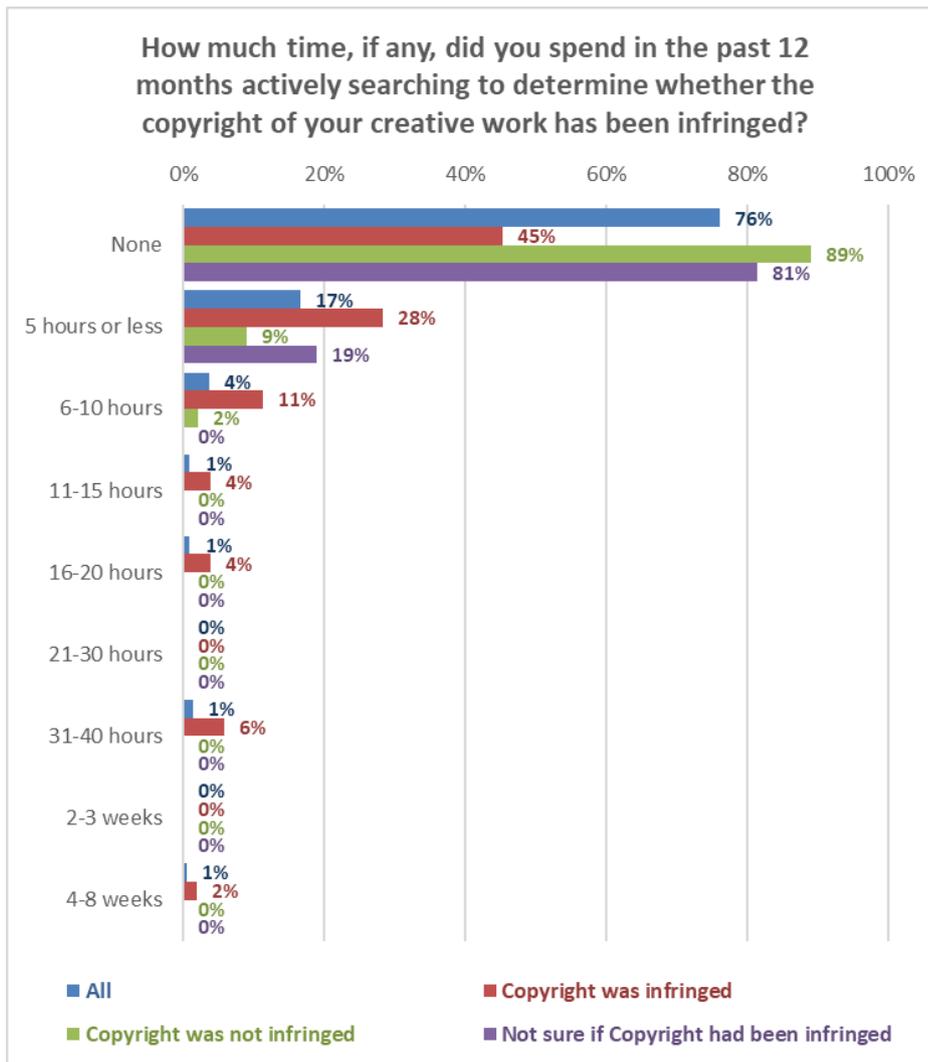
“I know that institutions have photocopied my work and distributed it to students. I have heard about it.”

“Teachers in education photocopying my books.”

7.1 Time taken in active search to determine copyright infringement copyright

76% of respondents had not spent any time in the past 12 months in active search to determine if their copyright had been infringed. This included 45% of those who reported that their copyright had actually been infringed at some stage (i.e., not necessarily in the past 12 months).

Those who had searched in the past 12 months had, overall, spent an average of 11.2 hours searching: 17.1 hours, on average, for those whose copyright had been infringed at some stage; 3.5 hours for those whose copyright had not been infringed and 2.5 hours for those who were not sure whether their copyright had been infringed or not.



7.2 Action taken to enforce copyright

Overall, 16% of respondents said they had taken some action to enforce copyright (19% in 2018): 52% of those who had identified that the copyright had been infringed (down from 62% in 2018) had taken some action to enforce it, along with 4% of those who had not had their copyright infringed and 5% of those who were not sure.

Of those who had taken some action:

- 31% reported issuing DMCA/takedown notices.
- 28% had contacted the offending party themselves.
- 14% had taken action via their publisher.
- 8% had involved a lawyer.

The 48% who had identified that their copyright had been infringed, but had not taken any action, were asked why that was.

30% said they felt that taking action was not a good use of their time or not worth the time.

“The time it would require to address the infringement would be far more detrimental than the infringement itself.”

“Pointless.”

“Not worth it.”

“Not a good use of my time. Don't see it as a particular threat to me as an author.”

“I don't have the time or legal knowledge needed to hunt down every possible pirate site and send them take-down notices as I am a one-person writing business. If I ever reach the point of being able to hire an assistant, I may pay them to do it. At the moment, the time I can carve away from my non-writing day job is better spent on actually writing.”

26% said it was “too hard” or too much effort was required.

“Too much effort needed to track it down - plagiarist was in Australia but I am in NZ.”

“Too hard. I spoke with other published authors about it. They too have to deal with this problem.”

“Too hard. I have mentioned it to CLNZ but I don't know if they took any steps about it.”

“Too difficult to determine where and when copyright of my books is being breached and too hard to identify who. Also, I am one person. It would be too costly for me to personally take legal action and the publishers of one of my books is now based in Australia and another publisher has closed its doors.”

“I simply don't have the time or energy. I hate not spending any time I've got to write doing something else. It's already taken me six years to get halfway through writing my 3rd book because... time, energy, life... I'm working so hard at everything trying to get to the point where I have "earned" my writing time/space... Plus, no money to pay someone else to do it. I used to use Blasty when it was free.”

Other comments included:

“They are pirates. They are aware they are breaking the law and they don't care. Torrent sites also allow for some anonymity, so it isn't like I can find the actual person who first infringed on my copyright.”

“No point - there will always be another pirate. Also, most pirate sites are risky (possibly containing viruses) and will do little even if issued a notice.”

“In some cases, the poems were reproduced on blogs in the context of discussion of poetry, and I felt there was cultural value associated with this use, so wasn't moved to take action. In others, considered it was the responsibility of my publisher to follow up.”

“I'm fine with pirated copies of my books being available, as discovery is more of a concern to me than so-called 'lost sales.'”

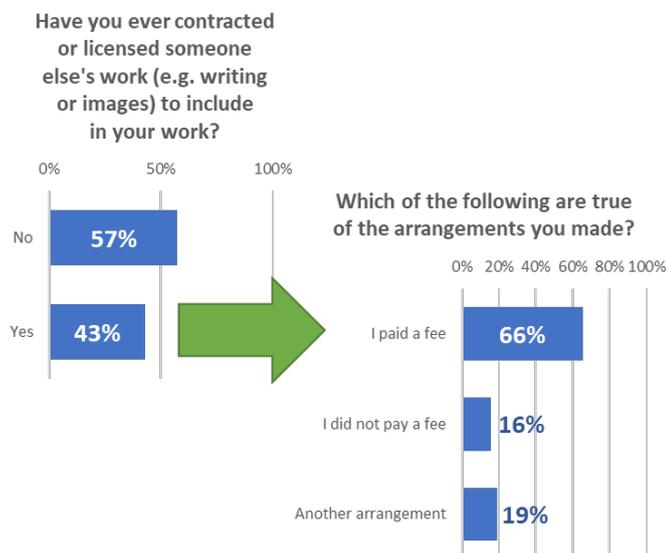
“I wrote to the editor of the Listener who contacted the writer. She apologised and I let the matter drop.”

“I didn't know what to do about it.”

“I could not prove it.”

8. Contracting/licensing others' work to include in own work.

43% of respondents overall said they had, at some time, contracted or licensed someone else's work (e.g., writing or images) to include in their work. Journalists, non-fiction book authors, playwrights and authors of young adult literature were the most likely to have done this.



66% of those who had contracted or licensed someone else's work said they had paid a fee and, in a further 3% of cases, the publisher or someone else had paid a fee or a donation had been made: a total of 69% of cases where a fee had been paid or a donation made. Other arrangements were as follows:

Fee or donation paid

"Publisher paid."

"Obtained permission, which sometimes involved my publisher paying them a fee."

"My publisher paid a fee on my behalf."

"My publisher paid a fee."

"I commissioned an image and paid for it. When I then wanted to use it for something that could earn money, I contacted the artist and offered to pay more. They thanked me but said I didn't need to pay any extra. I included a credit and a link to the artist's commissions"

"Photographer requested a donation to a conservation organisation."

"Photographer asked for a donation to be made."

Acknowledgement/accreditation

"Proper accreditation."

"The person gave me permission to use it giving an acknowledgement."

"I asked the defence force for access and permission to photograph a site; they commissioned their in-house photographer and were happy for me to use the work gratis with an attribution."

Other arrangements

"An agreement between photographer friends and I was arranged, they received a free copy of my self-published book which was not created for profit."

"It was a gift."

"A poem was included in exchange for a free signed book."

"A contract to adapt two novels for theatre."

"Publishers organised the use of a particular photo."

"My cover artist handles licensing agreements."

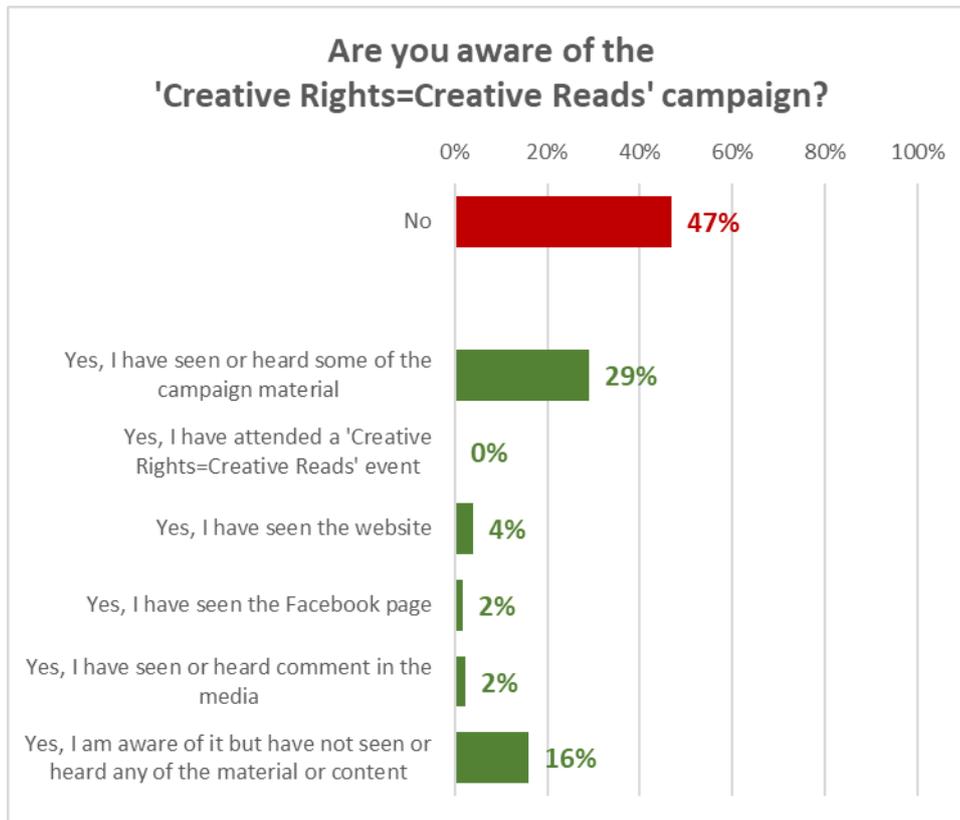
Of the 43% who had contracted or licensed someone else's work:

Terms documented:		%
Terms not documented		14%
The terms of the agreement were documented by me		21%
The terms of the agreement were documented by the other party		41%
Another arrangement		24%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal documentation - agreed terms by email • There was an agreement with the publisher • The author was acknowledged within my writing. • Standard contract via guild • Research agreement with a museum • Publishers organised this. • Publishers organised this. • phone call or email to ask permission • Permission for use was granted via email • Organisation acknowledged receipt of my donation. • It was music, which was kindly donated for a DVD special I recorded. It was offered for free and we instead made a donation to a charity on their behalf. • It was managed by the publisher • It was a casual discussion with both parties • I was the editor of a couple of anthologies a long while back. I assume all the arrangements were made by the publisher(s). I'm sure they were; I was lucky enough to have very reputable publishers. • I commissioned the images, and when I wanted to use them for a broader purpose, I contacted the artist and offered further payment. • Documented via freelance sites like Upwork • Documented via email • Documented by both of us over email. • Deposit photos Royalty Free images paid plan • Contract mutually agreed • Captured in an email sequence • Amicable email between my publisher and the poet 	

9. Awareness of the 'Creative Rights=Creative Reads' campaign

53% of all respondents were aware of the 'Creative Rights=Creative Reads' campaign; 47% were not.

Of those who were aware, nearly twice as many had seen or heard some of the campaign material than had not seen it. No respondents reported attending a 'Creative Rights=Creative Reads' event.



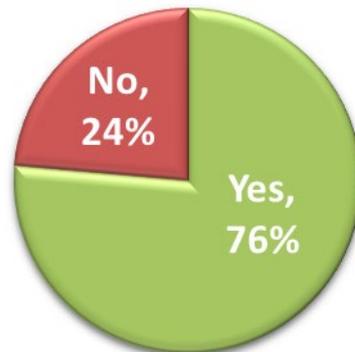
Playwrights and screenwriters were the least likely to have heard of the 'Creative Rights=Creative Reads' campaign; journalists and non-fiction authors were the most likely to be aware of the campaign but not to have seen or heard any campaign material or content.

10. Copyright Act

10.1 Awareness of the Copyright Act review

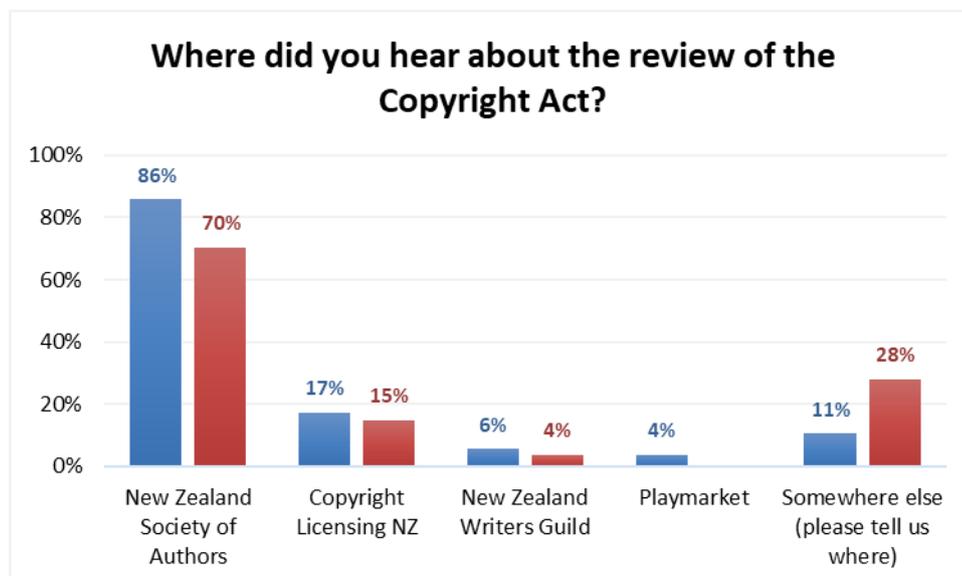
76% of the writers in the sample had had heard that the Government was reviewing the Copyright Act, up from 56% in 2018. However, 24% were unaware of the review.

Have you heard that the Government is reviewing the Copyright Act?



The least aware were playwrights (67%).

Respondents who were aware were asked where they had heard of the review. As in 2018, highest awareness came from the New Zealand Society of Authors. In most cases there were multiple sources of information about the review.

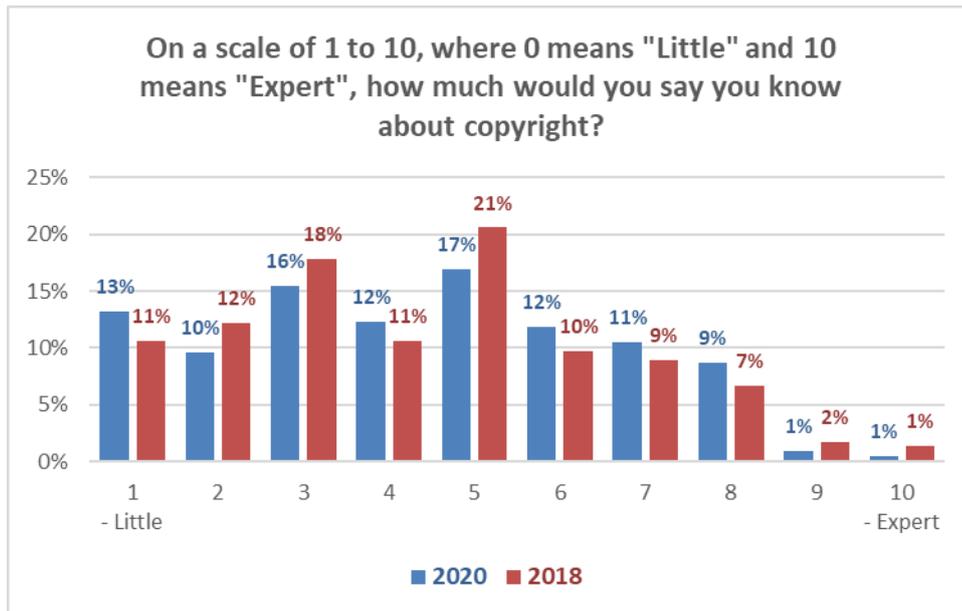


10.2 Knowledge of copyright

All respondents were asked to rate their knowledge of copyright on a scale of 1 to 10, where 0 meant "Little" and 10 meant "Expert".

As in 2018, only 3% claimed to know a great deal about copyright, and the average rating of their knowledge was exactly the same: 4.4 out of 10.

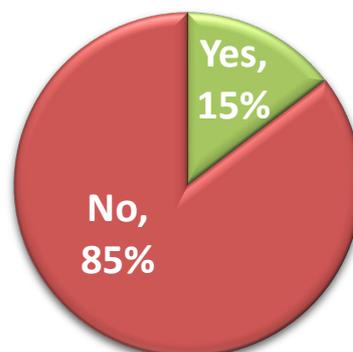
51% rated their knowledge at 1 to 4 (51% in 2018) and 82% rated their knowledge as 6 or below (79% in 2018, but the increase is not statistically significant).



10.3 Does the New Zealand government do enough to inform people about copyright?

As in 2018, respondents overwhelmingly felt that the New Zealand government does not do enough to inform people about copyright (83% in 2018).

Do you think the New Zealand government does enough to inform people about copyright?



10.4 What more could the government do?

123 respondents gave ways in which they thought the government could do more with regards to the copyright review and copyright in general. Comments and the broad categories are as follows:

Value writers' work and stop the dilution of copyright

"It could stop trying to erode authors' rights by reducing their copyright. And it would be a nice courtesy if when they use (steal) someone's work in the 'public good' that they pay an honorarium, and do the author the courtesy of letting them know."

"Work out how the producers and purveyors of material in the digital sphere can be made to support the copyrights of creative artists."

"They could stop by not further diluting copyright e.g., Marrakesh Treaty, MBIE proposals which treat creatives with disdain."

"Send clear messages that if you steal a writer's work, you are stealing from them. Create a campaign that runs a clear comparison; e.g., you wouldn't steal 10 loaves of bread from a baker, why steal work from an author?"

"Make people more aware of the fact that stealing someone else's creative efforts is theft."

"Respect the work of writers as significant."

Provide information/updates/workshops/sessions/talks for writers/work with writers' organisations

"Inform us in a way that we can receive and understand the information."

"Workshops."

"Work with writers' organisations."

"Updates to writers' groups."

"Use electronic media to keep NZSA authors and others up to date with news and changes."

"Use lending right list to contact authors directly, perhaps."

"Take heed of the concerns of NZSA."

"Tough question, more online awareness perhaps? Run info sessions with NZSA, at conferences etc."

"What I do know about copyright I learned from talks by a friend who was employed at Creative Commons at the time; having such talks or resources readily available and also directed to the attention of relevant parties would be helpful."

"They could write directly to the membership of writing organisations."

"Liaise with author organisations to make sure members are informed."

"I have never heard the government talk about copyright, only advocacy organisations."

“They can make it clear what will happen internationally. Almost all authors publish overseas and many think they have to apply for copyright in foreign countries for it to be valid. That's money going into a foreign governments coffers because New Zealand hasn't adequately informed independent and self-published authors.”

“Personally, I could do with help navigating how NZ copyright interacts with international copyright law, especially the US - e.g., should NZ authors register copyright in the US or can we rely on the strength of our own (not-required to register) NZ copyright to protect our rights?”

“NZSA and other agencies have done a lot to inform government about this - they should be guided by these submissions and agencies.”

“I know that NZSA reps have talked to the Government about protecting our copyright - so, I'd like the government to act on their suggestions quickly. I believe some of these meetings have been going for quite some time.”

“I have no idea but I am paid via CPLR (government funded) so you'd think they would at least let those writers know about copyright. When I need to know something, I check with the NZSA.”

“Actively and clearly inform those whose work is vulnerable to exploitation.”

“Encourage artists to learn more about the business and legal side so we can know when to advocate for ourselves.”

Generate public and government understanding of the importance of copyright

“Very few people really understand the nature of copyright and its purpose. More should be done to rectify this.”

“Make the PUBLIC more aware of how it affects authors' (etc) incomes. Most people working in the field have some idea, but I think others have - understandably - limited knowledge.”

“Be more respectful of copyright and acknowledging expert sources in its own policy documents.”

“Ensure that all branches of government understand the value of securing self or industry published writers' copyright in order to underpin development of New Zealand works that flow from the development of such work in the same way that they publicly support the right of e.g., a dress designer and manufacturer such as Trelise Cooper to preserve her dress designs from actual or virtual theft. Ensure that MBIE understands the value of New Zealand writing as the cardinal art form that underpins all other art forms and thereby contributes to the national economy by resisting acculturation from international literature that does not reflect New Zealand societal values. Institute an educative programme through libraries and schools and work to protect published works in all forms by reversing legislation that 'gives away' writers works without the direct permission of the publisher to individuals and or corporate organisations that take advantage of the Marrakesh Treaty provisions.”

“The issue isn't understood by the general public and by some authors. It needs to be made clear how the change to copyright laws will affect writers' income and their work. I don't

think the general public even knows about it. I only found out through a fellow writer and now, I'm trying to spread the information through my network."

"Be more watchful regarding writer's copyright."

"Be more open and frank with its intentions and its actions; less gloss."

"Ban parallel importing."

Create an expectation that writers' work is not free

"Value our work and stop big companies trying to steal it so they can distribute it for free. This notion of making writing that serves the 'public good' freely accessible would be great if it didn't mean stealing our work to do it."

"Help to remind people how creatives need to eat and content can't be free. Treat artists and writers the same as other professionals and encourage people to expect to pay for their services."

"A campaign to "pay the author". Get rid of this expectation that authors like to write for free. Cherish our stories."

"Be proactive in supporting the work of creatives via copyright and other means. Making an example of copyright infringements."

"Recompense for Marrakesh exemptions. Add audio and electronic books to PLR, along with private libraries. Ensure ALL schools pay for copyright licenses."

Raise awareness/understanding of copyright and the issues

"Social media campaign?"

"Send out info to press."

"Run promo campaigns on social media."

"Write simple ads to inform people across all mass media."

"Public advertising campaign."

"I'm not sure. More advertising/promotion? I believe outside of my old work as a librarian I've only ever seen mention of it on the start of DVD videos and on signs next to photocopiers."

"Have information/ advertising campaigns across all media and particularly social media."

"Advertising, education in schools."

"Advertise more in relevant author spaces."

"Advertise copyright requirements and make it plainer to the public that copyright infringement is theft."

"Have information/ advertising campaigns across all media and particularly social media."

"Make it cleared to individuals in simpler language."

“Make clearer what copyright is, what it covers, what the short-term and long-term consequences are for creatives and the creative sector if copyright is breached.”

“Find a simple clear way to let it be known.”

Education

“Education. I have sometimes defended other creatives' work from copyright breaches by gently explaining that you simply can't steal other people's work and words.”

“Education, education and education - as well as working on changing attitudes to copyright. So many people think it is okay to steal another's work. There is no respect for the work which goes into producing written material or value of the creative aspects associated with this.”

“Advertising, education in schools”

“Awareness should start in schools so that students and whanau understand the whys of copyright.”

“Make it part of what kids are taught at school. They're learning in a digital environment that freely shares, coopts, adapts and mashes up ideas and images and words. They should be aware of their rights and responsibilities.”

“Produce more educational resources.”

“Produce materials for education at all levels.”

“Have a campaign to educate creative workers maybe.”

“Education programmes? I think non-creators need to know about it - too many people seem to think that because something is available to see in print or on the internet, it is “in the public domain” and therefore theirs to use how they want.”

“Give a share of copyright to directors, provide more education in schools and publicly regarding the value of copyright (not just focused on plagiarism), legislate for resale royalties.”

“Ensure school librarians and teaching staff have the authority and knowledge to educate users and refrain from breaching copyright themselves.”

“Educate.”

“Offer ethics/philosophy classes as part of high school curriculum. So many people see nothing wrong with (illegally) downloading a book for free because “the content is already there and it's just like borrowing from a library, right?”.”

Enforcement

“Have a simple, available and affordable copyright tribunal for authors to be able to enforce their copyright when it has been breached.”

“Be transparent. Insist/Enforce that Internet providers/companies are committing crimes by allowing the material of customers to be easily accessed by them and those they sell information to.”

“Actually put some effort into enforcement.”

Public Lending Rights

“All the stuff about how public lending rights work and who gets paid is very opaque and outdated and should be updated to better reflect the realities facing modern authors.”

Other

“Make their website at all usable? Define fair use better?”

“I haven't seen anything from the government about copyright.”

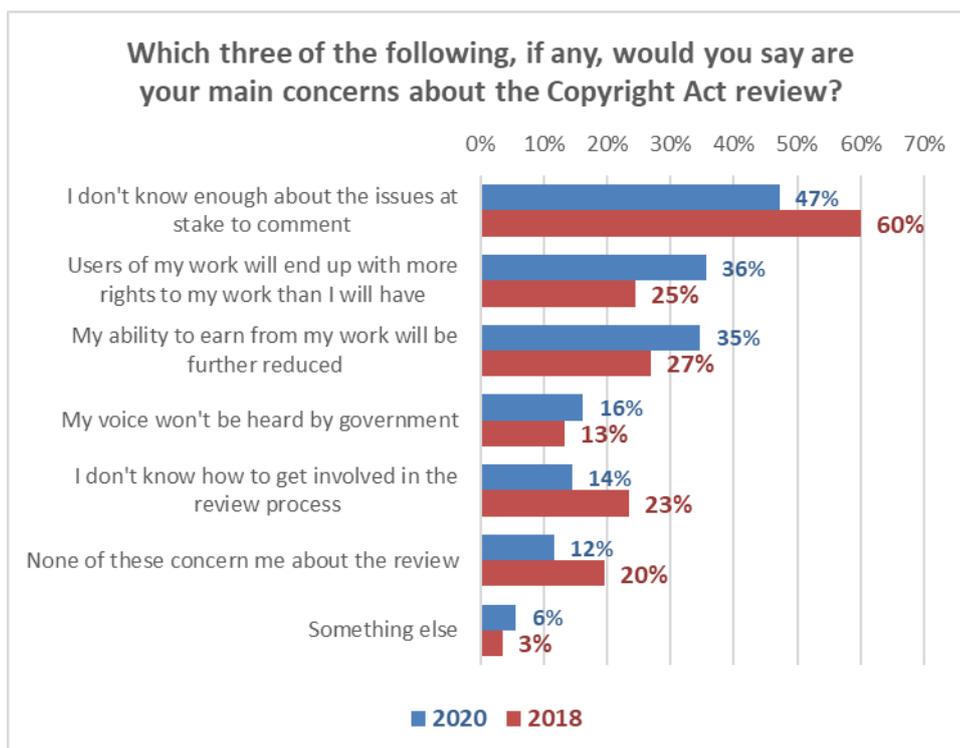
“Make it more worthwhile to protect one's copyrights.”

“Make an issue of it in parliament.”

10.5 Concerns about the review of the Copyright Act

As in 2018, writers’ main concern about the Copyright Act review was that they don’t know enough about the issues to be able to comment.

They increasingly fear that users will end up with more rights to their work than the writers themselves have and their ability to earn from their work will be further reduced.

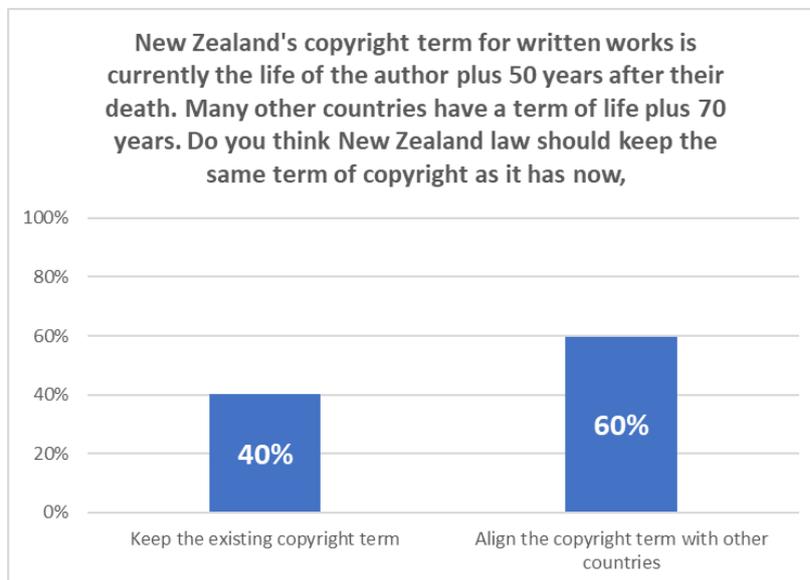


The most concerned are academic authors, journalists and adult fiction writers; the least concerned are education authors. Note that 91% of journalists in the sample say they don't know enough about the issues at stake to comment.

10.6 Copyright term

All respondents were asked whether New Zealand's copyright term should be retained as the life of the authors plus 50 years or aligned with other countries (many of which have a term of "life plus 70 years").

As shown in the following chart, 60% of respondents wanted the copyright term to be aligned with other countries (i.e., they wanted to have a longer term).



140 respondents gave reasons for their response:

Keep the existing copyright term. Primary motivations for this were accessibility of information, public good, and a lack of desire to leave copyright as a legacy to heirs.

"The term does not seem to be the major issue to me."

"The work was given to us so we can gift it on to the people for the common good."

"Suppose I die next year, at the age of 90. Some books that I wrote in 1965-1970 are still in print, today. If the books remain in print, my heir (a charitable trust) will go on collecting royalties until 2070. That is 100 years after the titles were first published... time to forget copyright, I think! On the other hand, there is a simplicity in aligning New Zealand law with other English-speaking countries. That way there is less confusion."

"The object of all my writing is to be of service to the reader. For that reason, I'm not precious about people using it for helpful purposes, for example, as a resource for university students. Being cited makes me giggle."

"It opens up the ability to create derivative works for a NZ audience more quickly and I'm pretty sure the dead authors don't care."

"In a small country, 50 years seems logical and fair."

"I'm making so little; I hardly think it is going to be a huge legacy for my kids. If I were earning more, I might be more invested in this question."

"So long as the work is attributed or referenced correctly, I don't see why it matters after the author is dead. We need more support to protect our work while we are alive!"

"Seventy years is a corporate construct. Logically, life plus 50 is more than adequate to protect any reasonable benefit of a writers and their heirs' endeavours."

"Seems long enough to me."

"Only that I'm unaware of the reasons behind the suggested change."

"Not a fan of inheritance."

"I don't care about other countries' rules, and I won't care what happens to my work when I'm dead. My family love me for me not my work and if they can't deal with the loss of my rights after fifty years then they a) didn't really know me and b) need to learn to deal with their sense of entitlement."

"My books are contemporary. I don't expect them to still be earning money after my death so 50 or 70 years doesn't matter to me."

"It's generally been 50 years for music."

"It's long enough".

"It seems logical."

"I'm generally in favour of the author getting money, then, after their death, the work passing to public domain."

"If the author is no longer alive, they no longer need the protection of copyright. Descendants should not have authority to control what happens to an author's work after their death. Let it be publicly available so popular opinion can determine the fate of the work."

"I'd be happy with copyright ending after death, and this - copyright owner's close friends and family having a say in what is done with their intellectual property after death but only for a limited time and not in perpetuity - is close enough that I don't mind it too much. Big corporations like Disney using copyright so aggressively is not a trend I'd like any laws to contribute to."

"I would say 'Align with other countries' but if other countries abandon the 70-year term, then we would be tied to their terms and we're just small fish here."

"I think the timeframe is long enough."

"I think copyright law overall is profoundly ideologically flawed and disproportionately favours large corporations rather than art and small artists."

"Extension of the amount of time to keep a work from the public domain only really serves to further the rights of media corporations, not individual authors. I believe that length of copyright should remain at no more than 50 years AND that 50 years should be an absolute maximum even when dealing with copyrighted works under different jurisdictions."

"I think 50 is adequate, would rather put more effort into protecting and enhancing authors' incomes while they are alive"

"As a music librarian, I'm usually dealing with the other side of copyright law, trying to get access to published music we need. 50 years already seems like a loooooong time."

"Fifty years is two generations; I think that is enough."

"Creative commons is important for many reasons. Things that become icons are often so because there are no barriers to access. Also, people taking things and making them their own allows for cultural integration of literature."

"BUT if this is the case, please do NOT erode our copyright from 100%."

"70 years places an unnecessary encumbrance on the free flow of information. In the vast majority of cases 50 years gives adequate benefit to the beneficiaries of a writer's estate."

"70 years is too long."

"70 years after death is too long."

"50 years is long enough."

"50 years is already substantial."

"I don't see much difference in 20 years once the author is dead."

"I don't desire control over my work for more than 50 years after I die."

"I don't agree with either of these options. I think Aotearoa has an obligation to begin with tikanga Māori approaches to intellectual property, and that whatever we do with copyright law, it must not further breach Te Tiriti o Waitangi. There is a lot of theft by non-Māori writers of knowledge that is not theirs to write about, for example. Perhaps we could invest some resource into understanding how non-Māori creatives are profiting off collectively owned (by hapū for example) mātauranga, and getting away with it scot free!"

"Because I'll be dead and the money earned on my works is already very low so it's not worth fighting for another 20 years."

"50 years is enough. It's annoying when work that has just come out of copyright goes back in. It's good that work goes in to the public domain."

Extend the term to seventy years. Primary motivations for this were leaving a legacy to heirs and international consistency.

"It's fair and also makes copyright standard, removing uncertainty."

"I now would like my children and grandchildren to benefit from my industries as a writer by being able to pass over the copyright to them. Aligning the copyright terms with other countries also makes sense as we are now a global market."

"I am currently working on children's picture books which will be self-published. I would like to think that I might be able to gift the rights to these books to my children."

"I guess the reason is obvious. I'd like my descendants to benefit from my work, the same way they would benefit from someone else's investments."

"Less confusion."

"International consistency."

- "The fewer barriers there are to publishing the better."*
- "The market is global and online. Awkward if copyrighted in some markets but not others."*
- "Allows for generational earnings from my IP."*
- "Different rules for each country are impracticable to monitor and enforce in a globalised world."*
- "Why would New Zealand give away its copyright when other countries don't? It's just giving money away."*
- "Royalties can be earned for my children and their kids for years."*
- "Because it's confusing. What if a New Zealand author has had work published in UK. Which law applies?"*
- "Because we live in a global environment. Also, I would like to think that my children and grandchildren benefit from the work I am doing now."*
- "Makes sense on the international scene."*
- "The rights to created works should remain with any subsequent progeny of the creator for as long as possible before reverting open source, unimpeded use. I write for money, that money I put towards bettering the lives of my immediate family members and friends. I'd like to think that what I create will remain with my children and my children's children for their continued benefit."*
- "Some of my books have been in print for more than 35 years. This means that one or two of them might conceivably be in print many years after my death. In this unlikely event, I'd like my descendants to receive the royalties."*
- "Because artists should retain rights to their work for their lifetime and their families should benefit if the artist dies."*
- "Save international confusion."*
- "Because I should be able to leave my earnings to my successors and royalties may well be all that I have when I die."*
- "Because once copyright reverts to public sector, any beneficiaries lose their rights and it may be that beneficiaries have been significant in assisting the writer."*
- "Many of us publish internationally."*
- "An author's works should never be out of copyright during their lifetime. Consistency across the world would be useful, appropriate and is overdue."*
- "Allows authors family to benefit from royalties."*
- "Doesn't really matter anyway if you don't have the money to fight an infringement."*
- "I have had zero support from anyone when I fight copyright infringements and I have had to finance my own legal actions."*
- "Clarity of messaging."*
- "Because that way, my writing might benefit my children/grandchildren for longer."*
- "For consistency and fairness."*
- "To help with compliance."*

"Copyrighted works are intellectual property, and like any other property should remain in the ownership of those persons/groups that the writer has decided in their will they belong to. 70 years is a better period, encompassing much of the average life span of the writer's grandchildren."

"Countries that opted for 70 years must have done so on a reasoned basis. We should be consistent."

"Workable"

"It is only fair and right."

"It makes sense that authors' families can retain that copyright for longer."

"50 years isn't long in the grand scheme of things."

"To better support families of writers into the future. Generations are living longer and may benefit from their parent's publications for longer."

"NZ authors need more protection not less given they earn less from their writing in NZ."

"To protect the rights of my children / grandchildren (and my memory) while they are still living, especially given my work is about my family and a very sensitive topic to all NZers."

"I would prefer to stay with international consensus."

"Better deal for writers."

"My children deserve income as the recipients of my copyright after my death."

"It seems logical."

"It just makes sense."

"A longer copyright protects an author's estate."

"As a published scriptwriter and poet, I would like my copyright terms protected, to align with Life plus 70 years."

"Why should NZ undervalue its creatives?"

"Improves the copyright."

"Books are sold internationally. If they are available under NZ law, they will be available internationally within moments."

"I always thought it was 70, so it surprises me it is only 50."

"Makes sense to be consistent with other countries."

"I actually don't care either way. If I'm dead it's not going to bother me."

"It's fairer."

"It's sensible."

"I think New Zealand should be aligned with other countries unless the Society of Authors members see, and agree, that there is a problem with that. I also like that it applies for a longer period, 70 years."

"Because it protects the author and their beneficiaries longer."

"Online publishing means that we are all international publishers."

"Makes administration simpler overall."

“Increased globalisation means that more NZ writers are being recognised overseas and, increasingly, set texts at overseas institutions are including them, e.g., Hera Lindsay Bird's self-titled poetry collection is a set text on the UEA MA course. This inevitably prolongs usage and demand of authors' works.”

“If a writer has a short life, their heirs may be disinherited in their lifetimes.”

“Sounds reasonable.”

“It needs to be international.”

“It seems logical however, I've also already said I don't feel knowledgeable so that question is nearly impossible for me to answer.”

“Good to be comparable with other jurisdictions.”

“Makes sense.”

“Greater protection for an author's work, plus people are living longer so the authors heirs should be the ones to gain the benefits not anybody else.”

“For consistency - I imagine other countries have researched this issue more than we have.”

“Consistency across all countries is more helpful.”

“Beneficiaries get precious little from a writer's income as it is - upping it to 70 years would help a tiny bit.”

“I don't feel strongly either way, but having tried to navigate copyright issues in order to use material from multiple countries, it sure would be nice to have consistency.”

“Not an issue I have thought about. I am too occupied with no writer's income doing multiple drafts, and working out how to get published and where.”

“Because writing should be international and should align.”

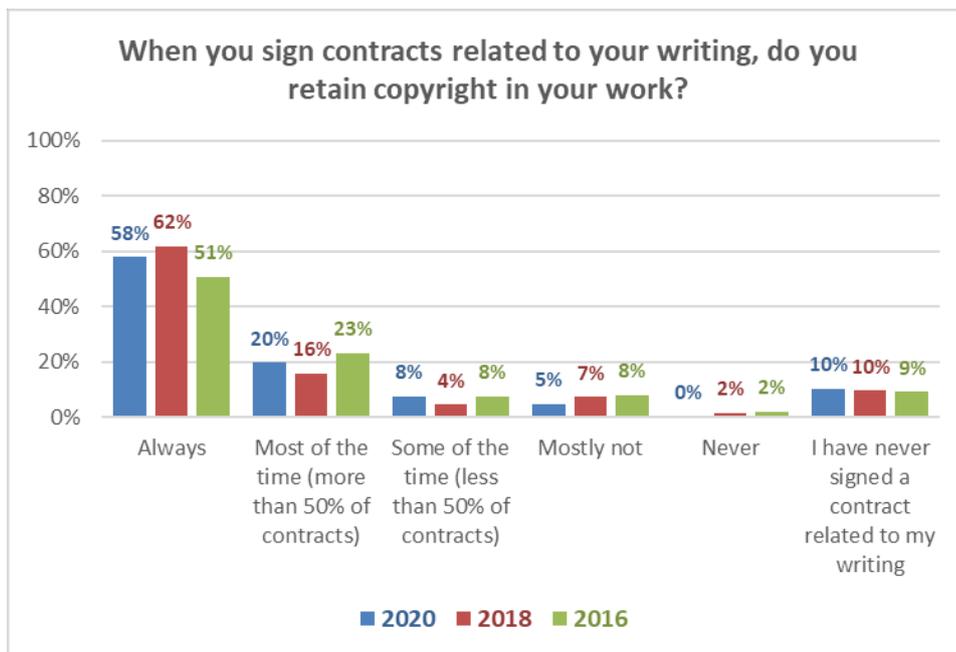
“It makes sense.”

“Makes sense.”

11. Copyright and contracts

11.1 Retaining rights

As in the previous two surveys, respondents were asked whether, when they signed contracts related to their writing, they retained copyright in their work. The overall total of those who always retained copyright and those who retained it most of the time (i.e., in more than 50% of their contracts) was similar to both 2018 and 2016.



Always retaining copyright was more prevalent among fiction (69%), non-fiction (68%), and young adult literature⁴ authors (71%) and playwrights (67%). Note that 16% of fiction and 20% of children’s authors said they had never signed a contract relating to their writing.

Although 58% said they always retain copyright, 92% of writers believed they should always retain copyright when negotiating contracts related to their writing.

As shown in the following chart, more than two-thirds of writers believed they should always retain other rights, but that may not translate into actual practice, as illustrated by the following comments:

“It depends on the contract; e.g., for an audiobook publisher I’d sign audio rights but not translation or POD rights.”

“But it depends on the contract that is offered to you, doesn't it????”

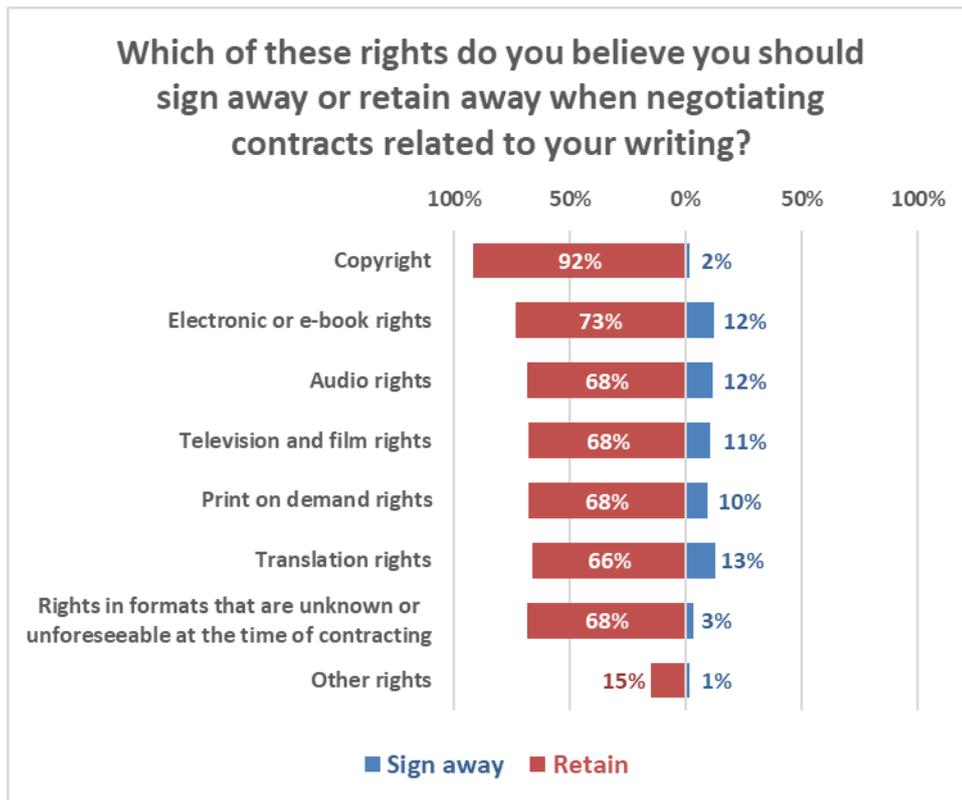
“I will retain copyright, but license my work to a publisher in certain areas for a determined amount of time which may or may not be exclusive. I do not give away audio, film,

⁴ Indication - small number of respondents.

translation, and other rights unless the publisher has networks / skills which will allow it to exploit those rights.”

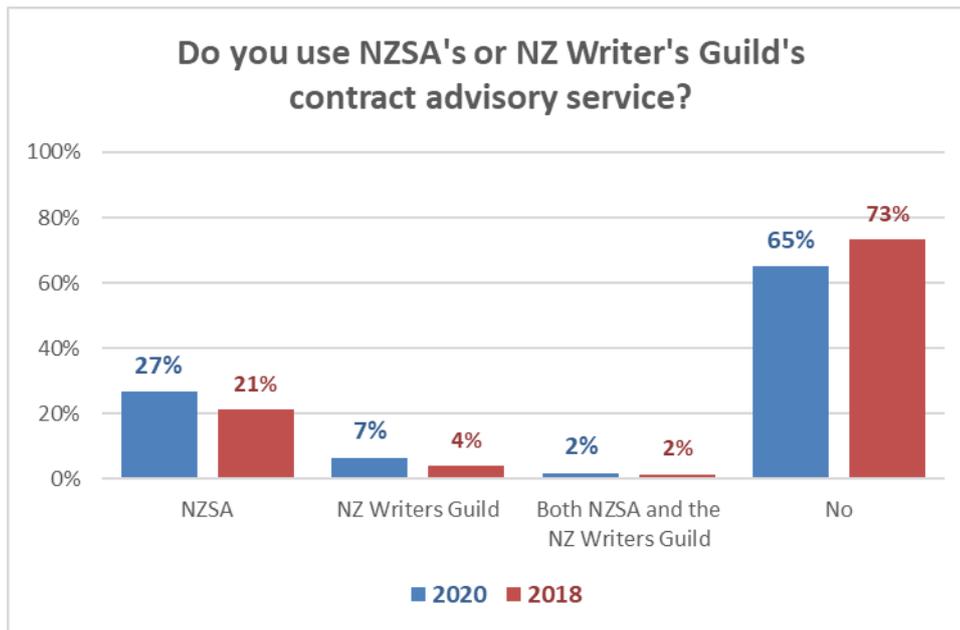
“The retention of rights other than copyright depends on the contract.”

“It's dependent on the type of work and the contract. IP work for hire, for example, does and should involve selling most of those rights. If a publisher wants to buy, for example, audio rights and pays well and uses them, that's fine. But if the contract is a rights grab with no intent to use those rights, that's a bad contract.”



11.2 Contract advisory service

35% of respondents had used a contract advisory service – mostly the New Zealand Society of Authors (NZSA) service. Note that the percentage of those who use neither the NZSA service nor the NZ Writers’ Guild Service dropped to 65% from 73% in 2018.



Changes in approach to copyright as a result of using these contract advisory services are illustrated as follows:

"I backed out of one offer to publish as a result of working with NZSA advisor. I have utilised the services of Playmarket to ensure copyright aspects of publishing agreement were all covered."

"It's made me realise I don't have to accept terrible contracts. I just walked away from one just last week. It empowered me to believe NZSA has my back."

"It was a long time ago, and it was okay advice, but not clear enough. the advice didn't change my approach, just encouraged me to be personally more savvy."

"I have only had one contract and it didn't adequately cover my digital rights - unforeseeable at the time of signing due to rapid change in e-book publishing. NZSA assisted me, plus I sought legal advice which led to the publishing company, which should have known better, to back down."

"Not a lot, but it is good to have someone else check a contract."

"Think harder before signing contract."

"It has not (changed approach to copyright)."

"I have only used them once or twice but often I find publishers say take it or leave it and there is no leeway offered."

"Made me more aware of possible problems."

"It has helped me not to be involved with 'Vanity Press' approaches especially from Austin Macaulay and Pegasus."

"It clarifies my negotiating approach."

"I've inserted more clauses, e.g., about movie rights and e-books."

"My approach hasn't changed, except it is now more informed."

“Made me more aware of possible problems.”

“Made me comfortable with some contracts and realise I'm doing more free work to get jobs than I should sometimes.”

“It has become very confusing.”

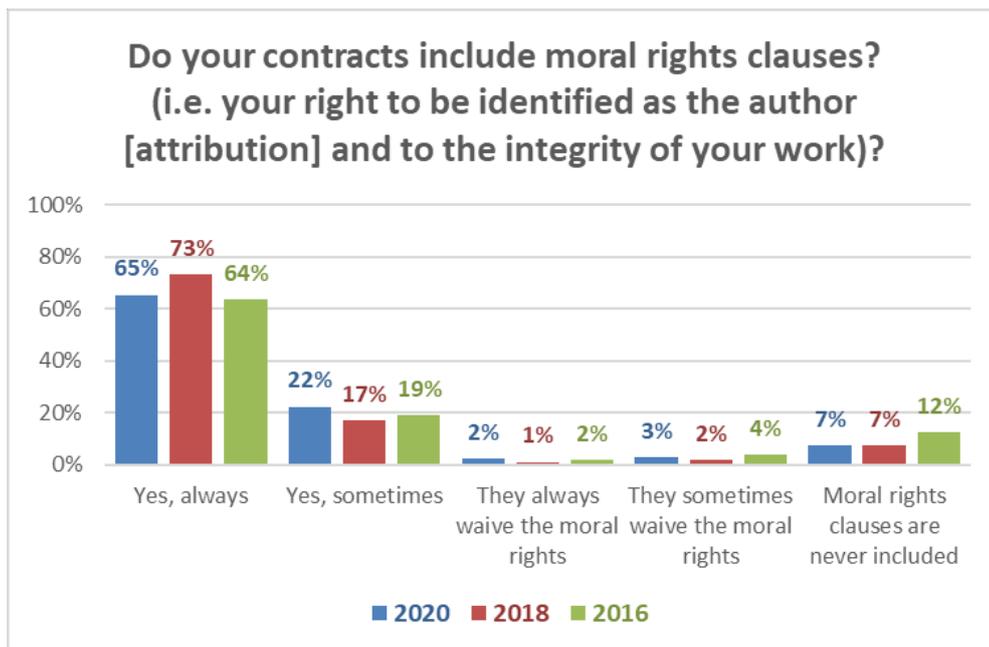
“Yes, I was able to get a clause changed.”

“Both the NZWG and PASC helped positively change my approach to copyright in my contracts, by officially representing me as a screenwriter when I needed to directly challenge a large NZ Screen Industry organisation for breaching contractual trust this year (2020).”

“It's helpful, but in the end the publisher has control.”

11.3 Moral rights

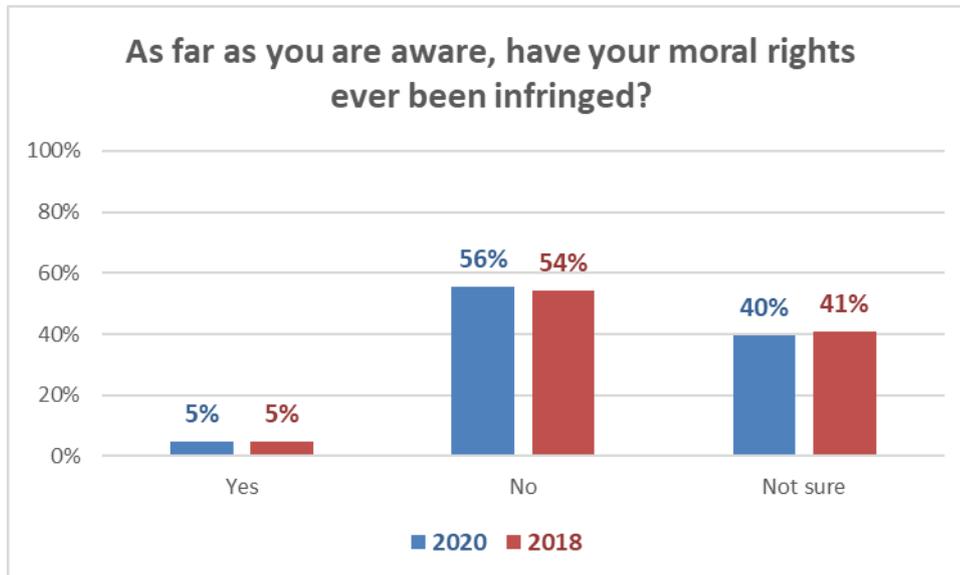
The percentage of writers who indicated that their contracts always included moral rights clauses dropped back to 65% - the 2016 level – while a further 22% said their contracts sometimes did: a total of 87%, similar to the 90% in 2018. As in 2018, 7% indicated that their contracts never included moral rights clauses.



Writers who indicated their contracts always included moral rights clauses were most likely to be book authors:

- Fiction authors: 73%
- Non-fiction authors: 73%
- Children’s authors: 81%
- Young adult literature authors: 86%.

As in 2018, 5% of writers said that their moral rights had been infringed.



Comments made about the infringements were:

“One of my songs was nearly placed in a pornographic film, but I was able to stop it.”

“Yes but no - articles I was paid to write have been given bylines of other people or no byline.”

“Use of material rewritten by another author without attribution and claimed as theirs.”

“This year (2020) I sought NZWG and PASC representation as a screenwriter to challenge contractual breaches made by Screentime NZ with EDF Project Funding from the NZFC.”

“Podcasts by others using my work.”

“Pirate website.”

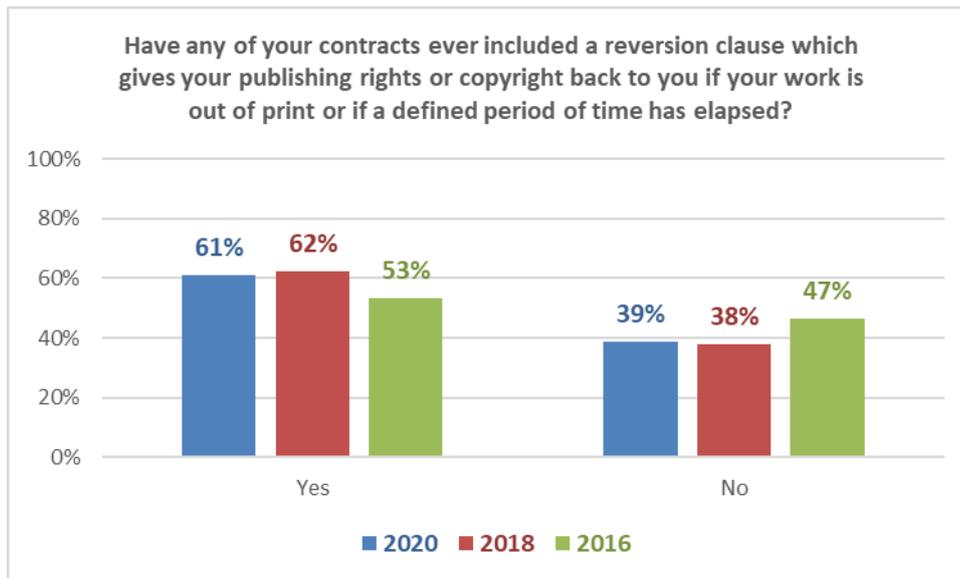
“One publisher butchered my concept and did such a poor job on layout of one of my books that it has never been a good seller, performing much worse than my other books. They would not allow me any input once typeset, stating they knew best.”

11.4 Reversion clause

As in 2018 and 2016, writers were asked whether any of their contracts had ever included a reversion clause which gave their publishing rights or copyright back to them if their work was out of print or if a defined period of time had elapsed.

The 2020 result was the same as the 2018 result. The 61% who had a reversion clause in their contracts was composed of:

- 27% who had exercised the reversion clause; and
- 34% who had not.



Of the 27% who had exercised the reversion clause:

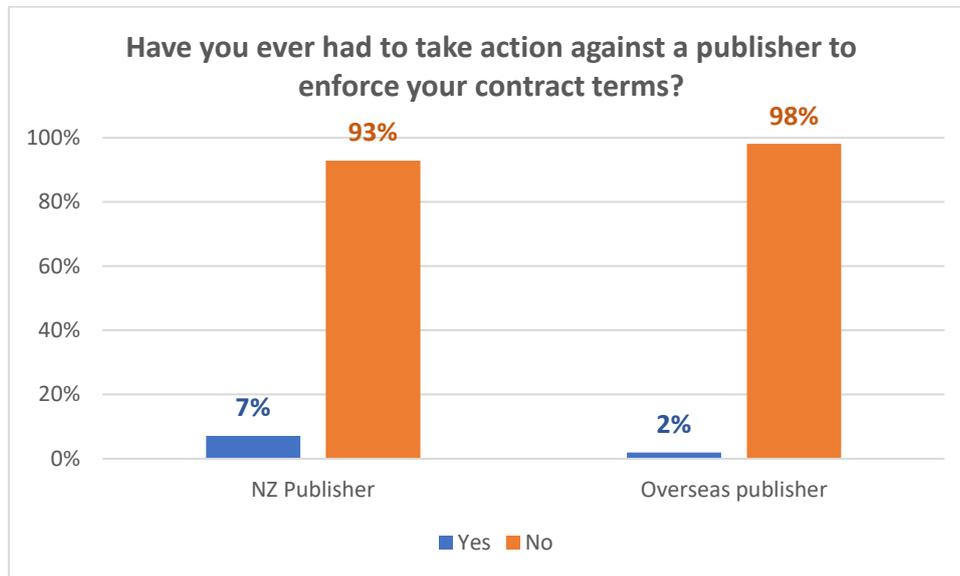
- 43% had published the work themselves
- 28% had sold the rights to a different publisher

Writers who were primarily education authors (53%), journalists (53%), non-fiction (41%) and fiction (37%) book authors were more likely than others **NOT** to have a reversion clause included in their contracts.

Young adult literature book authors (81%, up from 73% in 2016) and children's book authors (79%, up from 63% in 2016) were the most likely to have a reversion clause in their contracts.

11.5 Action against publishers to enforce contract terms

Writers having to take action against publishers to enforce contract terms was relatively rare, especially action against overseas publishers.



Actions taken against a New Zealand publisher were:

“Complained when a PhD candidate wrote about me in his doctoral thesis without consulting me and got it all wrong.”

“Suggested that honouring the contract would be safer for them in the long run.”

“Tried to. Was ignored as the excuse was 'that section of the contract was signed in error'.”

“Sought representation from the NZWG and PASC in a screenwriting dispute.”

“NZSA acted for me to release material for republication as I retained copyright on initial publication yet the original publisher tried to prevent republication by a different publisher”

“Many years ago via my agent at the time; a publisher defrauded his parent company and action was taken to recover royalties.”

“Letter from a lawyer.”

“Lawyers.”

“I discussed with NZSA and based on advice wrote letters. This worked but I had already lost more than half before I knew what was happening.”

“I asked the NZWG to act on my behalf when film producers breached contract.”

“Didn't have to take action as such, but did ask to take over the rights to e-book, as they were doing nothing to turn my book into an e-book.”

“Advised them of my rights and asked them to cease and desist.”

“Demanded payment when they on-sold work to another website without consulting me first (as copyright owner - I had not signed away my rights).”

“Annulled contract after publisher withdrew intention to publish.”

“After several years of no contact - which breached contract of advising me of royalties six-monthly - I was in a place where I could prioritise my writing enough that I could go through the unpleasantness of contacting the publisher to chase after my rights. After a few email exchanges my royalties were delivered to me and the publisher accepted rights reverting to me peacefully.”

“Advised by letter about unpaid royalties. Later was able to buy book back due to insufficient sales.”

Actions taken against an overseas publisher were:

“I filed a complaint with my PRO in the US for account fraud. They were funnelling money from my publishing account to an unknown benefactor. I had a viable lawsuit but chose to switch to another PRO with integrity.”

“The publisher continued to sell one of my books after the contract had ended.”

“Worked with SFWA's grievance committee.”

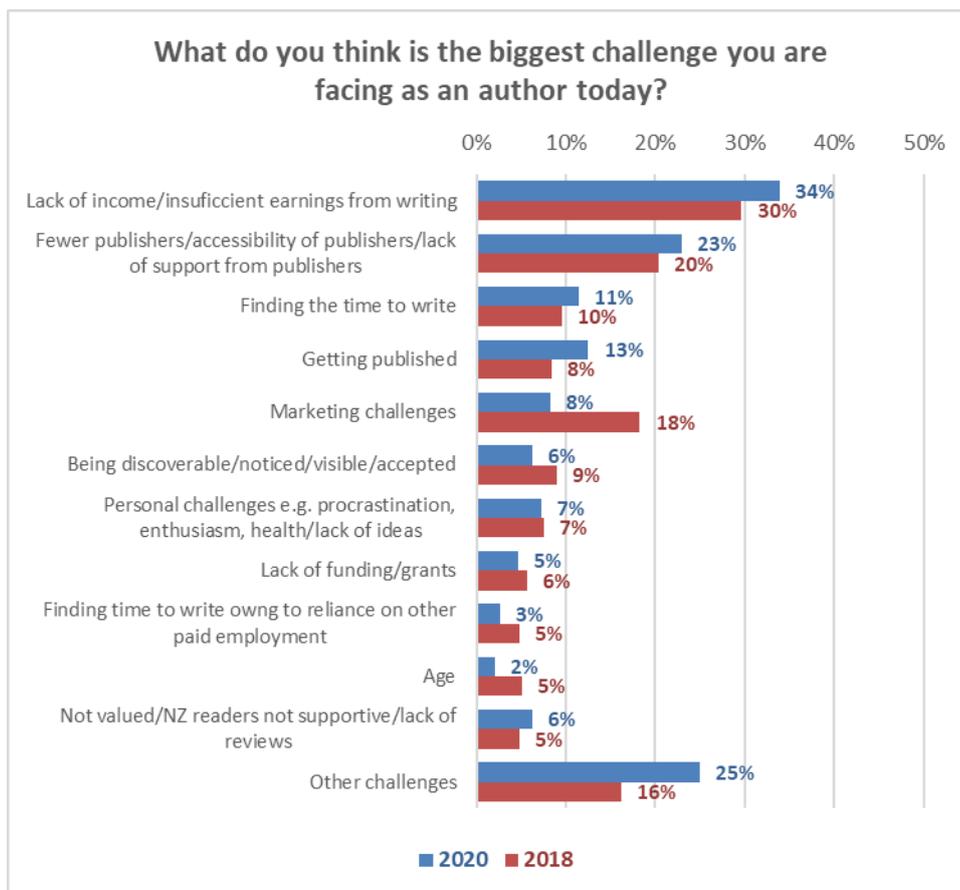
“I tried to get my works removed from an online platform of Australian Media. In the end, the effort wasn't worth it. I think I didn't understand at the time that my writing was given over to that platform so I just accepted it and moved on. It was a volunteer editorial and publishing position and so I felt that I could take it down if I wanted to after a falling out with the owner. However, he passed away around that time and the publication stopped publishing though remains online.”

12. Challenges faced by writers

Writers were asked to say in their own words what they thought was the biggest challenge facing as an author today.

Earning a reasonable income from writing remains the top challenge (as in 2018 and 2016) for writers.

Writers also said (as in both 2018 and 2016) that there were fewer publishers available, or that publishers were inaccessible – getting published is rising as a challenge.



A selection of comments under the main topics follows:

- **Lack of income/insufficient funds from writing:**

“Getting published and making enough money from it to not have to find unrelated work/income.”

“1 small advances and payments - in spite of US and UK publishing deals, income is tiny 2 because I write for an international audience and my books are not set in NZ, I feel I have no chance of support from Creative NZ or other grant organisations.”

“Earning enough income to work full time as a writer. Getting plays produced onstage.”

“Being able to support myself with my writing. Because I have to do other work to earn enough money to live, and I am the primary caregiver of two children, I do not have the time I would like to dedicate to my creative writing and build up a body of work that can generate ongoing income.”

“Not having enough income to proceed with publishing my work. I wish to develop my books into audiobook format.”

“I'm very poor. Work and Income can be confusing to navigate and even if you input your writing earnings completely correctly, they may dock significant amounts of your benefit, so that it is disheartening to pursue making even a little money from writing because it effectively will not get to you. As well, being unemployed and ill/unable to work is difficult socially and in terms of mental health, and it isn't always possible to have the energy to write and pursue publication. There are also the issues faced by being an author so far away from many main publication centres, who focuses on mainly queer themes, which are more accepted these days but still, I would say, harder to publish overall.”

“Lack of income to produce more books. I've invested \$10,000 in order to self-publish two New Zealand historical novels, 'The Gold Series'. I now live on superannuation and have no further funds to continue publishing. Finding the energy to write under such pressure is very difficult.”

“Income. Authors don't even reach the minimum wage for the hours they put into many projects. Authors are constantly expected to present talks etc for free, especially by local councils. The Society of Authors and other groups' membership fees can be unaffordable to many.”

“Money. I can't make enough money as a writer to pay my rent. There are too many magazines and journals that want work but will not pay for it. I'm a single person in my late 20s. There's only so long I can play at being a writer before I have to become someone a bank will lend money to. It's exhausting and depressing and worrying about how to pay the rent is shitty.”

- **Fewer publishers/accessibility of publishers/lack of support from publishers:**

“Living in a small country when your content is local/national will never be financially viable, and getting harder to find publishers.”

“Coordination of services for self-publishing. Traditional publishing avenues are no longer available for emerging writers.”

“My personal challenge is that of convincing publishers in diverse regions of the world to take up my book, even though some rights to certain regions have already been sold. There's a lack of awareness about the opportunities that arise. Also, another challenge is circumventing the system of literary agents dealing with publishers. I prefer to deal directly. But the US and UK insist on these gatekeepers.”

“Shrinking publishing outlets in New Zealand. Although countries like the UK and USA regularly publish collections of short stories and flash fiction that doesn't happen in New Zealand. There are two online magazines for flash fiction in NZ: Flash Frontier and Love

in the time of Covid. Takahe and Landfall occasionally publish flash, however, mainstream publishers do not publish collections. In addition, CUP and OUP do not publish any fiction."

"The dwindling of outlets - as in publications, number of mainstream publishers."

- **Finding the time to write:**

"I'm single and disabled. To get the money and time to be able to write as a job it took a literal global pandemic."

"As a self-publishing author, finding time to write."

"Time to do everything required to run a business and write. Availability of grants for genre fiction and self-published authors."

"Time. That being said, my youngest child is about to begin school, and my husband's business is beginning to find its legs enough that I can likely step back a bit more and put others in my current roles so I can focus on my writing. It is a privilege, I know, but I need to do it."

"Time and money. I have a mortgage which I need to meet, kids to raise, a job and little time to write undisturbed."

- **Getting published:**

"Too much time taken up finding a publisher...I've given up...life's too short for no answers, etc., etc."

"Getting my work published in Aotearoa."

"How to get my work produced with as few other people taking ownership and control as possible."

- **Marketing challenges:**

"Marketing - having to learn new skills outside of my comfort zone."

"Content is commodity. The value is all in the marketing."

"Being able to write fast enough, being able to distribute effectively, being able to keep the business side of things working well without selling my soul to Facebook."

"Marketing and distribution in self-publishing world."

"Sustainable careers, income, all the busy-work around releasing writing (i.e., marketing, self-promotion) taking time away from the creative."

- **Being discoverable/noticed/visible/accepted:**

"Gaining visibility as an author (it's a work in progress)."

"Breaking into the market and getting your books onto shelves."

"Income, markets, connection with other writers, professional development, publishing opportunities, the opportunity as a 'new' voice to be heard (especially when I write non-mainstream material)."

“Making my books visible to an engaged audience.”

“Making my work visible in the media, especially electronic.”

“Getting writing into the hands of readers.”

- **Feeling valued:**

“I note that in 2020 a survey showed that NZers thought creatives / artists / writers were the least essential of our workers. Wow, that made me feel disillusioned to know that my compatriots have little or no regard for my literary endeavours, that they think we have no value to humanity. Who do they think is recording this time for future generations? The fact that this perception of writers as being of no value was borne out by the government's emergency packages and Creative New Zealand response didn't help. Booksellers prefer to stock books by overseas writers. Schools demand free books / free author interviews. Readers want free content. News media want free content. And speculative writers have even less support since even the literary community looks down their noses at us -- we're not considered proper writers. Not asking for therapy, but this lack of support and respect for our work makes me want to give up. I've been a full-time writer for more than a decade, and I've barely made the equivalent of one year's salary of a public servant in all that time. Without the sponsorship of my partner, I would not be able to continue, and even that support is precarious in Covid. More and more, I think about giving up.”

“Having readers and consumers not value my work. It feels like readers expect eBooks to be dirt cheap - \$0.99 or even free, but they won't buy them at a price that enables writers and publishers to make enough money to live and create new work for the readers to enjoy. (Yet they think nothing of paying \$5.00 for a coffee) I am considered to be a successful author, yet I do not make enough money from my books to be able to live off, not even close, and therefore I have to have a day job to pay the bills. This takes away time I could be writing. I would love to be able to be a full-time writer, but it isn't financially viable.”

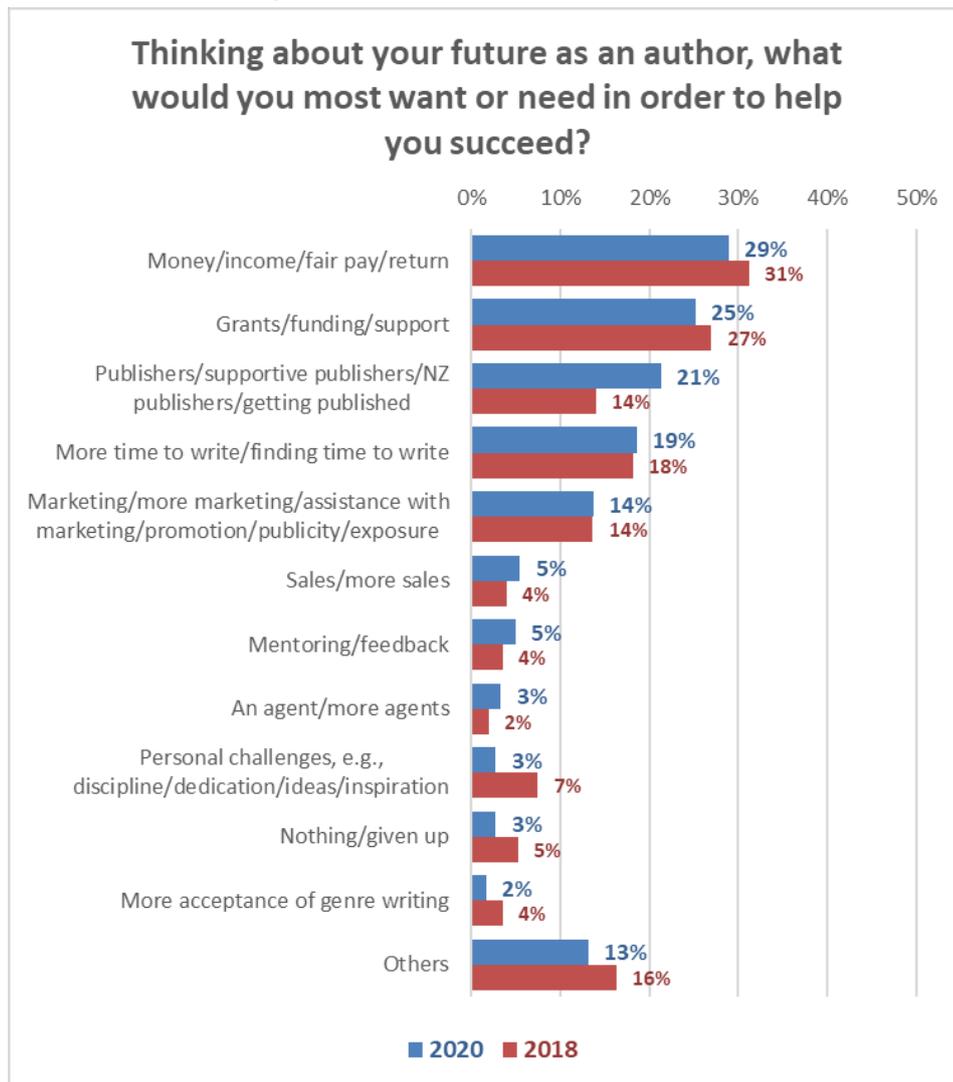
“NZ writers are not valued. Genre writers valued even less. Lack of publishing opportunities in NZ. This government's intent to erode authors' copyright and steal my work for what someone (not identified) decides is in the 'public good' TERRIFIES me. I make little enough as it is.”

13. Future needs to be successful as a writer

When asked what they needed in the future to help them succeed as an author, 183 respondents left comments.

As in 2018 and 2016, the most commonly mentioned factor was money/income, followed by “grants” or “funding”. Taken together, these factors were nominated by 49% of those who responded to the question.

Support from publishers/getting published, having more time to write and marketing/promotion continued to be key issues.



A selection of illustrative comments for the main topics follows:

- **Money/income:**

“Wider acknowledgement (by the public and by publishers) that most authors are very poorly paid.”

“Universal basic income. New Zealand culture shifting to better value the arts and also to recognise genre fiction as being valuable and important, not just literary fiction, would also be of help.”

“UBI would help.”

“Time, an agent, sustainable income.”

“Time and money - money would buy me time. I spend too much time trying to earn sufficient income to pay rent.”

*“Support to carve time to write (i.e., fellowships and retreats don't cover childcare)
Getting a real wage or return from being published.”*

“Steady income to allow a more sustainable approach to creative work.”

*“Some confidence that at least one of the two remaining creative writing efforts would
be professionally distributed and that I would at least break-even cost-wise with income
from sales.”*

*“Society to put a higher value on the written word and the work writer's do, so that
writers receive income that is reasonable for their skill level.”*

*“Retaining e-rights to my books with my traditional publisher, so I can venture into self-
publishing as a second stream of income.”*

*“My life as a writer is so precarious, it is frightening. Were it not for my partner, I would
not be able to survive as a writer. I should not have to be a second-class citizen in my
own relationship because my more than full-time work does not generate a typical part-
time income. COVID really showed how little CNZ and other bodies understood about NZ
authors' salaries and HOW we make our money. The average salary of writers in NZ is
\$12,000, but you had to earn minimum wage to get the subsidy...and to get the top up,
you had to get the first grant... If only NZ would INVEST in writers and writing...”*

*“Money. To be able to work as a writer I need to not have to work as something else. I
need to not worry about rent. I'd like to not have to look at the calendar and wonder
how much longer I can be a writer, before I need a mortgage, or to start actually saving
for my retirement.”*

*“I believe there is a great future in audiobooks, and yet very few NZ authors appear to
have their work in this format. It is very competitive to get grants or sponsorship. I do
need upfront capital to achieve this as my personal income is negligible. From the
production expenses and sales income of my books, I have made a profit of about \$2500
this financial year.”*

*“I am now a solo mother supporting my children on my book income. A grant so I can
write would be great.”*

*“Financial support, and support in other ways to help me onto the writing ladder. I'm
working on my second book at present (first won an award), but I've been declined for
financial help from Creative NZ and others so am having to fund my second project
myself. And I don't really have the money to do that. It really feels rigged so that only
those with connections in the big cities and MFA degrees have any chance to make a go
of it. I have applied for many different types of grants and other financial support - the
rules and gatekeepers are not open enough to diversity (despite what people like to
think and say). If you are Maori, LGBTQI, tertiary educated, connected to others who can
add their voice to your applications is pretty much essential - all of that you have to
have to stand any chance of breaking in. Otherwise people in the writing/publishing
industry in NZ won't give you a go at all.”*

*“eAudiobooks are reported to be surging ahead of eBook sales. My novels would be very
suitable for this market - but I am not in a position to advance \$3000 for their*

production. However, the projected royalties on these books would be of much benefit to me personally."

"Boosting other revenue streams than just advances/royalties, e.g., PLR being extended to school libraries. Dedicated grants for children's authors, who seem to be valued less by funders than authors for adults."

"Book sales in paper and eBook format that gave a decent return. This would take a mind shift for many readers that paying, e.g., \$10.00 for an eBook is good value and reflects the amount of work undertaken by the writer, so we get fairly compensated. PLR to expand to include books in educational libraries and eBook lending. And for the overall PLR pot to be made larger to accommodate this. More opportunities for funding/fellowships/professional development."

"A patron. Time and space and money to concentrate on writing - rather than my current state of working until I'm too exhausted to think, let alone write."

- **Grants/funding/support:**

"Financial support for the development of new works. Especially theatre works. Currently television writing subsidizes my playwriting."

"To be taken seriously as a self-publisher. Most people I know doing this are doing it all on their own, yet they get no help, support, or respect in a lot of cases. They are juggling several balls, learning new skills, and are often seriously experienced. The current system is geared up to keep the status quo."

"To win a grant to allow greater time devoted to writing."

"I'd love to get a grant from CNZ before I die! I've been trying for four decades now without success despite projects and my record as an author always meeting the criteria. Feedback on unsuccessful applications from CNZ is always overwhelmingly positive, which seems like even more of a slap in the face."

"Remove GST from NZ books sold in this country. I would like to see more reviews of NZ work in magazines etc and I would like to hear ordinary NZ authors championed in some way. It worked for NZ Music - why not for books. I also think we print too many 'literary' books and ignore the vast majority of readers who don't engage with this type of writing. All the 'Fellowships' and Arts grants tend to be handed out by the same people who write the books none of the ordinary people want to read. Maori readers want Maori stories in the same way as white, middleclass women want wmc stories. Musicians succeeded because most people hadn't been to university and therefore in touch with their audiences. Anyone in touch with a less educated audience in writing is generally looked down on e.g., romance writers. We need to champion the work that readers love to read and push the expensive anthologies of Hotere et al, into the niche market they are and concentrate on giving the market what it wants, and not what over-educated erudite writers are offering."

- **Publishers/supportive publishers/getting published:**

"To receive greater details about what the publishing world is looking for."

"More publisher opportunities or pathways for distributing and selling my books which are economic. It is very hard to produce a book and sell for a competitive price."

"Get back to publishing deal with mainstream publisher / distributor."

"Bring publishers back to NZ instead of them operating offshore."

"A publishing contract for my quality work."

"More publishing options"

- **More time to write/finding time to write:**

"Just more time for my own projects which I hope will happen. I have been through a stage of pressuring myself to write every spare minute and have decided it's an unhealthy way to live - for me."

"More time to spend writing, working in growing readership."

"More time to write and less time with my main occupation."

"More time!"

- **Marketing/promotion**

"Advice/help on gaining visibility as an author. Marketing strategies, newsletter/ mailing list advice etc."

"Marketing groups: authors banded together to promote each other's' books. I'm not at all shy of promoting other people's books but absolutely can't bring myself to promote my own, so having groups that collectively promote would help me a lot."

"A better range of alternatives to replace traditional publishing houses, including publishing cooperatives and advisory services. Marketing and distribution are the biggest challenges for self-published writers."

"The ability to have more forums to showcase new work."

"Effective channels to market and marketing."

APPENDIX 1 – SAMPLE

Sample

264 people started the survey between 10 December 2020 and 19 February 2021, with 226 respondents (81% of the total) answering in December 2020. The survey is therefore referred to as a 2020 survey.

46.7% of the original sample said that writing was their primary occupation, while 62.6% said that while it was not their primary occupation, they did write. 0.7% said they did not write at all and were excluded from the remaining questions.

78 respondents dropped out of the survey progressively, leaving an overall nett of 201.

The survey has a maximum margin of error, at a 95% confidence level, of $\pm 6.0\%$ overall.

Respondent comments

All comments from respondents are captured as entered by respondents and are available from the Horizon Research system.

Contact

For more information about this survey, please contact Grant McInman on 021 076 2040, email gmcinman@horizonresearch.co.nz or