

# SCGC COMPOSER RATES SURVEY INITIATIVE 2018



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## THE PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

The SCGC is frequently asked by its members, and other organizations, for guidance regarding what constitutes a reasonable fee for the engagement of a screen composer. Consequently, the SCGC has undertaken a survey of its membership covering composer services and fees (historical and current) in various production categories.

The results of the survey, set out below, are intended to provide guidance to members and the Canadian screen community at large about the pricing of screen composers' work. The use of this document and the fees described herein is not obligatory and contracting parties must make decisions regarding fees independent of others.

## NOTES & ASSUMPTIONS

- Survey respondents are members of the SCGC and SOCAN.
- The SCGC Rates Committee interviewed active members across a broad spectrum of experience, from established to emerging composers. The rates set out below constitute what might be considered a ‘professional standard’ in each category and present a range that falls “in the middle”, i.e. where most successful composers are plying their trade.
- All fees set out below are in Canadian (CAD) dollars.
- The figures quoted below are indicative of the “composer’s fee” only. Use of live musicians, music production personnel and facilities may have been engaged at the composer’s discretion within the fee; or may have been subject to additional fees and further negotiation.
- Ownership in the compositions and master recordings constituting a Musical Score is always a subject of negotiation and may be retained by the composer or assigned to the production, according to the agreement of the parties. Regardless of the disposition of ownership in the Musical Score, the Guild strongly encourages its members to seek equitable participation in all aspects of the revenue generated by all components of the Musical Score.
- The figures set out below do not include any provision for the licensing of pre-existing songs or source music. For more information in this regard, please seek the advice of a Music Supervisor.
- This document is a fluid document, and will be subject to additions and changes as they occur in the marketplace.

## IMPORTANT LEGAL INFORMATION

- The figures in this document are for informational purposes only.
- The Guild is not a union, and these figures are not binding upon its members.
- Composers are independent contractors and must decide for themselves how to set the fees they charge for their services.
- Nothing in this document constitutes an agreement or understanding between composers concerning the fees they may offer for the same or similar services.
- This document should not be considered a substitute for proper legal and/or business advice. The Guild recommends that all parties seek independent legal counsel and/or representation when approaching a negotiation.
- This document and all information contained therein should always be read in full and not be taken or quoted out of context.
- For further clarification regarding this document or any of the information contained within, please contact the SCGC.

# SCGC COMPOSER RATES SURVEY INITIATIVE, 2018: Results

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## ONE HOUR DRAMA SERIES (45MINUTES)

Rates range from 6500/ep at the “very low” end, up to 12-13K/ep (exceptions: upper end at 15 - 20K). 8K to 10K per episode is the most common range.

**The SCGC endorses 8K—12K as a mid range for One Hour Dramas**

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## TELEVISION MOVIES (83—84 MINUTES)

The mid range is 9.5K—16.5K. Exceptions exist, particularly when there has been a budget added for players.

**The SCGC endorses a narrower range of 11K—16.5K for a Television Movie score**

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## ANIMATION (22 MINUTES)

### Model #1

The most common range in this model is 5K – 7.5K per episode, with the composer kept on to handle music for the full episode run. As a matter of course, composers may begin reusing cues, at least unofficially, after a few episodes, to keep the workload manageable.

**The SCGC endorses 5k—7.5k for 22 minute animation in this model**

### Model #2

In this model – more common in Toronto than Vancouver – composers are contracted to provide a certain number of minutes of score as part of creating a music library for the series.

Examples: 120 minutes at 350 - 500/min, with an additional 60 – 90 minutes often requested as a second package.

Music editorial, if handled by the composer, is often done for an additional fee of (example 1,000/episode) – but some animation companies choose to have music editorial done by in-house editors.

**The SCGC endorses the rates described above by this model of Animation contract**

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## HALF HOUR COMEDY SERIES

4K per episode is the de facto standard fee for ½ hour comedy series. As always, ownership of the score is negotiable, and composer often bargain to retain full or split publishing rights/revenue.

**The SCGC endorses a rate of 4k for ½ hour comedy series.**

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## ONE HOUR DOCUMENTARY (EG., CBC)

8K – 13K is the common range.

**The SCGC endorses 8k – 13k as a rate for one hour documentaries, and notes that composers should generally negotiate to retain publishing, as there is much in the way of precedent in this area.**

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## NFB FEATURE LENGTH DOCS

Range from 16K to 25K. (Note: Publishing not generally retained, due to NFB policy.)

**The SCGC endorses 16k – 25k as a range of rates for NFB Feature Length Documentaries.**

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## INDIE FEATURES

Independent feature composer rates tend to be generally lower, at 8K to 20K (with ownership in the score often retained by composer), and may be based on existing friendships or on relationship building.

**With the appropriate caveats regarding sound “relationship building”, and particularly if copyright is retained by the composer, the SCGC endorses the range of rates described above.**

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## FEATURES

The widest range was found here, running from 10K to 80K, and even higher, and often the higher fee accommodates the cost of hiring of an orchestra as part of the composer’s package deal.

**Note: Because of the wide range of rates paid for music on features, the SCGC is unable to endorse specific rates in this category.**

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## IMAX

50K to 250K, and almost always involve hiring an orchestra, either at home or abroad.

**Note: Again, due to the wide range of known rates it is not possible for the SCGC to make a more narrow endorsement in this category**

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## THEMES – STANDALONE, OR AS PART OF A THEME AND BUMPER PACKAGE

**Sports and News Networks:** 15 – 30K for Theme and Bumpers.

**The SCGC endorses this range of rates for this type of package**

**Animation:** 5 – 7.5K.

**The SCGC endorses this range of rates for Animation Theme/Bumper packages**

**Lifestyle:** 5K is common for Opening and Closing Theme (all other music from Producer's choice of music library).

**The SCGC endorses this rate for Lifestyle Theme packages**

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## THEMES – WITH LIMITED TRACK PACKAGE

**Lifestyle:** 10 – 15K for Opening and Closing Theme, plus 10 – 15 2 minute tracks.

**Lifestyle (lower budget):** 4 – 6K for Opening/Closing Themes and Bumpers with a negotiable number of tracks.

**It should be noted that Lifestyle Themes in particular, and Themes in general see a lot of play and – as themes - also pay at the highest royalty rate through the various PRO's**

**The SCGC endorses 4k -15k as a range of rates for Lifestyle Theme & Track packages, with the caveat that composers should make themselves aware of what level of production (low or higher budget) they are dealing with.**

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## STATION ID'S

Example 15K (for 7 – 10 versions of the ID).

**Note the SCGC Rates Committee and Board do not consider that they have a broad enough sample of Station ID's to make a recommendation at this point**

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## ADVERTISING

**DEMO FEE:** \$250 - 300 per track, assuming a 0:30 spot, with diminishing returns as tracks go longer. For example, at 3:00 duration one might expect to see \$500.

Demo fees may not apply if the composer has been individually selected – nevertheless, the demo guidelines may apply vis-a-vis revisions per the parties' agreement.

**COMPOSERS FEE:** \$1000 - 2500, again assuming a 0:30 duration, with diminishing returns as length increases. In the experience of members surveyed, anything longer than a 0:60 tends to not be intended for broadcast, so back-end payments diminish or disappear. The initial fee should therefore compensate for that loss of back-end revenue.

**ROYALTIES/BACK-END:** Music houses tend to balance the back-end participation offered against the composer's fee - some pay more up front (composers fee) and others give more points on the contract (royalties). In either case, the broadcast location is a huge factor: American commercials are worth significantly more money than Canadian, simply due to the exposure. Additionally, the number of spots in which a track will appear will affect royalties, as will the total number of 13-week ad cycles for which any given spot will run.

**The SCGC endorses the rates described above, and strongly encourages its members to negotiate demo fees for their commercial submissions, as there is much precedent in that regard.**

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## CLOSING NOTES

- The SCGC is grateful for the participation of the composers who participated in the survey.
- The Guild is hopeful that the information presented here helps members better understand the current screen composing landscape in Canada and aids them in conducting their own negotiations. The Guild's intent was to create a simple and straightforward reference document that can be added to over time. Please check back periodically for updates.
- We encourage all parties to strongly consider utilizing the SCGC New Model Contract (License or Assignment Version) when formalizing their composer agreements.
- The SCGC wishes to gratefully acknowledge Rates Committee members Graeme Coleman (Chair), Mike Shields & Michael Neilsen for their support and advice in the creation of this document.