

Working together with a diverse group of journalists – editors, reporters, and “fixers” – we compiled a list of suggested best practices for global newsrooms when hiring local journalists. It is our hope that this document will create a standard for working practices.

Local journalists should have the right to choose how they want to be identified.

- Titles could include *fixer, translator, field producer, local reporter, location producer, stringer, cultural consultant, media support, or journalist.*

At the beginning of a project, clearly indicate whether the scope of work will include significant editorial contribution from the local journalist/fixer.

- Editorial leaders should be transparent about the expectations and approach.
- Local journalists should share their editorial interests and/or abilities.
- When a local journalist contributes significantly to the editorial direction of a story they should have the opportunity to review the work before publication.

All aspects of the work should be outlined in a contract and signed by both the editorial leadership and the local journalist.

- Any changes over the course of production (e.g. length of production, scope of work) must be amended in the contract.
- Payment should be made in a timely manner and the payment schedule should be outlined in the contract.
- Crediting language should be agreed upon in the contract at the outset of reporting, and if the roles/contributions change or expand, credit should be adjusted accordingly.

Local journalists should be afforded the same level of comfort and safety as all other members of the field team.

- Any risk related to reporting should be made clear to the local journalist. Likewise, the local journalist should identify and discuss any potential risks to the field team.
- Whenever possible, local journalists should be covered by relevant insurance policies – aligning as closely as possible to the coverage of the foreign reporters and correspondents.

To create trust and accountability, fair pay, and equitable practices, employers should outline all steps of payment.

- Payment should be agreed to in advance of pre-production and should reflect current market rates, including adjustments for inflation.
- The method of payment should be determined in advance and in the preferred currency with a clear payment schedule.
- The payment should be adjusted if the role of the local journalist is expanded during the production. And the updated payment should be reflected in the contract.
- Local journalists should have a point person assigned from the commissioning newsroom to communicate with them regarding payment and particularly delays to payment.

Local journalists should be publicly credited.

- If the local journalist has a reason not to be publicly credited (e.g. safety, risk to source relationships), this should be discussed with the editor.
- Award submissions should include the local journalist whenever possible.

Any issues related to pay, insurance, security, safety, credit, title, ownership of output, scope of work (including pre- and post-production), editorial input and other relevant matters should be promptly addressed by newsroom leadership.

- Any potential conflict of interest should be discussed with all parties.
- Local journalists should have a means to contact senior editors in case of concerns.

If a media organization agrees to follow this list of guidelines, they are responsible for ensuring that any subcontractors (e.g. freelancers or production companies) also agree to follow the guidelines when working with a local journalist.

Note: Fixer is a common term used in the practice of global journalism, but some recent research has questioned the accuracy and continued use of the term. According to Shayna Plaut and Peter Klein, “because of changes in news business models as well as an increased concern regarding security, the fixer has taken on many of the duties and responsibilities of a journalist. The roles have become blurred...sometimes the same person will be a journalist one day and a fixer the next.” For more, see [“Fixing” the Journalist-Fixer Relationship: A Critical Look Towards Developing Best Practices in Global Reporting](#) in *Journalism Studies*.