

A*dS Fee Recommendations

For Authors and Translators



A*dS

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We don't like to talk about money. That is the case in Switzerland in general, but even more so among authors. We find it embarrassing. We almost feel like we are doing something forbidden or at least unseemly when the nth event organiser just «wants to offer us a platform» and we ask for a fair wage. We almost feel we need to be grateful when the nth editor requests a text for a magazine, a newspaper or an anthology, just to «put us on the map».

Requesting money for one's labour is neither embarrassing nor indecent – it should be taken for granted. As professional authors, we offer a unique treatment of language, which includes more than the authoring of books and texts, which, to be honest, no one can live from. A big part of being an author is holding public presentations, sharing ideas and other activities of that kind. Consequently, most authors' earnings are made up of individual, variously-weighted commissions – this is true for those of us who still have a «day job», as well as for those who have dived into writing for a living.

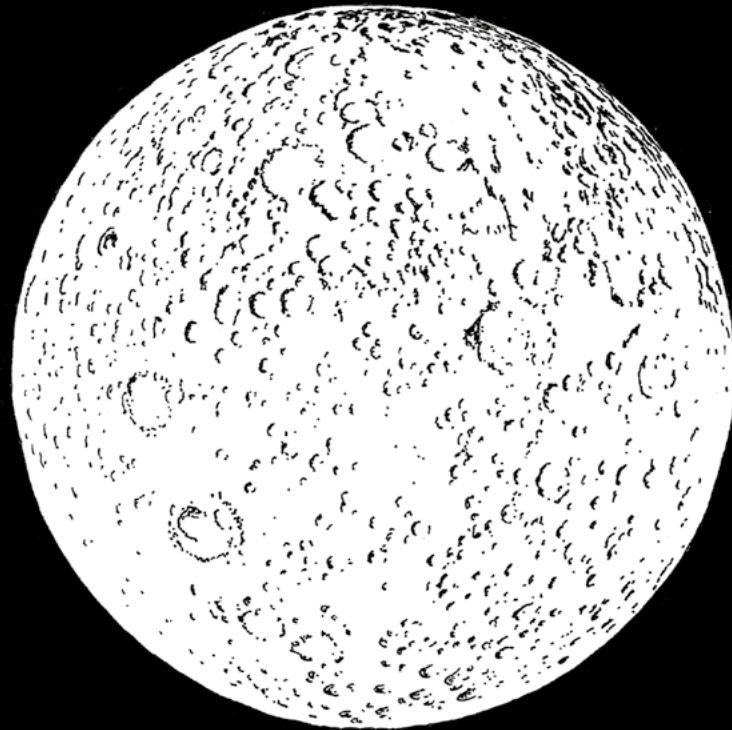
This brochure is not a collective agreement – it offers no unequivocal standards to be demanded or sued for. It is, rather, a framework that authors can refer to when they are dealing with potential clients, organisers or companies. It contains rate suggestions for many of the services that authors render on a daily basis: book publications, translations of literary text, readings, author's talks, signing sessions, participation in public discussions, hosting, creative writing workshops, mentoring, various commissions, reviews, media appearances, events at schools.

This brochure makes no claims to completeness – considering the great variety of activities authors practice, this would be impossible. This brochure is also not meant as a «regulation» for members of the A*dS. If an author wants to perform a reading for free, whether as a favour for a friend or for a worthy cause, they are of course free to do so. But this decision should be made by the author themselves and not by the organiser.

It is the chief task of the A*dS to advocate for the rights of its members and to work towards improving their lives and their work situations. Compensation for work, including cultural

work, is not a privilege. It is a right. We cannot claim it for you, but we can help you claim it for yourselves. Knowing that you are not only doing it for yourselves, but also for all the other authors. Until that day that it is so normal that we no longer need to ask for appropriate compensation.

The A*dS board



The following fee recommendations refer to remunerations for professional authors.

By authors we mean the following writing professionals:

- = Authors of literary text (fictional or non-fictional)
- = Text performers (spoken poetry, slam poetry, text installations)
- = Literary translators
- = Radio or TV playwriters (radio, TV, theatre or other)
- = Screenwriters
- = Comic and graphic novel authors
- = Book illustrators

What these professionals all have in common is that they are creators of intellectual property. Swiss copyright law holds that creators own the personality and property rights of their works.

By «professional work» A*dS refers to authors who occupy themselves with literary pursuits on a regular basis, whether fictional or non-fictional. That they publish, perform or adapt their texts for the stage with professional conditions (industry-standard management, work for compensation etc.) or otherwise make a contribution to literary life with their texts.

2. Forms of remuneration

Basically, the A*dS differentiates between two different forms of payment:

2.1. Fees

Fees are compensation for any professional services rendered, i.e. publications and performances (for fee recommendations see chapter 3). The exact form of compensation depends on the legal status of the authors' and translators' social insurance. Self-employed authors receive fees in exchange for bills. People with fixed employment must be paid a salary with the social insurance contributions required by law (for questions about social insurance law see chapter 7).

2.2. Collective copyright compensation

Copyright compensation refers to those collective compensations that are prescribed by law and collected by the copyright associations for their members. For detailed commentary see chapter 6.

Compensation vs. promotion

The line between self-promotion and literary work is not always clear-cut. While it is clear that excellent readings increase book sales, organisers often consider them as self-promotion to avoid compensating the authors. Fact is: readings are independent work – just like any other form of work, and people who perform literary work professionally have a right to be adequately paid for. No one would suggest that a chef should be paid only for cooking the meal, but not for preparing the ingredients or cleaning her kitchenware. It should be just as natural that authors are paid not only for writing, but for all the other activities that belong to their job, be it readings, workshops or preparations.

Fee recommendations

3.

Components of fees

A fee includes compensation for the following services:

- = Share of the production costs of the work (research, writing, publishing)
- = Organisation, preparation (incl. any concrete expenditures) and possible follow-up work
- = Travel time
- = Social insurance contributions (see chapter 7)
- = Infrastructure costs (studio rental, computer etc.)

Benefit performance

If a professional author takes on a commission for free, the AdS recommends the author ask to be publicly noted as a donor or sponsor.

Book publications

3.1.

Compensations for book publications are handled individually by the author based on a publishing contract. In general, the author receives a percentage of the sales (royalties or net proceeds) as well as of the licensing agreement for ancillary rights. Sample publishing contracts with comments can be found at: www.a-d-s.ch under «Wissenswertes» (useful information, in German, French and Italian) → «Musterverträge» (model contracts).

How much does an author make from a book sale?

With a retail price of CHF 20 the author receives on average 8% royalties, or CHF 1.60 per book. For a typical first edition of 2000 copies that amounts to a total fee of CHF 3200 (provided the entire first edition is sold). Assuming the author writes a book every two to three years this amounts to a yearly income of CHF 1280 from book sales.

3. Fee recommendations

3.2. Translations of literary texts

Prose

- = CHF 110 per standard page*, CHF 80 minimum
 - = For text excerpts of up to five pages a flat rate of CHF 500 is charged
-

*A standard page consists of 30 lines of 60 keystrokes. Nowadays, the counting of characters or «computer-based calculations» allows the total number of characters (including spaces) in a document to be used as the basis for a calculation of the number of standard pages. This method does not take into account spaces, open line endings at the end of a passage or partial blank pages at the ends of chapters, which are, after all, integral components of a translation (e.g. of dialogue-heavy texts, poems etc.). The AdS does not recommend mixing the two calculation methods, but rather using standard pages (e.g. with the help of the appropriate document format). If measurements are made with characters, a unit of 1500 characters should be used for invoicing (surcharge of approx. 15%)

Poetry

Properly assessing how much effort it takes to translate a poem is almost as complicated as translating a poem. We recommend the following guideline:

- = CHF 150 per poem of up to five lines, from the fifth line CHF 20 per additional line
-

Compensations for book publications are handled individually by the translator through a publishing contract. As a rule, translators receive a percentage of the sales (royalties and net proceeds) in addition to the agreed-upon flat-rate fee, as well as a percentage of the licensing revenues from ancillary rights. Sample publishing contracts with comments can be found at: www.a-d-s.ch under the rubric «Wissenswertes» (useful information, in German, French and Italian) → «Mus-terverträge» (model contracts).

Fee recommendations

Readings (with subsequent talk)

Readings are events at which an author, a translator or multiple authors read a longer passage of their work. Readings are often introduced by a host and conclude with a short author's talk. Readings require careful preparation by the author.

- = Readings of at least 30 minutes: CHF 800 appropriate, CHF 600 minimum
 - = Readings under 30 minutes per author/ translator: CHF 600 appropriate, CHF 400 minimum
-

If multiple authors are performing together or with other artists, the AdS considers the fee recommendations to apply to them as well. So, a second author at a reading should also receive the same fee.

Author's talks

These are moderated talks about a text by the author (with possible short readings in between) and are to be remunerated like readings, as they require the same amount of effort from the author.

- = Talks of at least 30 minutes: CHF 800 appropriate, CHF 600 minimum
 - = Talks under 30 minutes per author/ translator: CHF 600 appropriate, CHF 400 minimum
-

Signing sessions

Planned and advertised signing sessions are especially common in the francophone world. Although they are often unremunerated, extra costs (travel, meals, overnight stays) must be compensated.

3.

3.3.

3.4.

3.5.



Fee recommendations

3.

Participation in public discussions (panels etc.)

3.6.

Authors often take part in discussions as experts. These events do not require extensive preparation, as the experts are already well acquainted with their topic.

= CHF 400 appropriate, CHF 300 minimum

Hosting a discussion or author's talk

3.7.

Authors often host discussion rounds or author's talks. In this capacity, authors must be well prepared, both organisationally and in terms of the content of the talk.

= CHF 800 appropriate, CHF 600 minimum

Creative Writing workshops

3.8.

The author teaches writing techniques and develops original pieces with workshop participants. The author must prepare intensively; there is often follow-up work.

= Half day: CHF 1000 appropriate,
CHF 800 minimum

= Full day: CHF 1500 appropriate,
CHF 1250 minimum

Mentoring

3.9.

A cost ceiling is usually established at the outset, within which clients are charged at an hourly rate.

= CHF 600 per work session (including
preparation time) appropriate,
CHF 500 minimum

3. Fee recommendations

3.10. Various commissions

Authors receive commissions that fall outside of the classical categories, e.g. research work performed over the course of a week.

- = Hourly rate: CHF 100 appropriate, CHF 80 minimum
- = Daily rate: CHF 800 appropriate, CHF 500 minimum

3.11. Commissioned literary text

Authors may be commissioned by a third party to compose a literary text about a specific topic or in a specific context.

- = Text of up to 4000 characters: CHF 800 appropriate, CHF 600 minimum
- = For longer text the fee must correspond to the actual effort (see chapter 3.10).

3.12. Literary reportage

Literary reportage is generally commissioned by the media.

- = Text of up to 20,000 characters: per 1000 characters CHF 100 appropriate, CHF 80 minimum
- = Text of between 21,000 and 40,000 characters: per 1000 characters CHF 120 appropriate, CHF 100 minimum

For text of up to 10,000 characters the author should not be required to travel for longer than a week, for 40,000 characters no longer than four weeks. In addition, adequate compensation for travel expenses must be agreed upon with the author.

Fee recommendations

Reviews

- = Reviews of between 1000 and 8000 characters: per 1000 characters CHF 100 appropriate, CHF 80 minimum
- = Book reviews of over 8000 characters often require the same effort as an essay, therefore CHF 120 per 1000 characters is appropriate.

Media appearances

While it used to be common to be remunerated for media interviews, this is no longer the case today. However, one must distinguish between classical interviews and other forms of media appearances. In general, a personal contribution by the author or translator is compensated, if for instance the interview required extraordinary preparation or includes an original literary work by the author (e.g. a new text about the topic of the interview) – in these cases specific rates apply (see chapters 3.6, 3.10, 3.11). This also applies to readings as part of a radio or television broadcast.

Events at schools

For a literary creator's first event:

- = Reading with talk: CHF 800 appropriate, CHF 600 minimum
- = Writer's or illustrator's workshop:
- = Half day: CHF 1000 appropriate, CHF 800 minimum
- = Full day: CHF 1500 appropriate, CHF 1250 minimum
- = Discussion: CHF 800 appropriate, CHF 600 minimum

3.

3.13.

3.14.

3.15.

3. Fee recommendations

3.15. For any further follow-up event (reading tour; indications per event):

- = Reading including talk:
CHF 400 appropriate, CHF 300 minimum
 - = Writer's or illustrator's workshop:
Half day: CHF 500 appropriate,
CHF 400 minimum
Full day: CHF 750 appropriate,
CHF 625 minimum
 - = Discussion: CHF 400 appropriate,
CHF 300 minimum
-

For details as well as sample agreements see the separate brochure under: www.a-d-s.ch, rubric «Wissenwertes» (useful information, in German, French and Italian) → «Schullesungen» (readings at schools)

Costs of travel, overnight stays and accommodations

4.

Travel and overnight costs, as well as additional expenses, must always be compensated in addition to the fee and in relation to effective costs or with a previously agreed-upon flat-rate.

Travel costs: As a rule travel costs are reimbursed by the organiser in exchange for receipts or bills from the author. If there are higher travel costs due to longer trips, the A*dS recommends paying that to the author before they are due.

5. Author's events abroad

The basic rule is: Same pay for the same work in the same place. The A*dS recommends compensating authors and translators outside Switzerland according to the usual fees in those countries. For terms of compensation in neighbouring countries, see among others:

Germany

- = VS – Verband deutscher Schriftstellerinnen und Schriftsteller, www.verband-deutscher-schriftsteller.de, see among other items «Rechtsfragen» → «Lesehonorar»
 - = VdÜ – Verband deutschsprachiger Übersetzer literarischer und wissenschaftlicher Werke, www.literaturuebersetzer.de, see «Berufspraktisches»
-

Austria

- = IG Autorinnen und Autoren, www.literaturhaus.at, see «Das Haus» → «IG Autorinnen Autoren» → «Mindesthonorare»
-

Italy

- = Federazione Unitaria Italiana Scrittori FUIS, www.fuis.it, among other things the article «La FUIS propone il tariffario per il lavoro degli scrittori» under «Notizie» → «In primo piano»
-

Author's events abroad

5.

France

- = Société des Gens de Lettres, www.sgdl.org, see «Action social» → «Le Guide pratique» («La rémunération des auteurs»)
 - = La Charte des auteurs et illustrateurs jeunesse, www.la-charte.fr, see «Inviter un·e chartiste» → «Recommandations tarifaires»
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Support for reading tours from the Swiss cultural foundation Pro Helvetia

The Swiss cultural foundation Pro Helvetia supports public appearances of Swiss authors and translators at curated cultural institutions, here as well as abroad. In these cases, special regulations about fees apply. For details see www.prohelvetia.ch, «Guidelines for Applicants: Literature».

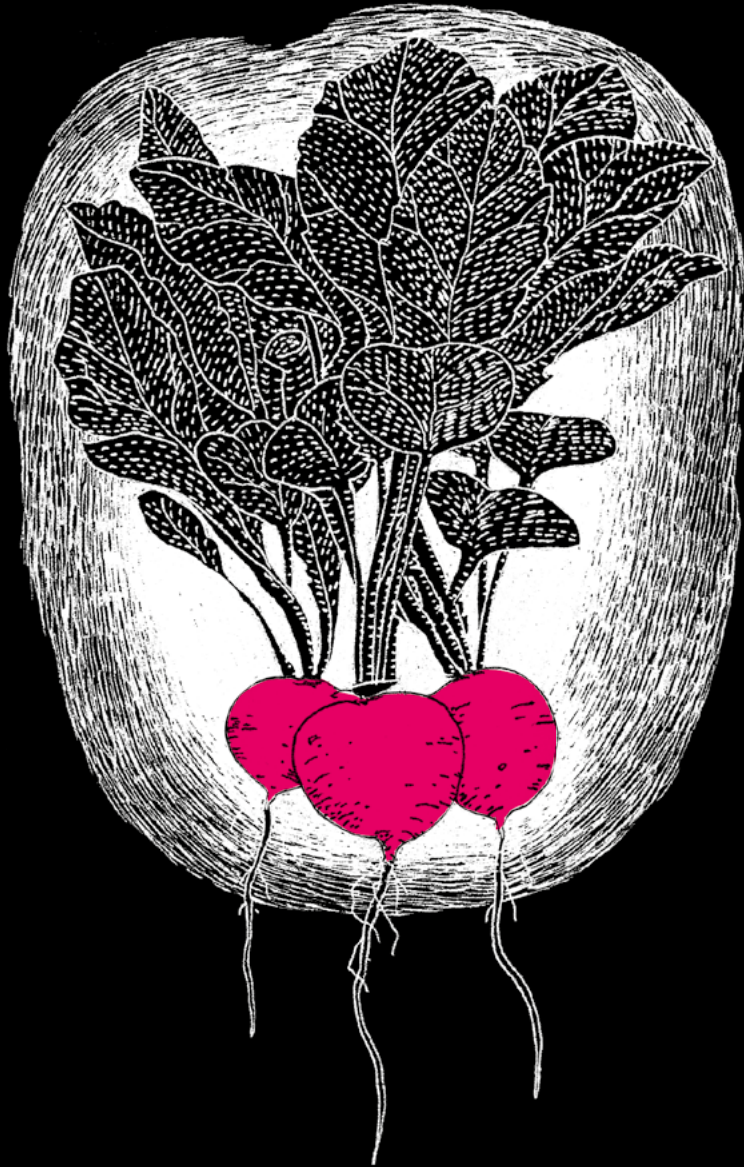
Literary works and the rights attached to them may be directly compensated in publishing contracts. While this leads some authors to license or completely relinquish their copyright, they do not automatically lose it. A book publication is covered by the rights of reproduction and distribution, a reading by the rights of presentation. Broadcasting rights can be handled easily with the aid of a collective rights management organisation, especially if the author is not officially employed by a TV or radio station, or composes freelance text that are broadcast over TV or radio. The collective rights management organisation in charge here are ProLitteris (literary works), Société Suisse des Auteurs (dramatic works, Suisse romande and Ticino) and SUISSIMAGE (audio-visual works).

Some of the terms set by copyright law contain legal remuneration requirements for rights holders. Works may be used within their scope of application, but this use must be remunerated. Collective rights management organisations such as ProLitteris collect and distribute these remunerations, as well as setting fixed rates. The amounts and recipients are determined by the respective distribution regulations. The following are important for authors:

- = Uses in schools (Common Tariff 7)
- = Reprography in businesses and administration (Common Tariffs 8 and 9)
- = Remuneration on blank storage media (Blank tape levy, Common Tariff 4)
- = Rental of copies of works in public libraries (Common Tariff 6a)

The organisation of ProLitteris is responsible for authors, visual artists and photographers. The sums to be distributed fluctuate from year to year depending on income and deductions for social benefits, cultural funding and administration. The largest share goes to reprographics/networks (Common tariffs 7, 8 and 9): in 2016 the net distribution was CHF 8.5 million.





Distribution rights provide for certain parts of the to be distributed amount to be paid directly to the author, while other parts are paid to publishers. This distribution applies no matter what has been agreed in individual contracts; clauses to the contrary in publishing contracts are not binding for ProLitteris. This system minimises the risk of the author's remuneration rights being contractually revoked.

7. Conditions under labour and social insurance law

Questions about social insurance law answered online

A detailed online guideline to questions about social insurance law can be found on the Suisseculture Sociale homepage at www.suisseculturesociale.ch. In addition, we will selectively publish author-specific questions on the A*dS homepage under «Wissenswertes» (useful information, in German, French and Italian) → «Soziale Sicherheit» (social security).

7.1. Self-employed or salaried

Before an author's work can be compensated by an employer or a client it's important for the author to be aware of her legal social insurance status as it relates to her literary work, since different rules may apply under labour and social insurance law.

Swiss law only differentiates between self-employed («selbstständig») and salaried («unselbstständig») work. Other forms do not exist even if terms such as «freelance» («freischaffend») are used often.

As a rule, authors and translators perform their literary work in a self-employed capacity. The social insurance office (AHV-IV) decides whether they fulfil this status on a case-to-case basis upon application. According to the law, one must fulfil the following criteria to be considered self-employed:

- = work under your own name and at one's own expense
 - = take on one's own financial risk
 - = deploy one's own work and capital
 - = manage one's own time
 - = be profit-oriented
 - = have more than one client
-

Conditions under labour and social insurance law

7.

Only the purely economic perspective is relevant; neither artistic quality nor success plays a role.

In all other situations, the author is considered as salaried. It is, however, possible to be self-employed as well as salaried, depending on work circumstances.

Social insurance contributions

7.2.

As a self-employed person, the author is responsible for paying all her social insurance contributions (including about 10% AHV contributions). In the case of salaried authors, the employer takes care of half of the social insurance contributions (in total approx. 12.5% AHV contributions, or a good 6% for the wage earner). In addition, salaried authors are then also insured in case of unemployment. Added to this are the costs for additional mandatory insurance (accident, possibly BVG); the self-employed can pay for such insurance out of their own pocket.

The current figures for authors are published on the AdS homepage under «Wissenswertes» (useful information, in German, French and Italian) → «Soziale Sicherheit» (social security).

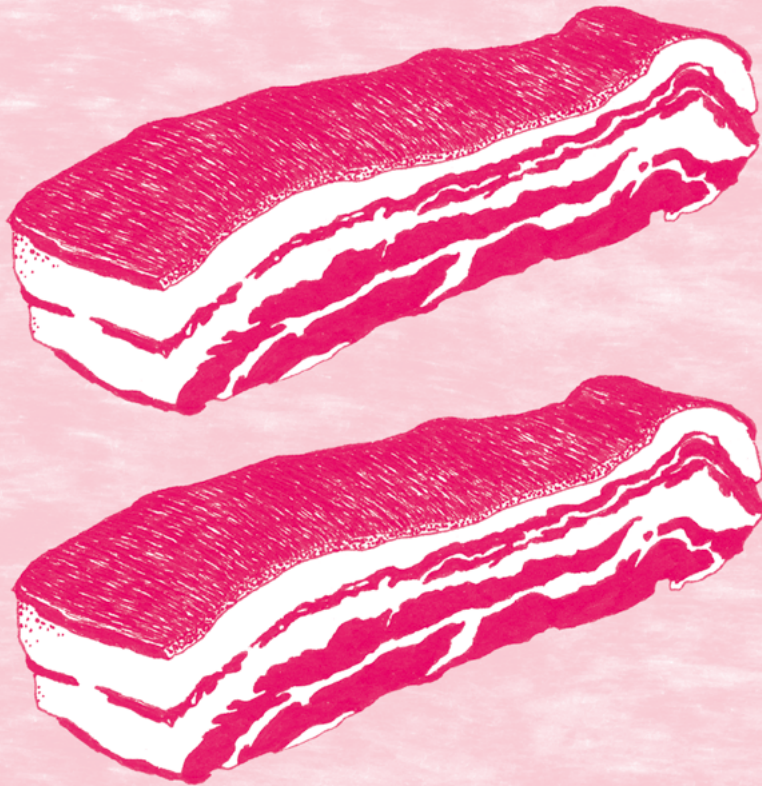
Sometimes an author or translator – or organiser – cancels an event, for health or other reasons.

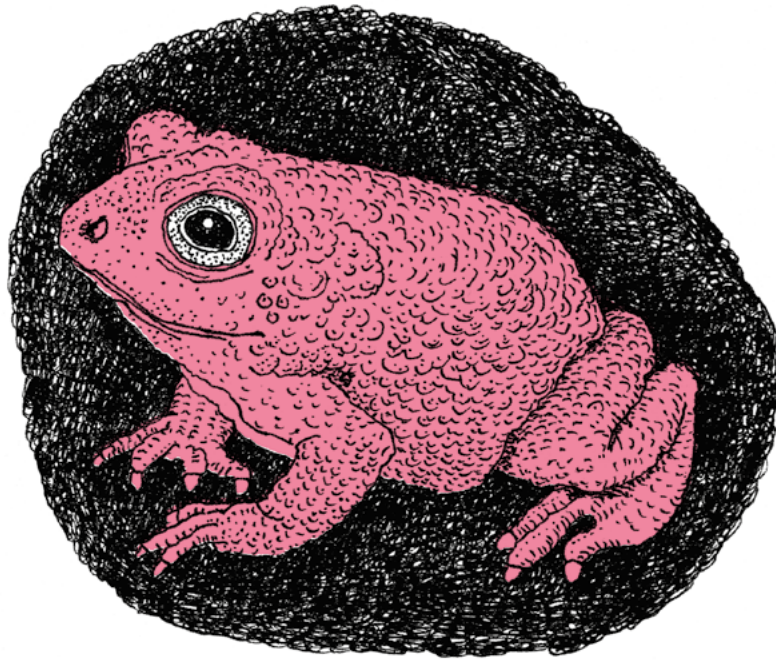
In case of cancellation by the author or translator:

- = The event gets postponed, especially if the fee has already been paid.
- = The author or translator helps find a replacement.
- = In the case of a last-minute cancellation: if the cancellation is involuntary, e.g. in the case of sickness, the author or translator should refund a part of the expenses and fee payments received in advance. On the other hand, if the author or translator cancelled the event on short notice for a reason he was responsible – for instance, because he is appearing elsewhere or travelling abroad – he can be forced to pay damages. He owes the organiser expenses that have become unnecessary, such as the rent of rooms or cancellation fees.

In case of cancellation by the organiser:

- = The organiser decides whether the event can be postponed in consultation with the author or translator.
- = If no other date can be found, the author or translator will receive an agreed-upon cancellation fee.
- = If the organiser and the author or translator cannot agree upon a sum, a cancellation fee in the original amount is to be paid for last-minute cancellations.
- = In any case, unnecessary expenses such as non-refundable train tickets are to be compensated.





Negotiations between author and organiser/client

9.

Although this brochure offers fee recommendations for authors and translators, actual compensations are ultimately reached in negotiation between the organiser/client and the author. Here are the most important negotiating tips for authors:

- = Always be prepared when entering negotiations! Solid arguments, not opinions, will win.
 - = Always determine your desired fee ahead of negotiations, as well as the minimum fee for which you would be prepared to accept the commission.
 - = Know the composition and individual elements that make up your fee, so that your client can better understand the compensation amount.
 - = Be aware of your own position of power: The client is interested in hiring you, so don't be desperate to be hired.
 - = Enter negotiations with a generally positive attitude. A combination of friendliness and confidence in the name of good professional collaboration goes a long way.
-

10. Additional useful information

10.1. Links

- = www.a-d-s.ch, among others «Wissenswertes» (useful information, in German, French or Italian)
 - = www.suisseculturesociale.ch for culture workers' questions about the legal dimensions of social insurance (in German and French)
 - = www.swisscopyright.ch, www.prolitteris.ch, www.ssa.ch and www.suissimage.ch for copyright questions
 - = www.tpunkt.ch, in German, French and Italian, among others «Richtgagen & Richtlöhne» (basic wages) for questions about compensation in free theatre jobs, as well as «Soziale Sicherheit» (social security)
-

10.2. A*dS contact information

The professional association of authors and of literary translators is open to questions about the framework conditions for writing professionals:

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Kohle (d):	Ich habe keine <i>Kohle</i> mehr. E: I'm out of dough. F: Je suis sur la paille. I: Sono al verde.
Lunario (i):	Sbarcare il <i>lunario</i> E: Making ends meet. F: Joindre les deux bouts. D: Über die Runden kommen.
patates (f):	On va gagner des <i>patates</i> ! E: We're gonna make a boatload of money! D: Wir verdienen Geld wie Heu! I: Si guadagna un mucchio di soldi.
Mäuse (d):	Leih mir mal 100 <i>Mäuse</i> . E: Lend me 100 bucks. F: Prête-moi cent balles. I: Prestami cento franchi.
Radis (f):	N'avoir plus un <i>radis</i> . E: I'm broke! D: Keinen müden Cent in der Tasche haben. I: Avere le tasche vuote.
Bacon (e):	Bring home the <i>bacon</i> . D: Die Brötchen nachhause bringen. F: Fais bouillir la marmite. I: Guadagnare la pagnotta.
Kröten (d):	Her mit den <i>Kröten</i> ! E: Show me the greens! F: Raboule la maille! I: Scuci la grana.
Brique (f):	Ça pèse une <i>brique</i> . E: That costs an arm and a leg. D: Das kostet eine Menge Geld. I: Costa un patrimonio.

