

## Briefing an illustrator

### Selecting an Illustrator

Work by Australian illustrators can be found on the Illustrators Australia website [www.illustratorsaustralia.com/](http://www.illustratorsaustralia.com/)

### Things to check

- **Availability:** how busy is the illustrator – are they free to take on a new commission?
- **Style:** check websites such as Illustrators Australia for illustrators with styles that match your needs.

### Describing the illustration required

- Outline your timescale together with details of the job. The illustrator will probably want to discuss uses and fees before making a commitment.
- Is there a particular reason for contacting this illustrator? If your contact is based on seeing a particular piece of work let the illustrator know what you've seen as it will give them a better understanding of exactly what it is you need.
- Document any mechanical information such as the likely printed size, whether in colour/mono, space for typography etc.
- If relevant, be specific about the means of execution if an illustrator works in a variety of styles ie watercolour, line etc.
- Is the brief open to the illustrator's interpretation? Many illustrators prefer an open brief as it enables them to work more creatively; however frustration can set in if proposed sketches are repeatedly rejected. Be sure to outline any and all restrictions at the outset. If a sketch is rejected ensure you communicate to the illustrator the reasons for the rejection together with any suggestions for a remedy. The illustrator may reasonably expect additional payment if extra rounds of sketches are requested above and beyond what was originally briefed.
- State the deadline for finished artwork and delivery of roughs. Also, provide an indication of the time needed for sketch approval. Days spent waiting for approval on a drawing can seriously eat into the time set aside for execution of finished artwork.

### Requesting a portfolio

- Consider if a physical portfolio is necessary. Most illustrators have extensive online folios, with samples available via email.
- Outline the job you have in mind. The illustrator may well want to shape their folio contents to suit the job concerned.
- Let the illustrator know if their portfolio is being called in as part of a pitch or as an individual request.

### Asking for an estimate of costs

Illustration is costed according to its usage. The illustrator will need details of how and where the finished piece is to be used, and over what period of time. These uses can vary considerably depending on whether it is just for an Annual Report cover or to be used in other ways, eg a web version.

The illustrator will need to know the following:

- a list of anticipated uses - i.e. Report cover, brochures, website etc.
- area of use - i.e. Australasia, UK, global or list of single countries.
- period of use.
- total print run.

If you have a budget it saves a lot of time and energy if this communicated upfront.

### Expenses

It is reasonable to expect the illustrator to quote extra for any necessary expenses above and beyond the norm i.e. travel to a specified location. Similarly a 'premium' or 'rush fee' may be quoted for work which is required in an unusually short time frame e.g. a job which requires working through the night.

Everything is negotiable. If a quote exceeds your budget get back in touch with the chosen illustrator and see what flexibility exists in the licencing arrangements. For example, if a quote for blanket all-rights has been requested, a more specific licence, tailored to the exact usage requirements, may actually be far more cost effective.



## Documentation

- It is in the interests of both client and illustrator that proper documentation is maintained. Illustrators Australia has an agreement that their member use. Equally you may have your own contract to send to the illustrator.
- Illustrators won't assign copyright or 'all rights' to you without first agreeing a price for such uses.
- In the great majority of cases a licence is the most appropriate way for the illustrator to grant the appropriate rights. The illustrator keeps the copyright and grants the client a licence appropriate to the commission. The licence would state the use, territory and time period and be exclusive to the client for the specified time.

## What to do if the job is rejected/cancelled

- Any problems about the style or content of artwork should be aired as soon as possible.
- If you are unhappy with the quality of artwork (eg. it falls far short of the quality seen in samples by the artists) and you have to reject it you can contact Illustrators Australia for advice on the best approach

## The finished artwork

- These days finished artwork is usually delivered in electronic form.
- If alterations are required the illustrator may charge a reasonable fee for significant changes which were not in the original brief. The illustrator may not charge extra fees for alterations which are their fault.
- Unless otherwise agreed the original artwork belongs to the illustrator.

