

Equitable Wage Policy

Introduced Feb 2025

Purpose & principles

Setting our wages is a political and operational choice, for which all collective members have responsibility. This policy doesn't attempt to solve the economic pressure of the wider context we work in, but to make working at Tripod a viable & sustainable choice for a wider range of workers than would otherwise be possible.

This policy is inspired by those used by other orgs including RadHR, PIRC and Platform. It is part of an ongoing inquiry & development process to define how we want to financially support ourselves to do this work in a way that values the work we do & is a reflection of Tripod's values & purpose. Both setting & sourcing this income, while remaining staunchly anti-capitalist, is a challenge and we are wary of the ways in which significant increases in financial resourcing can lead organisations away from the radical politics at their core. That said, we also fully acknowledge the importance of making Tripod an attractive, supportive & enriching place to work, in a world that's on fire, that encourages people to stay long-term - which is both about (and more than just about) money.

Speaking frankly about class and other experiences and issues outlined below is a skill and can bring relational tensions and challenging feelings. These challenges could prevent some people rightly claiming an uplift. This policy is designed with this in mind, and encourages workers to take uplifts that apply to them. As we are a small team, being able to speak frankly about our class experiences and support one another's material needs non-judgmentally is part of the team culture we want to create and essential to having transparent and accountable budgeting processes.

- **Requesting:** the system should be as simple as possible to work through.
- **Transparency:** we recognise that confidential pay structures can have a corrosive effect on worker trust so our actual rates of pay will continue to be visible via our open budgeting systems.
- **Trust:** the system of uplifts (and whether these are taken or not, depending on inherited wealth etc.) relies on the honesty and integrity of all workers.

Process

- **Share policy:** Before someone commences paid work for Tripod, a staff member shares this policy with the worker and outlines the process. Job descriptions should include a range of salaries and mention of the equitable wage policy.
- **Discuss policy:** The team member should offer to talk through the policy in whatever medium suits the worker so that they can clarify the approach and uplifts if needed.

- **Claim uplift:** The new worker and staff member leading on induction should calculate together the total uplift for their pay rate. The staff member checks the uplifts, if there are any problems, they should discuss them with the rest of the team.
- **Agree uplift:** The process should not take longer than 1 month, and should complete before the worker starts their role for Tripod, ideally at least 2 weeks beforehand.

Policy

There will be a review of pay annually at the last Operations meeting of the year, when co-directors set the base rates will be set for the following year. Any Tripod worker will be able to suggest changes and amendments to this policy at the review stage each year, which can then be discussed and agreed collectively by the team, likely in an operations meeting. All wages are funding dependent, and co-directors hold financial responsibility which could mean lowering as well as increasing base rates to take care of Tripod's long term needs. Our financial reserves policy outlines steps taken to remedy financial strain which should be considered before changes to wages.

£ Base rate

All members of the staff collective are offered the same 'base rate' annual salary, regardless of their role in Tripod, their experience or type of knowledge.

2025 Current Salary Rate: £27,000 (4 days) From Sept 2025: 29,000

Base rates are updated annually in December and implemented in January

Uplifts

The appropriate base rate is then subject to a percentage adjustment according to the criteria outlined below. The uplift percentages are not compounded, but added together to give a total percentage uplift, e.g. three uplifts of 2%, 8% and 6% are totalled into a single 16% uplift and then applied. Any member can claim a maximum uplift of 25%, to avoid the impacts on the team of having too wide a wage differential.

Changes to any uplift—through changes to a worker's circumstances or an annual change to the uplift, should be applied from the date they take effect. Workers should notify the core team of any changes to circumstances that affect uplifts, by letting their peer supervisor and the finance person know, and changes will be applied usually in the next pay run.

A worker can choose not to take up any uplift available to them, see below for more detail ([Debt, Wealth & Inheritance](#)).

1. Time worked

Tripod should recognise and reward long-term commitments to the organisation, by increasing pay rates appropriately.

An uplift of 1% is added after every year worked,

2. Dependents

Often the greatest financial insecurity (and need) is felt by those with financial dependents: such as (but not limited to) children, ill or aging relatives. Staff with dependents should be supported with increased pay.

Dependents are defined as primary or secondary.

- Primary - dependent not earning and without access to other income.
- Secondary - depending on the worker as a source of financial support, with access to other sources of income.

An uplift of A 6% for a primary dependent reliant on the worker for living costs, and 4% for second, etc dependants

An extra B 2% if financial dependent for whom the worker is the sole earner.

An extra C 2% for secondary dependents receiving some financial support from the worker.

- In the case of low- or higher- waged partners, the divider should be adjusted accordingly.
- Children are classed as primary dependents while they are in full-time education or live with the worker, who provides their food and accommodation.
- Dependents are not just children and relatives.

Example: A worker has 2 children child and is the sole earner in the household = a 10% uplift (6% for first primary dependant, 4% for second primary dependent, 2% for sole earner)

Example 2: A worker is a source of income for someone who isn't a primary dependant, they claim B, 2% uplift.

3. No recourse to public funds or state support

People with no recourse to public funds or unable to access state support for whatever reason, should not be further disadvantaged.

An uplift of 6% D for a worker that cannot access state support.

- There are a multitude of extra costs affecting those with no recourse to public funds, including lack of access to benefits and housing assistance, childcare support, liability to the NHS surcharge etc.
- Where possible, the worker should share evidence of their status.

4. Experience of marginalisation, discrimination and oppression.

Long-term experience of marginalisation, discrimination and oppression has a significant material impact on people's lives.

An uplift of E 6% for workers whose material circumstances are impacted by systemic oppression.

- This uplift does not require proof and can be made as needed by the worker.
- For a number of reasons, we recognise this can be a challenging uplift to identify. So, as part of the implementation of this policy, we encourage a conversation with each new worker to establish whether this applies or not, rather than trying to offer a comprehensive list of what would or wouldn't 'qualify'. These conversations should be respectful, supportive and validating, and not pushy.

5. Disability or long-term health issues

Many long-term health impacts and experiences of disability result in higher costs of living.

An uplift of 2% for workers with a disability or long term illness

Policies—including types of paid leave, flexible working hours, the ability to swap an uplift for more paid time off etc.—can be as (if not more) important than pay. We aim to design these to be more flexible and inclusive, and encourage all workers to suggest additional changes.

- Disabled workers are eligible to claim this uplift in addition to E (experience of systemic oppression).
- Claiming this uplift does not require any formal diagnosis of a 'condition', the focus is on life-impact and extra costs, even if the health issue is managed.

6. Housing insecurity

Safe and stable housing is a fundamental need. Housing security is one of the main ways in which class disparities manifest, and housing in Edinburgh rarely meets the criteria of 'affordability': i.e less than 30% of income paid in rent. Any worker who is in insecure housing may claim an uplift.

A G 6% uplift for anyone in private rental accommodation, or otherwise without housing security.

- Insecure housing is any private rental accommodation. It can also be living situations where the worker is unsafe, or becomes unsafe at some point in time.
- Examples of more secure housing: homeowner with a mortgage, member of a housing co-operative, council tenant, living in property owned by a partner, family member or friend.

Additional uplifts/downlifts

Tripod acknowledges that workers may be affected by factors not listed above. If there is anything significant which negatively or positively affects your wealth, you can build this into your rate by making further adjustments.

We appreciate that sometimes it can be hard to ask for the uplifts for whatever reason. If that is the case, we encourage you to discuss what these might look like during the implementation process, or else raise anything that comes up with your peer supervisor or someone else appropriate at any point throughout the year.

Debt, wealth & inheritance

The aim of this policy is to uplift workers with greater financial need, not penalise those with access to wealth..

- If a worker has a lot of accumulated or inherited wealth; significant income or equity in property which is not coming / did not come from work; or wealthy family members from whom they would reasonably expect a lot of inheritance, we would expect them to decline some or all of the uplifts available to them.
- Examples include property ownership, savings of over £25,000, £10,000 or more in or expected inheritance, including via significant other.
- Workers with significant personal debt should factor this into their uplifts.

Inspired by others' policies:

Appendix: Future considerations

Emergency pay system

What do we do if funding changes are dramatic and we need to prioritise wages among us? E.g cover housing costs first, take account of other household income . . .

Emergency fund

Policy for personal emergencies: e.g emergency healthcare where NHS inadequate