

TRANSLATION & INTERPRETATION

BUDGETING STANDARDS FOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

A side-by-side comparison of pricing factors for translation and interpretation is below.

Translation

Standard rates range between \$0.19-\$0.55 per word, using your English wordcount total for estimates/quotes/billing.

These per word rates vary depending on:

- Final language needed: Rarer languages (other than Spanish or HMoob) cost more and have fewer translators available.
- Total wordcount requested; minimum charges for short documents, discounts may apply for large volume texts.
- Formatting adjustments: billed per word, flat fee, or hourly time to format.
- Rush turnaround rates [Extension warns against this authorizing RUSH]
- If the vendor uses computer-aided translation (CAT) or not controlling for repeating text e.g. Likert scales

Additional considerations:

- Character count increases in most translated languages (expansion factor of at least 20%) vs. English, so leave extra space for this when designing your graphic layouts
- Vendors may charge different rates and have different levels of quality.
- Delays and additional costs would occur if you forgot to include more text, or the text contains typos and other errors or un-editable text like images of text.
- Vendor may need clarification so be available or have a proxy.
- NOTE: If translating from a non-English language into English, different rates may apply based on non-English word count.

Interpretation

Interpreters charge between \$120.00-\$250.00 per hour, with a two-hour minimum.

(State Approved vendors may appear to cost less but charge additional travel-time hourly rates and mileage, round trip)

These rates vary depending on:

- Language direction (e.g., English to Spanish vs. Spanish to English)
- Language pair (e.g. English to Spanish vs English to Russian)
- Interpreter certification level and technical expertise
- Type of interpretation (simultaneous, consecutive, shadow, sight)
- Format of event (conference, meeting, small group)
- Platform (virtual vs. in-person)
- Rush turnaround rates
- 2+ interpreters for anything over 1 hour of simultaneous interpretation

Other costs to factor in:

- Travel time and mileage
- Use of interpretation equipment and technician
- Evening or weekend hours
- Lesser diffused languages (languages requested less frequently) cost more.
- Interpreters that cannot be split up.
- Over 4 hours may be billed as a half day flat fee instead of hourly.
- Events over 7 hours are charged as a full day.
- Concurrent sessions require additional pairs of interpreters.
- Cancellations fewer than five business days before an event are still charged the full rate quoted.
- Vendor may need clarification so be available or have a proxy.

NOTE: Audiovisual projects are not being supported by Extension in 2024 at this time. See website for updates (<https://blogs.extension.wisc.edu/oaic/>).