

World of freelancing growing, but not an easy way to make a living

By Kaomi Goetz, NPR

The recession brought widespread unemployment across the U.S., but it also prompted a spike in the number of freelance or independent workers.

More than 30 percent of the nation's workers now work on their own, and the research firm IDC projects the number of nontraditional office workers – telecommuters, freelancers and contractors – will reach 1.3 billion worldwide by 2015.

Typically, freelancers get to choose when and where they work. Many opt to set up shop in “co-working” arrangements, where they can rent a cubicle and other office resources by the day or the month.

It was once a relatively simple process to sign up with a co-working site.

But now, more companies are adopting a selective approach known as “curated co-working.” One such company, New York City's Grind, requires an application – and you have to be accepted to get started.

That means some would-be co-workers will find they don't make the cut.

“If you write two words and two sentences [on your application], you're probably not going to hear from me,” says Benjamin Dyett, a Grind co-founder and the company's chief gatekeeper. “But if you write two pages about why you want to work at Grind, I will bring you in for an interview.”

Read the whole story