



Call for applications to select regional collaborative and investigative media hubs in Europe

GENERAL

This call is part of the “Collaborative and Investigative Journalism Initiative” (CIJI), which aims to equip independent media outlets and individual journalists with resources, innovative networking infrastructure and standards-based methods that enable them to practice high-quality, and ethical and accountable collaborative and investigative journalism. It aims at providing enabling environments for individual journalists and existing news media outlets to excel, and for start-ups to emerge and succeed. CIJI is carried out in partnership by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Free Press Unlimited (FPU) and Tactical Tech (TT) and aims to become a network-based initiative that promotes ethical standards, offers training and capacity building opportunities and a fora for collaboration and peer-support.

WHAT DOES THE PROGRAMME OFFER?

Funding. CIJI will award grants worth up to 30,000 EUR to established local/regional media organisations to support their capacity to act as local/regional hubs for the community of cross-border, collaborative & investigative journalists.

Accelerator. CIJI will operate an accelerator for small and medium newsrooms and individual journalists, which will give small production grants (up to 7,000 EUR) and facilitate crowdfunding opportunities.

Training. CIJI will offer training opportunities on topics like advanced collaborative journalism, digital investigation skills and safety.

Resource sharing. CIJI will serve as a single access point to a variety of tools and resources. It will support exchange among its members and share best practices and case studies.

Ethical Standards. CIJI will provide an additional European framework by standardising and sharing ethical codes, professional principles and guidelines, adherence to the same set of policies enabling quality journalism. Regional media hubs will also have access to a train-the-trainer programme.

Network. CIJI will provide a collaborative environment across borders and facilitate a regional network for collaboration and peer-support. Members will have opportunities to engage with fellow colleagues in their own countries, but also on a regional level.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

This is an open call for applications for selection of three regional media organisations that will act as CIJI regional hubs in three respective geographical locations: Baltic States, Southern Europe and Visegrád Four. We expect local/regional non-profit media organisations, public and commercial media/newsrooms, media associations and cooperatives from the following countries below to respond to the call:

- > Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania (Baltic States)
- > Greece, Italy, Spain (Southern Europe)
- > Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, (Visegrád Four)

Media organisations that are state owned and/or editorially controlled by state authorities are not eligible to apply.

Only organisations present and operational in one of the above countries are eligible to apply.

FUNDING

Regional media organisations will receive direct financial support to be able to perform their activities as CIJI regional hubs of collaborative and investigative journalism. Average awarded funding is expected to be around 25,000 EUR per grantee but it can range from 17,000 EUR to 30,000 EUR. We anticipate funding one media hub per region.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested and eligible candidates can apply by completing **this** short application form. Only applications received through this online form will be considered. All applications need to be submitted in English. The applications will not be judged based on the level of the English language, but on the quality of the proposed content.

Applications are accepted until 15 November 2021, 18:00 CET.

For any clarifying questions on the application, get in touch via email: info@ciji.eu

SELECTION CRITERIA

A jury, consisting of renowned media professionals, will make the final selection of organisations to be funded.

The jury will guide its decision-making on how the applicants meet the following:

- > Capacity to act as an ambassador / regional media hub which can facilitate regional collaboration and exchange of best practices and resources.
- > Proven track record in cross-border/regional collaborative and/or investigative journalism training, capacity building or related activities.
- > Access to established local/regional networks and media institutions and journalists in all countries of their selected target region

Additionally, the jury will also take into account:

- > Applicants' credentials and professional experience
- > Applicants' capacity to train fellow colleagues
- > Applicants' communication, promotion and engagement strategy
- > Expected (regional) reach and impact

While not mandatory, the jury will appreciate joint applications and regional partnerships.

THE TIMELINE

- > 15 November 2021, 18:00 CET - Application deadline
- > 15-29 November 2021 - Jury selection
- > 1-10 December 2021 - Awards communicated
- > 10-20 December 2021 - Grant agreements signed
- > December - August 2022 - Projects underway
- > 31 August 2022 - Projects wrapped up

WHAT DOES THE GRANT COVER?

The funding may be used to cover the following:

- > Costs of staff or consultants assigned to the project.
- > Communication activities.
- > Localisation of materials to local norms, contexts and languages
- > Activities related to promoting CIJI activities within wider community of professionals
- > Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs related to project activities.

The grant money CANNOT be spent on:

- > Office and rent
- > Hardware investment (laptops, cameras, phones, etc.)
- > Organisation of events or procurement of services that are not part of the “Collaborative and Investigative Journalism Initiative” project
- > Unethical and illegal activities

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Free Press Unlimited (FPU) is a non-profit organisation based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, that works to make independent news and information available to everyone, particularly in countries with limited (press) freedom. Free Press Unlimited helps journalists and media professionals with emergency support, advice, training and capacity building in more than 40 countries, together with over 90 local media partners worldwide.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is a Paris-based non-profit organisation that promotes journalistic freedom, pluralism and independence. This includes defending those who embody these ideals. RSF provides information about the media freedom situation throughout the world and provides journalists with concrete support by means of campaigns, advocacy, litigation, legal aid and material assistance. RSF has also launched initiatives designed to promote the right to reliable news and information, especially in the digital domain.

Tactical Tech (TT) is an international NGO that engages with citizens and civil-society organisations to explore and mitigate the impacts of technology on society.

This project is co-funded by the European Commission under the Pilot Project: Supporting investigative journalism and media freedom in the EU (DG CONNECT).