

MEDIA » FORWARD FUND

for media diversity in Germany,
Austria & Switzerland

Info Event: August 12, 2025

General Funding Line

Agenda

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| › 12:30-12:35 pm: | About Media Forward Fund (MFF) | ~ 5 Min. |
| › 12:35-12:40 pm: | How we fund | ~ 5 Min. |
| › 12:40-12:50 pm: | How we choose | ~ 10 Min. |
| › 12:50-01:00 pm: | How to apply | ~ 10 Min. |
| › 13:00-02:00 pm: | Your questions | ~ 60 Min. |



Your questions will be addressed in the last 60 minutes and can be posted in the chat at any time.

About Media Forward Fund

What is the goal of the fund?

➤ Media Forward Fund is intended to lead to more independent quality media with viable business models that publish strong, trustworthy content and are sustainably financed in the long term.

The aim is to strengthen journalism and thus democracy.

Particular attention is paid to media organizations that

- › fill gaps in **supra-regional / national reporting and thematic niches**
- › fill gaps in **regional / local reporting (news deserts)**
- › address **underserved communities**

Initiators and partners

An initiative of 10 foundations, 1 impact investor:



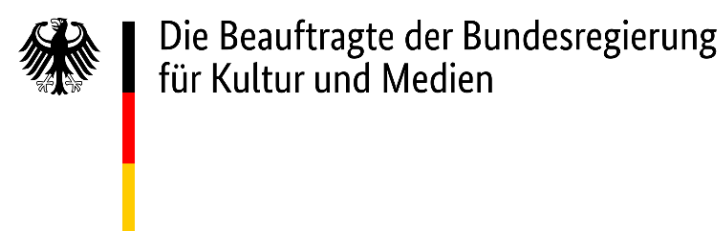
Funding partners:



In partnership with:



Funded by:



“Journalism now needs a lot more money from a lot more people. Then our democracies will have a chance.”



Hans Schöpflin
Chairman of the
Management Board
Schöpflin Foundation

“Nobody invests in media – that urgently needs to change.”



Sebastian Klein
Founder Karma Capital /
Neue Narrative

“For a resilient democracy, you need a vibrant media landscape.”



Manuel Hartung
Chairman of the Management Board
ZEIT STIFTUNG BUCERIUS

How we fund

Overview of the general funding line (GEN)

	GENERAL FUNDING LINE (GEN)
Journalistic work focus	no limitations
Funding period	max. 24 months
Funding sum	max. € 400,000 or € 200,000
Organization size	> 30 FTE: Project funding ≤ 30 FTE: Organizational funding
Proof of Concept	established
Product Market Fit	established
Business model	further development of an existing business model
Objective for use of the funding	growth of an existing offering, format, distribution channel or revenue source
Type of funding	organizational funding* or project funding for a specific undertaking <i>*for OF, non-project-related (overhead) costs can be submitted</i>

Offers



01

Open Calls



02

Upskilling



03

Community

General funding line

Non-Profit

For-Profit

Pre-tax figures


≤ 30 FTE

Organizational funding*

usually € 400,000

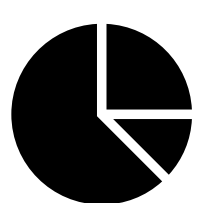
Project financing


> 30 FTE

Project funding

usually € 200,000

Project financing



50% funding rate when > 30 FTE



max. 24 months

* non-project-related costs can be submitted.

No grants can currently be awarded for

- ✗ Schools, universities, public research institutions
- ✗ Public service media
- ✗ Interest groups
- ✗ Sole proprietorship and individuals who are not part of an organization, as well as partnerships*
- ✗ Service and technology providers
- ✗ Platforms that primarily curate third-party journalistic content
- ✗ PR or news agencies
- ✗ Production companies, that cannot demonstrate an innovative approach
- ✗ Organizations or projects that are still in the concept or start-up phase
- ✗ Conferences and networking events
- ✗ Studies, accompanying research, individual research projects
- ✗ Scholarships
- ✗ (Piloting) of technical solutions or a service for media professionals or media companies (infrastructure)
- ✗ Supplementary funding for an ongoing project

*(e.g. for DE: GbR, OHG, KG, PartG; for AT: OG, KG, e.U., GesbR; for CH: e.G., KIG, KG)

How we choose

Must-haves

- Registered headquarter of overall organization is in **Germany, Austria or Switzerland**.
- **Work serves the common good.**
- Work is based on **recognized journalistic/editorial standards** and commitment of the media organization to the principles of the **country-specific press council**.
- (Prospective) **structural and personnel separation** between **editorial** and **business management**.
- Organization has a **working business model aimed at serving the common good**. This means that a **proof-of-concept** for the journalistic offering and a **product/market fit** can be demonstrated, which proves **initial revenues generated from several sources primarily from the DACH region**.
- **Growth of revenue streams focused on the common good** are at the heart of the project, rather than merely striving to continue business-as-usual.

Overarching criteria for the funding decision

Transformation

Onward and upwards

We examine:

- › the potential for internal and external transformation through our grant,
- › whether there is a potentially viable and sustainable business model
- › whether there is an opportunity for scaling
- › the relationship between costs and the expected impact in the funding application,
- › whether the project is part of a long-term strategy

User focus

User at the center

We examine:

- › the degree to which the organization focuses on its users,
- › whether the needs of the target audience have been analyzed

Diversity

Various perspectives

We examine:

- › whether structural gaps or gaps in regional/local or national/supra-regional reporting are addressed,
- › the accessibility of reporting, especially for underserved communities,
- › the degree to which these communities are represented in the staffs of the organization applying

Independence

Freedom of the press as cornerstone

We examine:

- › the (prospective) structural and personnel separation between editorial and business management
- › the clear division between editorial and ad sales,
- › the crisis resistance through strategic organizational development and long-term sustainable financial planning

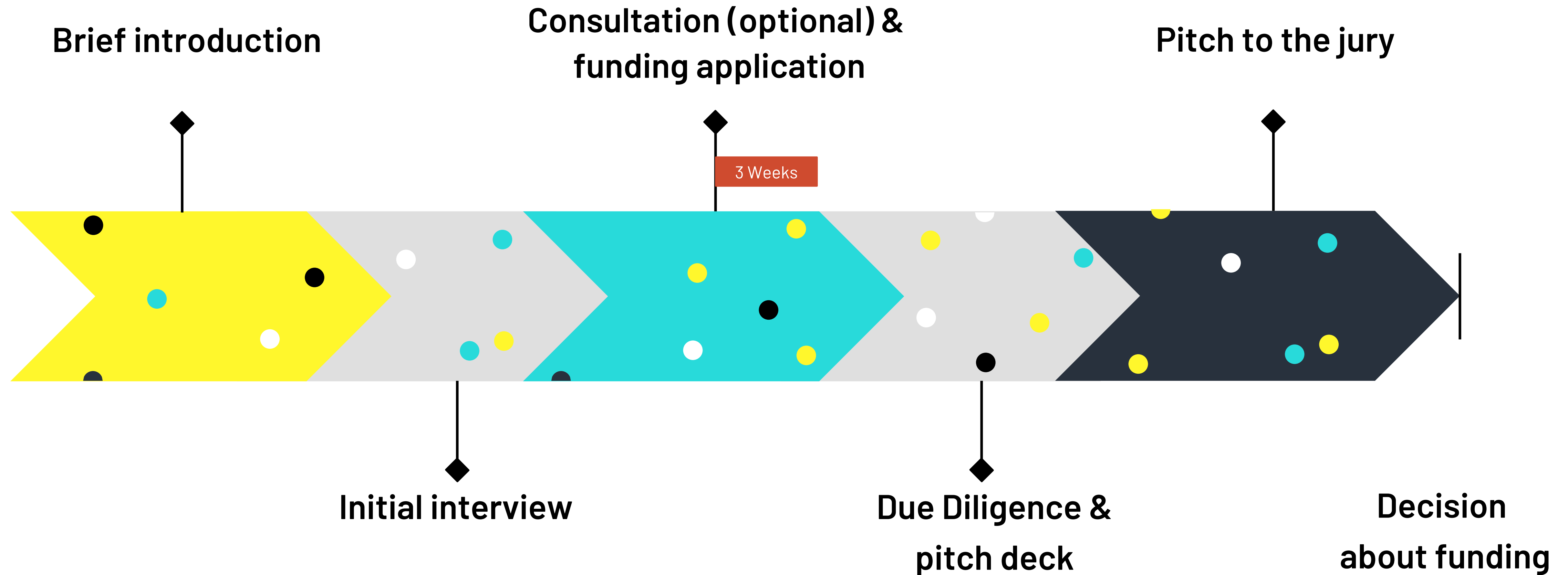
Quality

Highest standards

We examine:


- › the organization's commitment to the principles of the country-specific press council.
- › the existence of established editorial standards and institutionalized mechanisms to monitor them,
- › professional and journalistic competence within the organization's team,
- › the disclosure of finances

Selection process

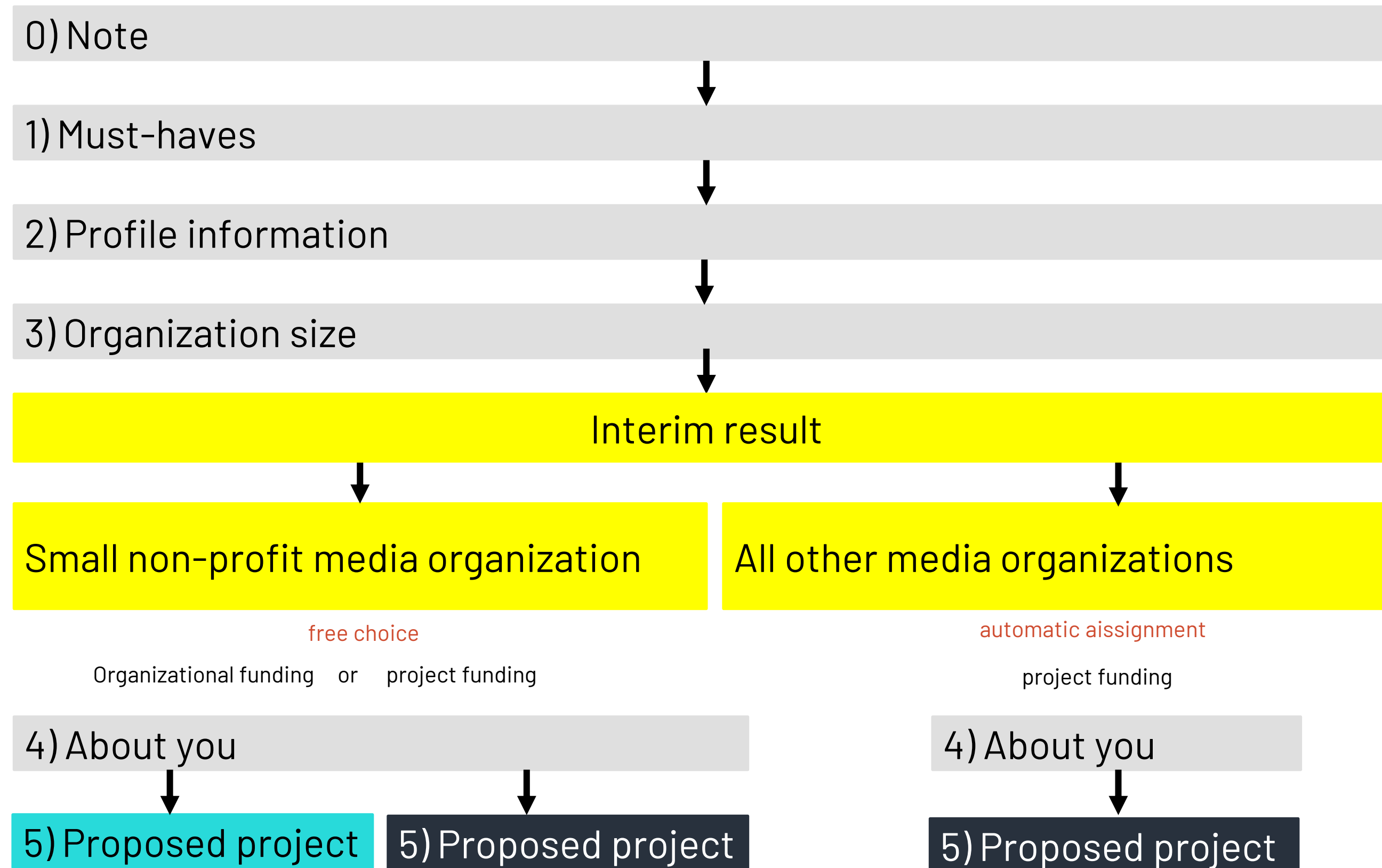


How to apply

Transformation potential

- 
- A project that is the next step in the **further strengthening your financial sustainability** and at the same time...
- › ...closes a **gap** in reporting
 - › ...creates transformative added value in the media sector through the use of **new approaches**
 - › ...has a particular focus on **reaching target audiences** that have thus far been **underserved** by the news media.

Brief introduction



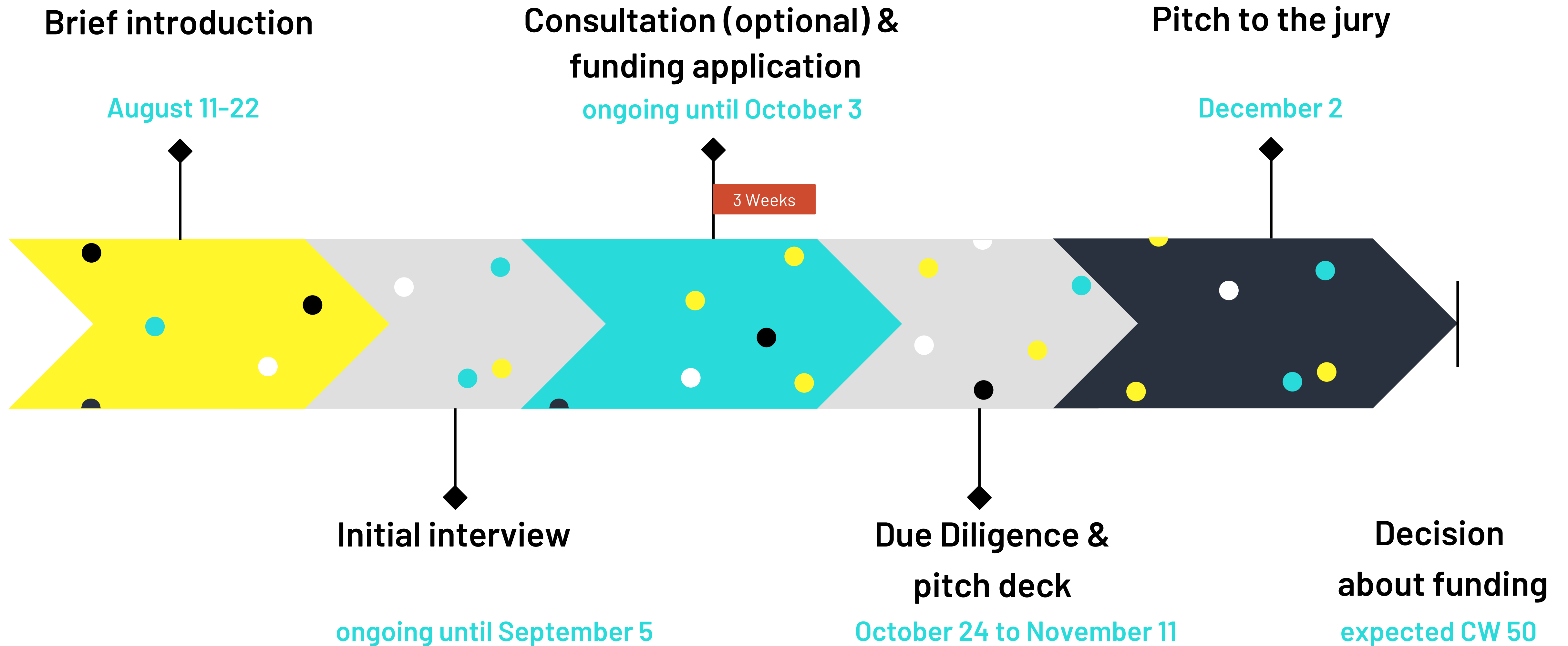
Answers to the questions in the Brief Introduction cannot be cached.

Funding application

Basic profile information	
Your organization	
<div><div></div><div><div>1. Management and team</div><div>2. Status-quo</div><div>3. Strategy</div></div></div>	
Business model and journalistic work	
<div><div></div><div><div>4. Business model</div><div>5. Ensuring journalistic quality</div></div></div>	
Your grant project	
<div><div></div><div><div>6. Grant project description*</div><div>7. Timeline for project implementation</div><div>8. Transformative added value</div><div>9. Target audience & interaction</div><div>10. Needs assessment</div><div>11. Market and competition analysis</div><div>12. Financial overview and planning</div><div>13. Project team</div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div>	
Impact	
<div><div></div><div><div>14. Impact on overall strategy*</div></div></div>	

*Answers from the brief introduction are complemented and revised

Timeline 2025



Your questions

Thank you!



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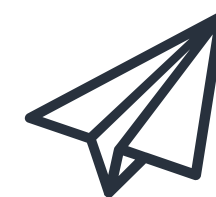
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