Brief Introduction

General Funding Line

0) Note

By completing the brief introduction, you start the application process. You confirm that you meet our basic eligibility criteria, briefly introduce yourselves – and most importantly: present your project clearly and convincingly.

We support the growth of media organizations focused on the common good seeking to improve their financial sustainability through the implementation of a specific project. In doing so, they fill a reporting gap and ideally rely on approaches that differ from existing methods commonly used in the DACH region (Germany, Austria and Switzerland) and/or in their own market. There is a particular focus on organizations that report for target groups that have thus far been underserved by the news media.

Media Forward Fund is not intended for organizations that are merely seeking to secure their continued existence or a one-time seed funding.

Please note that the Media Forward Fund currently **cannot** award grants for:

- Schools, universities or public research institutes, arts and education projects
- Public service media
- Interest groups, think tanks
- Sole proprietorship or individuals who are not part of an organization, as well as partnerships (For DE: GbR, OHG, KG, PartG; for AT: OG, KG, e.U., GesbR; for CH: e.G., KIG, KG)
- Service and technology providers
- Platforms that primarily curate third-party journalistic content
- PR or news agencies
- Production companies, that cannot demonstrate an innovative approach and therefore are unable to contribute to the transformation of the media sector
- Organizations or projects that are still in the concept or startup phase

- Conferences and networking events
- Studies, accompanying research or individual research projects
- Scholarships
- (Piloting) of technical solutions or services for media professionals or media companies (infrastructure)
- Supplementary funding for an ongoing project

1) Must-haves

☐ We hereby confirm that we meet the following requirements, understanding that they are essential for eligibility and will be reviewed by the Media Forward Fund team during the application process. (*)

1) The registered headquarters of your overall organization is in Germany, Austria or Switzerland.
2) Your organization must serve the common good. That means that the revenues produced by your work are predominantly generated with the intention of strengthening journalism in its social mission of promoting public education and strengthening democracy.
3) Your work is based on recognized journalistic/editorial standards, which you document publicly (or plan to do so). You are committed to the principles of the press council in your country.
4) You have a distinct structural and personnel separation between editorial and business management. If your company is younger than five years old and has fewer than 10 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs), there must be a demonstrable intention to implement this separation in the future.
5) You already have a working business model aimed at serving the common good. Consequently, you can demonstrate a proof-of-concept for your journalistic offering in addition to a product/market fit, confirmed by initial revenues generated from several sources primarily from the DACH region.
6) With your project, you are aiming to grow your common good-oriented revenue sources rather than merely applying to secure the continued existence of your organization and to continue business-as-usual.

2) Profile information

1) First and last name of contact person: (*)

[Answer]

2) E-mail address of contact person: (*)

[Answer]

3) Telephone number of contact person, including the country code (Germany: +49, Austria: +43, Switzerland +41): (*)

[Answer]

4) Complete name of the applicant organization: (*)
[Answer]

5) Founding year: (*)

[Answer]

6) Legal form of the applicant organization (Note: Cooperatives are generally not considered non-profit and are therefore classified as for-profit): (*)
   a) Non-profit (charitable)   ☐
   b) For-profit (not charitable) ☐

7) Country of registration of applicant organization: (*)
   a) Germany   ☐
   b) Austria   ☐
   c) Switzerland ☐

8) Complete address of applicant organization: (*)

[Answer]

9) Is the applicant organization part of a larger organization, i.e. is it dependent on an affiliated entity (company or group) or under the control of a third party (e.g. parent company or companies)? Does a close relationship exist with another organization or company (e.g. GmbH linked to a non-profit association)?

   ☐ Yes (Please use this space to name the relevant (overall) organization(s) (incl. legal form) and briefly describe the relationship):

[obligatory answer if yes]

   ☐ No

10) If applicable, please indicate here the name of the sub-unit (e.g. editorial team, department) submitting this brief introduction:

[Answer]

3) Organization size

Note:

Small non-profit media organizations with up to 30 FTEs in the overall organization can apply for both organizational funding (including funding of project costs) and for project funding.

All other media organizations can only apply for project financing. For overall organizations larger than 30 FTEs, the MFF provides co-financing on a 50:50 basis.

The following information serves to assist us in classifying your organization and assigning it to the correct funding type. If the applicant organization is part of a larger overall organization, i.e. dependent on an affiliated entity (e.g. company) or under the control of a third party (e.g. parent company or companies) (see question 9), the following information pertaining to the overall organization must be provided.

1) Number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) employed by the overall organization: (*)

Current number

a) ≤ 30 ☐
b) ≥ 31 ☐

2) Average share of original content (i.e., not agency reports, aggregated/curated third-party content, or predominantly AI-generated material) among all published works of the organization is above 70 % over the course of the year: (*)

Previous year's figure

a) ≤ 70 % ☐
b) ≥ 71 % ☐

3) Share of total digital revenue of the overall organization made up by regularly recurring payments from users (excluding e-paper in the case of print publishers): (*)

Previous year's figure

a) ≤ 30 % ☐
b) ≥ 31 % ☐

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4) About you

Note:

The following information pertains to the applicant organization. If a <u>sub-unit</u> of the applicant organization (editorial team, department) is submitting this brief introduction, the following information – in contrast to Section 3 – pertains <u>exclusively to the sub-unit</u>.

1) Reporting focus: (*)
a) Regional/local ☐
b) National/supra-regional ☐

2) What kind of journalism do you produce and for what specific audience(s)? (max. 1,000 characters) (*)

[Character limit: max. 1,000 characters]

3) Free access to media offerings for the general public:
a) yes ☐
b) no (please briefly describe access limitations, e.g. paywall) ☐

[obligatory answer if no]

4) Link to your website: (*)

[Answer]

5) Links to examples of your journalism in the DACH region (name of media offer and link: max. 3 entries) (*)

[1. Example podcast: www.examplepodcast.de

2. Example newsletter: www.examplenewsletter.at

3. Example project: www.exampleproject.ch]

6) What are the <u>three channels with the greatest reach</u> that you operate yourself? (Multiple answers possible) (*)

[Multiple answers]

a) Website   ☐
b) Audio   ☐
c) Video/TV   ☐
d) Newsletter   ☐
e) Social media   ☐
f) Print   ☐
g) Other (please specify)   ☐

7) What are your <u>three largest</u> sources of revenue or financing? (Multiple answers possible)(*)

[Multiple answers]

a) Subscriptions   ☐
b) Affiliate marketing   ☐
c) Content partnerships   ☐
d) Events   ☐
e) Grants   ☐
f) Private donations   ☐
g) License fees/revenue sharing   ☐
h) Merchandise   ☐
i) Memberships   ☐
j) Advertisements/sponsoring   ☐
k) Native advertising   ☐
l) Other (please specify)   ☐

8) Key figures pertaining to the reach of your three channels with the greatest reach (e.g. website: unique users and monthly visits; newsletter: subscriber number and opening rate; social media: engagement; podcast: downloads per month across all platforms): (*)

[Answer]

[General information section ends here. The following pertains to your project.]

5) **Your proposed project**

1) For what specifically do you wish to use the funding? Please provide a brief summary of your proposed project and describe who you hope to reach. (max. 1,000 characters)(*)

[Character limit: max. 1,000 characters]

2) Please describe how your proposed project contributes to your long-term strategy and the further development of your organization, your journalistic work and, in particular, the growth of your common good-oriented business model. (max. 1,500 characters)(*)

[Character limit: max. 1,500 characters]

3) To what extent do you rely on approaches in your work or in your proposed project that differ from existing methods commonly used in the DACH region and/or in your market and/or meet a specific need? (max. 1,000 characters)(*)

[Character limit: max. 1,000 characters]

4) Does your work or your proposed project take into account groups that have thus far been neglected by the media ("underserved communities")? (max. 1,000 characters)(*)

[Character limit: max. 1,000 characters]

5) How much funding do you require for the project? (in euros)(*)
   Note: As a rule, the maximum sum for small media organizations is up to €400,000. For larger media organizations, the Media Forward Fund co-finances projects on a 50:50 basis up to a maximum of €200,000. In the case of common good-oriented for-profit organizations, these are gross figures.

[Answer: in euros]

6) For how long will you need the funding? (in months)(*)
   Note: Maximum duration is 24 months.

[Answer: in months]

Other information

[optional]

☐ I voluntarily consent to my information from the application process being shared with partners of the Media Forward Fund if needed. Any personal data will be redacted. This consent is not required for the application.