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# Arena

for  
journalism  
in Europe

# Tips to get started with fundraising for journalism – **the journalist's perspective**

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# Fundraising in short: 3 steps

1. Your journalism project
2. Matchmaking
3. Interaction between journalist(s) and funder(s)

# Preparing your application – step by step

1. Your journalism – know what you want
2. An entrepreneurial mindset
3. Editorial independence – avoid conflicts of interest
4. Matchmaking
5. Be mindful of the two target groups
6. Practicalities & procedures

# Your journalism – know what you want!!!

What is the essence of your journalism project?

Journalism?

→ Work grants, foundation grants, fellowships, production grants, cross-funding through freelance tasks

A start-up medium?

→ Foundation grants, investments, business models, subscriptions, fees

Meta-journalism?

→ Foundation grants, academic grants, membership fees, business models

# Your journalism – TIPS

- Write down what your project is about or aims for. Write headlines. Write half-pagers. Write one-liners. ➔ Force yourself to **get to the point!**
- Make a work plan
- Make a time line
- Draft a budget
- Test it all with trusted friends and colleagues – they may ask good questions and help improve

# An entrepreneurial mindset

Take the responsibility for everything – from idea to publication

Use your (journalistic) competence and creativity to find a way to fund your work.

- Example: "Zero waste journalism"
- Be inspired by what others do (journalists, data developers, journalism projects, others) and consider, whether you could adapt it to your work

Be aware that this is time consuming!

Don't give up easily!

# An entrepreneurial mindset – TIPS

- Entrepreneurial thinking does not necessarily come natural to trained journalists
- Entrepreneurial thinking can be trained
- Entrepreneurial thinking can be solved in collaboration – budget for a pie big enough to both feed the journalist and the entrepreneur/coordinator in the project
- Funders do not want failed projects. If an entrepreneur/coordinator is necessary, argue for it. (If not, don't even mention it).

# Editorial independence – avoid conflicts of interest

Check: Where does the money come from, what is the purpose?

Foundations → Source of money, statutes, other activities

Business → Source of money, purpose of support

Governments → Purpose of support, control mechanisms, intermediaries

# Editorial independence – TIPS

- Check for “strings attached” – that means limitations to your editorial independence
- Consider whether this would question your and your journalism’s credibility – in the short term and the longer term. If in doubt, read ethical guidelines for New York Times’ journalists, senior lawyers etc.
- Be transparent, insist on transparency

# Matchmaking

1. Your interest – the journalism
2. The interest of the foundation
3. Time & timing

# Be mindful of target groups for your proposal

In fundraising, you operate with two "target groups"

The target group of your journalism

The foundation (jury, team, trustees...)

Imagine your foundation contact person:

- Do they support journalism as such? Journalism to play a particular role in society (fx stimulating public debate, holding accountable)? Are they familiar with journalism practice or is this their first call?
- Do they support a given topic – and are maybe *not* familiar with journalism practice?
- Do they get a lot of (smaller) applications at once and are very busy?

# Practicalities & processes

Timing – long term planning – keep an eye on grant deadlines

Interaction with foundation

Budgeting and finance reporting

Narrative reporting

# Practicalities & processes - TIPS

## Interaction with foundation

Application, contracting, reporting, payments...  
...good advice, network, commitment

## Reporting

Consider it an opportunity to think of your work – on practical aswell as on meta level

# Let's collect the links to help each other

<https://discussion.dataharvest.eu/t/funding-for-journalism/137/8>

# Further reading

Alfter, Brigitte (2019). Cross-border Collaborative Journalism, chapter 7 (hands-on, short intro).

Ferrucci, Patrick & Nelson, Jacob L. (2019). The New Advertisers: How Foundation Funding Impacts Journalism. Media and Communication (ISSN: 2183–2439) 2019, Volume 7, Issue 4, Pages 45–55 (meta)

Konieczna, Magda (2018). Journalism without profit. Oxford: Oxford University Press (meta)

Reuter, Stephanie (2016). Die richtige Stiftung finden. Deutscher Journalisten-Verband (hands-on).

Schiffrin, Anya & Zuckerman, Ethan (2015). Can we measure media impact? Surveying the field. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved from [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/can\\_we\\_measure\\_media\\_impact\\_surveying\\_the\\_field](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/can_we_measure_media_impact_surveying_the_field) (meta)

**TIPS: The question of impact of journalism is currently discussed a lot by funders and it is worth knowing the terminology and arguments – and consider what it means for your journalism and for independence.**