



2025

FAQ

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**Simon Cumbers
Media Fund**
An Initiative of Irish Aid

Simon Cumbers Media Fund – Q&A

Questions related to preliminary research:

- *What preliminary research is expected?*
- *How much detail are the judges looking for?*
- *Do I need to identify the people I will interview in advance?*

Applicants are expected to undertake preliminary research regarding the treatment of their proposed story, and this should be addressed within the application form.

You are expected to have a well-developed sense of the issues you want to cover, your destination country/region, the people/groups with whom you want to engage, and the perspective you want your audience to see, read or hear in your work.

The preliminary research includes but is not limited to consideration of the following (as outlined in the application form):

- The judges will look for evidence that the applicant can display preliminary knowledge of the topic and can deliver a clear pitch in terms of what the story is and how it will be told. The focus of the project should be clear and you must be able to show how it relates to the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Who do you plan to interview/engage with while in-country? The name of organisations, rather than individuals, would suffice. This list does not have to be exhaustive but should illustrate that you have researched relevant organisations and have made initial contacts with individuals or organisations to secure their participation.
- Why do you believe this story is of interest and importance to the public in Ireland?

The preliminary research is an important consideration for the judges. The judges will be looking for clarity around how you propose to engage with the task and of some, at least, of the realistic likely participants.

The research section of your proposal gives you the opportunity to showcase your engagement with the topic and advance preparations. The more detailed your approach the better.

It will be helpful to have identified a number of people/groups who you would like to speak to/who can answer your questions, even if you do not have all the specific details or names. However, the judges do recognise that it is a dynamic environment, and you might defer from your initial plan.

Questions related to the commitment to publish/publication:

- *The primary publication outlet committed to publish my project is a media outlet with its primary audience in the Republic of Ireland, can some of the material I produce also be published by another publication (outside the ROI)?*
- *What is meant by primary publication outlet?*

All applications must be accompanied by a valid letter of commitment to publish your work by a media outlet with its primary audience in the Republic of Ireland. You can download the template letter of



commitment on [our website](#). Please note: the exact wording must be used, and the letter must be on the media organisation's headed paper and must be signed by a commissioning editor.

The primary outlet is the media outlet which is your main vehicle for communicating the story. The primary outlet must be based in the Republic of Ireland and should be members of the Press Council of Ireland or be an established media organisation with a strong track record of bringing foreign stories to a large audience in Ireland.

The judges require a commitment to publish from at least one outlet. Letters of commitment can be submitted from more than one outlet if you intend on publishing across multiple outlets.

Additional opportunities with outlets in other jurisdictions are permitted and encouraged, once the primary outlet is in the Republic of Ireland.

Questions related to accessibility

- *Would the funding cover reasonable accessible accommodation and/or other accessibility needs?*

The Fund covers costs associated with successful applicants travelling to and within, a developing country or region for the production of development-related articles or reports that would not normally be covered by a media organisation's news budget. Applicants can include notes in their budget form and application form to indicate any additional needs or supports they require. Notes can be added to the 'Project Budget' section of the application form under 'Additional comments regarding the budget'.

Questions related to the Fund timeline

- When are decisions on granting funding made and what is the timeframe for when the project must be completed?

The deadline for applications is 19th September 2025 at 5pm. The judging process for the fund will begin after the application deadline until the end of October. The earliest any successful applicant would receive funding is November 2025.

Our intention is to be as efficient and robust as possible with all stages of the judging and administrative process. We cannot guarantee the exact date upon which each grantee's grant allocation will be completed.

Grants from the fund (70% of the grant allocation agreed by the judging panel, not 70% of what the applicant has necessarily requested in their application) will all be allocated before the end of December at the latest.

As per the application guidelines, projects must have been completed and published / broadcasted in the calendar year 2026.

