



2026

Frequently Asked Questions



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

Simon Cumbers Media Fund – Q&A

Questions related to the budget proposal

- Do you have any tips for first time applicants preparing a budget submission?
- What is an average length of stay in the country?

Applicants are expected to demonstrate that they have undertaken preliminary research and have a well-developed plan for the delivery of their project. The consideration of budget is an important part of your preliminary research and will help you support the overall credibility and feasibility of your application. The judges are looking for evidence that you have mapped out how you will deliver your proposed story within the budget you have estimated. The more detailed the breakdown of cost the better. You are encouraged to itemise your costings and show what you have taken into consideration rather than giving topline estimates.

During the research phase, we advise you to contact organisations in the country to which you intend to travel, as well as speak to colleagues with experience of reporting on development issues while planning your budget. We also advise you to contact the Embassy or Consulate in the country of destination if you have any questions around travel – including visas required.

There is no standard or recommended length of stay, however, on average, projects funded in previous funding rounds included an in-country stay of 7-10 days. The length of stay in the country is dependent on what is required for the delivery of your project. You should propose a duration that is appropriate to your project and can be justified by your reporting plans. The judging panel will consider whether the proposed travel schedule and associated costs are realistic and proportionate to the scope of the project.

Questions related to the judging criteria

- What does the judging panel look at when scoring a project in terms of reach?

The judges will consider the extent to which your proposed story is likely to reach a large audience across a range of media platforms/outlets in the Republic of Ireland. All applicants, irrespective of the media organisation's focus or niche, will need to demonstrate how they propose to maximise the audience for the story. You should demonstrate how and where your work will be published, the audiences you expect to reach, and any opportunities to extend the project's impact through additional channels or formats. Cross-media projects are encouraged and can help strengthen the reach of a proposal.

The judges will look at the overall audience that a project is likely to reach. However, they do recognise that some topics are of particular relevance to specific communities, sectors or interest groups. In such cases, an outlet that reaches all or the great majority of those specific audiences would be favourably considered. Where the applicant can augment the reach of their project through additional news platforms or media outlets, this will be important to highlight.

Questions related to journalistic experience

- Can I apply as a producer or director for radio and TV?

The Simon Cumbers Media Fund is open to journalists and media professionals with an interest in reporting on global development issues in the developing world for an Irish audience, including print, broadcast and digital journalists, as well as radio and television producers and directors.

Questions related to the Fund timeline

- When are the funding decisions expected to be made, what is the deadline for completing the project?

The deadline for applications is Friday, 18th September 2026 at 5pm. The judging process for the fund will begin after the application deadline until the end of November. The earliest any successful applicant would receive funding (70% of the grant allocation agreed by the judging panel, not 70% of what the applicant has necessarily requested in their application) is December 2026.

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.

As per the application guidelines, projects must have been completed and published or broadcast in the calendar year 2027.

List of projects funded by the Simon Cumbers Media Fund

- Can I get a list with previous/past reports under Simon Cumbers Media Fund in previous years?

We have put together a snapshot of some of the published projects from previous funding rounds below. These are projects that received funding under the 2024 & 2025 funding round. The list is not exhaustive, it includes only one piece of each project published, however this will give you a flavour of the topics and locations that previous recipients of the fund have covered.

Snapshot of coverage - Simon Cumbers Media Fund

- “A lot of children die’: Patrick Freyne reports from inside Chad camps for Sudanese refugees” – Patrick Freyne, The Irish Times – see link [here](#)
- “Breaking the silence on gender-based violence in Zambia” – Karen Creed, RTÉ News – see link [here](#)
- “Colonisation 2.0’: inhabitants of unspoilt Caribbean island Barbuda push back against Robert De Niro-linked development” – Jennifer Hough, The Irish Times – see link [here](#)
- “I work hard so my children will not struggle the way I do’: Irish aid supports enterprising women in Sri Lanka” – Imasha Costa, Irish Examiner - see link [here](#)
- “Guyana’s high-stakes oil and climate debate - and Ireland’s role in it” – Joseph O’Connor, The Irish Times – see link [here](#)
- “Guatemala and rebirth of a language: Youth in the vanguard of reviving native Xinkan culture” – Hannah McCarthy, The Irish Times – see link [here](#)

- “‘The dead bodies float to our houses’: Life in Bangladesh, climate change’s ‘ground zero’” – Sally Hayden, The Irish Times – see link [here](#)
- “‘Japa’ - Cultural phenomenon sees millions leave Nigeria” – Juliette Gash, RTÉ News – see link [here](#)
- “Child trafficking, exploitation and abuse in Guatemala: “What is happening is not a series of disconnected tragedies. It reflects deeper systemic failures”” – Marcelo Biglia, Hot Press Magazine – see link [here](#)
- “Grim reality of Kenya’s harrowing malnutrition crisis with kids too hungry to move & death risk from common illnesses” – Danielle Masterson, The Irish Sun – see link [here](#)
- “‘Food doesn’t last’ - Aid cuts hit Africa’s largest refugee camp” – Isabel Perceval, RTÉ Primetime – see link [here](#)

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