

Public Call for Applications:

Financial Support to one Independent Armenian Organisation for the Establishment of an E-School for Media Managers in Armenia

1. Background of the Call for Application

The consortium consisting of DW Academy (lead organization), BBC MA, OSIAP and the two Armenian media organisations Hetq and Factor, were awarded from the European Commission to implement the EU co-funded project “European Media Facility in Armenia – Building sustainable and professional media”. The overall aim of the project is to contribute to a vibrant Armenian media sector that is able to fulfil its role as a watchdog for Armenian society. In particular, the project aims to support independent Armenian media to become more professional and financially sustainable. The project foresees a whole set of activities, such as capacity building for fact-checking and investigative reporting, strengthening networks within Armenia as well as with Eastern Neighborhood and European counterparts, the financial support to regional media organisations and the setup of an E-School for media managers.

The project started on 1st December 2020 and will last for three years. During its implementation, the project will target media managers and independent journalists from national and regional media outlets, journalism students, small regional media outlets as well as local stakeholders such as universities.

For further information for this project, please find updates on the project on our [social media page](#).

2. Priority of the Call for Application

This call for applications is to award one independent Armenian organization for the successful establishment of an E-School for media, supporting the professionalization of Armenian media managers. By this, the project contributes to the specific objective to support independent Armenian media to become more professional and financially sustainable.

Sound management is a precondition for any strong media outlet, be it national or regional, online or offline. Armenian media outlets lack skilled management when it comes to marketing and promotion (in order to attract both audience and

advertisers), digital strategies (to keep track with the digital change and rise in online media) and financing strategies to create transparent ownership and media content. The media managers to be targeted by the E-School are mainly academics with background in journalism rather than management. Currently, the management level of independent media is dominated by men, prospect participants are assumingly between 30-45 years old. With the establishment of an E-School journalistic education shall be improved and practical elements shall be integrated into the program. The E-School shall furthermore support female managers and managers from regional media outlets that usually operate outside the formal educational system.

3. Eligibility of Activities & Framework for Financial Support

The financial support will be employed to achieve the objectives of the project by selecting a local organization that develops and implements the activities related to the establishment of the E-School. A detailed timetable of envisaged activities leading to clear results with objectively verifiable indicators will be elaborated together with the contractual party DW Akademie after the award. The activities to be implemented during the three-year project lifetime are:

- Selection of 10 trainers (taking into consideration gender equality) for E-School training
- Conduct 6 Training of Trainers for 10 suitable trainers (2 trainings per year, 3days each) in cooperation with DW Akademie
- Conduct need assessment of Armenian media managers in cooperation with DW Akademie
- Develop an E-School concept/program based on the outcomes of the needs assessment and taking into consideration learning methods such as Blended Learning, in-class events and alternate online classes (in cooperation with DW Akademie)
- Selection of 60 media managers to participate in E-School program (beginning of each year – approx. 3months each) in cooperation with DW Akademie
- Coordinate and organize four E-School modules through trained trainers and in cooperation with DW Akademie. The four modules are: marketing, strategic management, finance management, digital strategies.
- Award ceremony for E-School graduates in cooperation with DW Akademie
- Develop appropriate tools (e.g. website, social media channels) for E-School promotion and strengthening media networks
- Photo documentation, publication of results of financial support

- Internal progress reporting on outputs and deliverables

4. Size of Financial Support

A maximum of 120.000 Euro will be assigned to the successful applicant.

The funds will be disbursed in 6 instalments (2 per year) according to the project deliverables and reporting timeline to be elaborated after the award with DW Academy.

DW Academy will check regular progress reports, flagging potential problems and seeking solutions. Each implemented activity will undergo regular reviews by DW Academy in order to determine their continued visibility.

5. Eligibility of the Applicant

In order to be eligible to submit the application, the applicant must be:

- a. A registered independent legal non-profit or media entity in Armenia that can accept international funds;
- b. Operative since a minimum of two years from its day of registration;
- c. The applicant organisation must have a clear accounting system and procedure including proper documentation of financial transactions;
- d. Proven experience in the field of journalistic education and training, media development
- e. Institutional capacity (consisting of at least 5 permanent staff members) to build strong partnerships with local organisations working in the fields of academic and professional training, education, and development
- f. Proven experience in the implementation of international grant-support projects (including proposal and budget planning, project management, project evaluation and accountability)

Priority will be given to a local organization as they can provide a deeper understanding of local media, which will directly benefit the media managers and their respective media outlets and help understanding local needs, especially in social relevant topics such as environmental issues, marginalized groups, people with disabilities, and/or women.

6. Corporate Values and Ethics

Interested organisations shall apply to the following corporate values:



- Active commitment to the project's objectives:
 - full involvement and engagement in all project activities
 - strive to development and improvement
 - commitment to gender equality at the workplace as well as its continuous strive to engage people with disabilities in its initiatives
 - commitment to develop a sustainable and environmental-friendly corporate structure.
- Sustainability:
 - commitment to stay involved with the applicants beyond the end of the project
 - maintaining of relevant thematic topics
- Organizational values:
 - openness
 - accountability
 - political independence and neutrality
 - journalistic ethics
- Reliability to ensure effective implementation of the project in terms of administration and content:
 - financial reliability (proven through records of the past)
 - transparency
 - functioning personnel structure

7. Eligibility of costs

The financial support will mainly cover staff costs to implement the activities listed in section 3.

The financial support shall not be used to procure significant amounts of equipment or invest in infrastructure other than that which the selection committee deems essential for the proposed project and also for the future operations of the third party. For example, this could include a small number of inexpensive technical items as cameras or smartphones. The majority of the funds will be used to invest in human resources.

Eligible costs in detail:

- Contribution to personnel costs
- Costs for local travel (car rental, public transport, etc)

- Costs for hotel and subsistence (per diem)
- Equipment (small items only; existence of equipment to run E-School should be given)
- Costs for infrastructure in relation to project proportion: electricity, internet, tel/fax
- Other Costs, services, such as publications (layout and print), visibility, financial services
- Costs for activities, such trainers and consultants, who receive fees/daily rates, costs for software, room rent for offline events

Non-eligible costs:

- Purchase of bigger items, vehicles or furniture, land or buildings
- Debts and debt service charges (interests)
- Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities
- Costs declared by the recipient and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union grant (including through the European Development Fund)
- Currency exchange losses
- Office rent, unless the applicant can demonstrate that additional and specific office rental is necessary for the purpose of the action implementation;
- Taxes, including VAT, unless the Recipient can demonstrate they cannot reclaim them
- Credit to third parties
- In kind contributions (e.g. valorisation of existing equipment, donations, volunteer works etc.)
- Salary costs of the personnel of national administrations, unless otherwise specified in the special conditions and only to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action were not undertaken
- Performance-based bonuses included in costs of staff

8. Location and Timetable for Financial Support

The E-School is targeting media managers throughout Armenia. However, a strong focus should be given to media managers operating in the rural areas of Armenia. This

should be taken into consideration when applying to the establishment of the E-School.

The financial support will start as soon as the contract between the applicant and DW Akademie has been signed and timetable, deliverables and reporting mechanisms have been agreed upon. The contract will automatically end with the end of the project that is on 31 July 2023.

9. Number of applications and grant per applicant

Each applicant can submit only one application.

10. Documents to Apply for Financial Support

The Application must be written in English using Annex I attached to this document. Hand-written applications will not be accepted. The narrative should respect the number of pages as indicated in the Annex. At this point of stage, no budget shall be submitted.

Additionally, applicants should submit by email together with the application and additional Annexes the following scanned or photocopy of original documents:

- a. Certificate of registration
- b. Latest annual financial report
- c. List with reference projects following table provided in Annex I
- d. Organisational chart (permanent and non-permanent staff)

11. Prevention of fraud and corruption & Complaint Mechanism

DWA has a policy of zero tolerance of fraud and corruption and always require its staff and partners to act honestly and with integrity. Thus, the applicant and /or co-applicant will develop and apply a thorough anti-fraud- and anti-corruption-system according to local and international best practice standards at any stage of the financial support to third parties process, i.e. during tendering, application and implementation process.

To achieve this, we will:

- develop, maintain and consistently apply effective controls at all levels;
- ensure that if fraud or corruption occurs, a vigorous and prompt investigation takes place, and that findings are reported / reports are shared with stakeholders as appropriate;

- take appropriate disciplinary and legal action in all cases, where and as justified;
- take all appropriate and reasonable steps to recover any financial losses;
- review systems and procedures to prevent similar frauds or acts of corruption;
- ensure fraud and corruption risks are taken into consideration in future program planning.

A sound complaint management system ensures that applicants and grantees have a source for communicating their problems and concerns, including suspicion of any kind of malpractice (whistle blower function) by contacting dw-Akademie.complain@dw.com.

This email address is related to the head office of DWA in Germany where a complaint management team will take up the concern and initiate next steps. As such, any applicant or award grantee will have the opportunity to address matters of any kind confidentially.

12. Request for Clarification

The applicant has the right to send a request for clarification until 14th May 2021 to the following email address dw-akademie.armenia@dw.com. All questions will be answered, summarized and shared in a compiled document on the online platform of the call and via email with all applicants no later than 19th May 2021 before the deadline.

After this date, no further answers will be provided. To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contractor will not give a prior opinion on a work programme, an action or specific activities. The contractor may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or clerical in the text of the call for proposals on the respective website. It is therefore advisable to consult this website regularly in order to be informed of any updates and of the questions and answers published. No modification to the proposal is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. If there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, the contractor may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process. This is generally done by e-mail. It is entirely the responsibility of applicants to ensure that all contact information provided is accurate and functioning. In case of any change of contact details, please send an email with the new contact

details to the functional mailbox indicated above. Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the reasons for rejection. No information regarding the award procedure will be disclosed until the notification letters have been sent to the beneficiaries.

13. Deadline for Submission and Procedures to Follow

Step 1: submission of application (Annex I) as well as supporting documents (certificate of registration, annual financial report, list with reference projects, organizational chart). Please use the provided template for Annex I: (<https://share.ard-zdf-box.de/s/p5AEPJQ3iBXe6em>)

Deadline for submission: 31 May 2021

The project proposals can be submitted via email to:

dw-akademie.armenia@dw.com

Step 2: award of grants and contract signing. Grantee contract template is available here for information (<https://share.ard-zdf-box.de/s/p5AEPJQ3iBXe6em>)

14. Reporting and Payment Arrangements

The selected applicant organisation shall provide narrative and financial reports four times per year following the request for payment. An advance payment will be provided to cover costs for the first months of project implementation. Interim payments following percentage of actual expenses of previous periods will be done. The last report should cover the complete lifetime of financial support, following the provided template by DW Akademie after contract signature.

15. Evaluation and Selection of Applications

DW Akademie will evaluate – together with the co-applicants BBC and OSI AF Armenia - the applying organisations according to the below mentioned criteria and a thorough and fair ranking system (evaluation grid with the categories organizational capacities, work experience in related fields, access to rural and regional media organisations, ethical standards). The organisation with the highest total score will be awarded. A list with awarded grants will be published on our [social media page](#).

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and sub-headings. Criteria under heading 1 are eliminatory. If answer to any of the criteria is “No”, the application will be rejected on this sole basis. For heading 2, each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 4 (2.1 counts double the scores) as follows; 1= poor; 2=adequate; 3=good; 4= very good.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK	yes	no
1.1 The deadline for submission has been met		
1.2 The applicant satisfies the eligibility criteria in section 5		
1.3 Supporting documents were submitted in accordance with the guidelines		
*If all previous answers were YES, Application is accepted		
DECISION		
2. EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION	Sub-score	20
2.1 Organisational Capacity (management and personnel structure, number of staff permanent and non-permanent, donors/funding sources, annual turnover of the last two years, accounting and documentation system, technical equipment to run E-School)	Max 8	
2.1 Work experience (similar projects related to E-Learning and/or Blendid Learningand/or other reference projects if related to this call)	Max 4	
2.2 Access to and networkswithregional and local media organisations	Max 4	
2.3 Ethical Standards	Max 4	
TOTAL SCORE		20

After the applicant's approval, a detailed intervention logic including activities, results, indicators and timeline as well as detailed budget will be worked out together with the applicant resulting in a grant contract.

16. Indicative timetable of the Financial Support

The following timetable is indicative and can be adapted depending on the number of applications and external circumstances. Start of contract should latest be on 1st June 2021, preferably earlier if time allows.

Publish/announce the Call for Proposal	05 Mai 2021
Deadline for submission of applications, work plan and budget	31 May 2021
Evaluation of Applications	June2021

Notification to applicant on evaluation results	8 July 2021
Elaboration of intervention logic, budget and timeline	8-18 July 2021
Contract signing and orientation on proper accounting of project expenses	July 2021
Start of project implementation	1 August 2021
End of project implementation	31 July 2023

17. Processing Personal Data

Any personal data will be processed solely for the purposes of the performance, management and monitoring of this contract by the contracting authority and may also be passed to the bodies charged with monitoring or inspection tasks under European Union law. Beneficiaries will have the right of access to their personal data and the right to rectify any such data. If the beneficiary(ies) have any queries concerning the processing of personal data, they shall address them to the contracting authority. The beneficiary(ies) will have right of recourse at any time to the European Data Protection Supervisor.

The beneficiary(ies) must process personal data under this contract in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements). The beneficiary(ies) shall limit access and use of personal data to that strictly necessary for the performance, management and monitoring of this contract and shall adopt all appropriate technical and organisational security measures.

18. LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex I: Application Form

Annex II: Model Contract Agreement (just for information, not to be submitted)

Annex III: General Conditions (just for information, not to be submitted)