

## Local News Fund Scoring Framework

### Overview of Assessment

The Local News Fund is divided into two parts:

- Local News Outlet Funding (LNOF)
- Infrastructure Funding (IF)

Each of the two funding streams has its own separate application form and individual eligibility requirements. Please ensure you carefully read the eligibility information and objectives on the advert to ensure you are applying to the correct funding stream. Applicants will be asked to confirm they have selected the correct application form for the fund they are applying for at the beginning of their application, otherwise the application will not proceed

Following the general guidance below, this document provides further information on each application form:

- Local News Outlet Funding (LNOF) from page 2
- Infrastructure Funding (IF) from page 21

### **Stage 1 – Eligibility and due diligence checks**

Our Government grants administration team will carry out an initial sift of all applications to confirm that:

- Eligibility criteria are met
- Required organisational and financial information has been provided
- Basic due-diligence and counter-fraud checks can be completed

Applications assessed as not meeting the eligibility requirements will not proceed to Stage 2.

### **Stage 2 – Assessment of eligible applications**

Eligible applications will be assessed by trained grant assessors against the published assessment criteria and scoring framework along with an external steering board. Assessment will focus on:

- Strategic fit with the grant objectives
- Deliverability within the funding period
- Expected impact and value for money

The Department for Culture, Media & Sport( DCMS) reserves the right to amend or withdraw this funding opportunity at any point during the competition window and assessment process, including closing the competition early where the fund is significantly oversubscribed.

Responses to each assessment question are subject to the stated maximum word limit. Any text beyond the word limit will not be assessed or scored. Attachments may only be used where explicitly permitted and do not count towards word limits.

Applications will be ranked from highest to lowest total weighted score. It is DCMS' intention to award funding to the highest-scoring applications until the available funding envelope is exhausted.

Supporting documents are available in the supporting information of the advert, such as the Budget Management Tool Template and Delivery Plan Template. Responses must use only the templates provided in their application response. Use of alternate templates will mean the application is deemed ineligible.

**Local News Outlet Funding (LNOF)**

**Stage 1 Objective / Eligibility Questions**

Stage 1 checks are used to confirm gateway eligibility, re-confirm baseline eligibility, and complete proportionate due-diligence and counter-fraud checks.

Only applications that meet all Stage 1 requirements will progress to Stage 2.

Stage 1 is assessed on a Pass / Not Met basis and is not scored.

Question	Area	Question	Source Checks	Scoring
Q1	Funding Stream	<p>The Local News Fund is divided into two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local News Outlet Funding (LNOF)</li> <li>• Infrastructure Funding (IF)</li> </ul> <p>Applicants must confirm they have selected the correct application form for the fund they are applying for otherwise the application will not proceed</p>	Tick-box confirmation	N/A
Q2	Data Sharing	<p>Applicant data will be shared with our external evaluation partner in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.</p>	Tick-box confirmation	N/A
Q3	Applicant Name	<p>Organisations may complete one application as the lead applicant per funding pot (IF/LNOF) however they are allowed to be named as a partner in a consortium bid.</p> <p>This excludes regional or local services operated by national broadcasters, including the BBC, ITV and S4C.</p>	Short Answer (50 words)	Pass/ Not Met
Q4	Organisation Type	<p>What type of organisation is the lead applicant?</p> <p>Applicants must select either Non-Profit or Private Sector. Applications may not be submitted by individuals or local authorities.</p>	Multiple Choice	N/A

Q5	Basis for type of organisation	<p>Applicants will have to select in the previous question whether they are non-profit or private sector.</p> <p>Please describe the basis upon which you have classified your organisation in Question 4. This could reference your legal status, Companies House registration, ownership structure, governing documents and/or primary purpose. Please include your charity registration number or companies house registration number if applicable.</p> <p>The criteria will not be met if the lead organisation cannot demonstrate they are non-profit or private sector</p>	Short Answer (100 words)	Pass/ Not Met
Q6	Registration in England or Wales	<p>Can you confirm your organisation has been registered, with a published registered office or other business address in England or Wales, and operating in your relevant sector for at least one year?</p> <p>To be eligible for this scheme, applicants must be registered and be operating in their relevant sectors for at least one year at the point of the scheme opening for applications (6th July).</p>	Self-certification	Pass/ Not Met
Q7	Threshold for Minimum Financial Assistance	<p>Should your bid be successful, will you exceed the threshold for Minimum Financial Assistance under section 36 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022?</p> <p>Grants will be awarded as Minimum Financial Assistance, under Section 36 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022, meaning that all grantees must be in receipt of no more than £315,000 of Minimum Financial Assistance funding over the past three years, including from this Fund. Lead organisations in consortia bids will also need to consider this in relation to any partners receiving funding.</p> <p>If you answer “Yes” to this question, your bid will not be taken forward to the assessment stage.</p> <p>Successful bidders will be required to complete and sign a Minimum Financial Assistance proforma as part of the grant agreement paperwork, in order to confirm that they do not exceed this threshold. This form is available on the Supporting Documents</p>	Self-certification	Pass/ Not Met

		<p>section and will be requested at a later date, if successful</p> <p>A link to guidance on the Government website is available in the Eligibility Information section.</p>		
Q8	Lead or consortium	Please specify if this application is being submitted by a single organisation or a consortium of partners.	Multiple Choice	N/A
Q9	Consortium Details	<p>If you are applying as the Lead Organisation for a Consortium Bid, please provide the following details of all the consortium partners:</p> <p>(1) Organisation legal names  (2) Organisation types (e.g. limited company)  (3) Registered addresses  (4) Charity Commission numbers (if applicable)  (5) Companies House number (if applicable)</p> <p>If you are not applying for a Consortium Bid, please answer with 'N/A'.</p> <p>The application will not proceed if the organisation is applying as a consortium, and has not provided the above details for all consortium members.</p>	Short Answer (300 words)	Pass/Not Met
Q10	Consortium financial due diligence	<p>If applying as part of a consortium, please can you confirm the following:</p> <p>1. As the lead organisation you have conducted due diligence on all partner organisations  2. You have reviewed their financial soundness as part of the application process referring to the section above.  3. You are able to confirm that your bid does not duplicate the proposed activities of any separate bid submitted by any of your partners  4. You can confirm that a successful bid would not lead anyone to exceed the minimum financial assistance threshold</p> <p>If you are not applying for a Consortium Bid, please select 'N/A - I am not applying as a consortium</p>	Self-certification	Pass/Not Met

<p>Q11</p>	<p>Primary location of audience</p>	<p>Please confirm the primary geographic location of the audience who will benefit from your bid</p> <p>Not scored but Applicants must choose any of the following and can select multiple options</p> <p>England, Greater London, South East, South West, East of England, East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and The Humber, North West, North East, Wales</p> <p>This is not scored but may be used to consider diversity in award allocation.</p>	<p>Multiple Select</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Q12</p>	<p>Recent and sustained track record in the provision of local news and information in England or Wales</p>	<p>Do you have a recent and sustained track record in the provision of local news and information in England or Wales? Please provide details</p> <p>Please provide links to, or descriptions of, 12 distinct local news stories which meet the definition of local news set out in the “Eligibility Statement” below. Applicants should demonstrate that have been published over each of the past 12 months, with at least one of these as being dated July 2025, or earlier. These can be provided in list format, either as a list of URLs taken from your website or as brief descriptions (if for example stories were only broadcast on local TV or radio) of the stories, date they aired, and how they meet the definition.</p> <p>If you are unable to provide this information, your bid will not progress.</p> <p><b>Eligibility Statement:</b> Organisations must be providers of high quality local news and information relating to a defined geographical area within England or Wales. Local news and information encompasses: Investigative or campaigning journalism; Reporting on the activities of local public institutions; or Reporting on other matters of unique interest to local communities including events, local businesses and the local economy, or other local and community initiatives. Organisations must be able to demonstrate a recent and sustained track record in the provision of local news and information, by having published at least one local story each month over the past 12 months</p>	<p>Long Answer (600 words max)</p>	<p>Pas/ Not Met</p>

		<p>Applicants must prove 12 distinct examples of local news stories either via URL or a short description</p> <p>URLs should be functional and link to a website or websites which relate to the title of the news outlet.</p> <p>The stories at those URLs (or summarised in short descriptions, for example by broadcasters without straightforward online access to their journalism over the past 12 months with at least one dated July 2025 or earlier) must relate to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● investigative or campaigning journalism e.g. lobbying for local service improvements, investigating wrongdoing within their local areas</li> <li>● reporting on the activities of local public institutions e.g. covering of council meetings, local NHS trust activities , or</li> <li>● reporting on other matters of unique interest to local communities including events, local businesses and the local economy, and opportunities to participate in local and community initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>If URLs have not been provided, applicants may provide 12 distinct descriptions of local news stories from England and Wales, as above, showing a sustained record of local journalism over the last 12 months</p> <p>Bids which do not meet all of the above requirements, for example stories provided which are not considered local news to England or Wales, or do not appear to be published by the lead organisation, or if subsequent internet searching indicates that multiple stories are copied in full from other sources, or we are unable to resolve outreach on non-functional URLs, will not progress</p>		
Q13	Primary Type of Media	<p>Please specify the lead organisation’s primary type of media</p> <p>Not scored but applicants must choose one of the following - this feeds into the next two questions: Television, Radio, Print &amp; Digital News, Online Only</p>	Multiple Choice	N/A

Q14	Television or Radio Ofcom license	<p>If you selected Television or Radio, you must hold an Ofcom licence to broadcast. Please provide details of your Ofcom-license number including Service Name, Licensee Name and License Number</p> <p>The Fund is open to local TV, commercial local radio and community radio, where these outlets are able to meet the other eligibility criteria and on the condition that they hold an Ofcom licence to broadcast. This latter criterion provides a guarantee that broadcast applicants are trustworthy and held to certain editorial standards.</p> <p>If you hold an Ofcom licence to broadcast, please provide details of the Service Name, Licensee Name and License Number. Please also provide details of any Ofcom breaches in the past five years.</p> <p><b>If you are not required to hold an Ofcom licence to broadcast (Print &amp; Digital News or Online Only), please type N/A and proceed to the next question.</b></p> <p>Applicants who have selected Television or Radio in the previous question, must provide Ofcom license details to be verified in order to meet eligibility criteria</p> <p>NB regarding breaches. Ofcom licensees have also been requested to provide details of any breaches of their licence conditions in the past five years. This is to provide contextual information on their history of adhering to the editorial standards required by Ofcom and is not intended as a Pass/Fail.</p>	Short Answer (100 words)	Pass/ Not Met
Q15	Print & Digital News and Online Only Editorial Control	<p>Is the content produced by your organisation subject to editorial control? If so, please provide details, including the name and job title of the individual responsible for this.</p> <p>Local news outlets which are subject to editorial control can reasonably be expected to adhere to basic standards of journalistic ethics, which helps to ensure that funding is made available only to trustworthy providers.</p> <p>Organisations must have a named person responsible for deciding to publish content and for</p>	Short Answer (100 words)	Pass/ Not Met

		<p>determining how it is presented, as well as a published editorial policy or set of guidelines.</p> <p>Please confirm that a named person is responsible for deciding to publish your content and for determining how it is presented. Please also provide their name and contact details. Please also confirm whether you have a published editorial policy or set of guidelines, by providing the relevant URL or a brief summary.</p> <p>If you are unable to provide this information, your bid will not progress.</p> <p><b>Please type N/A if you have previously selected Television or Radio and provided Ofcom details in the last question.</b></p> <p>Applicants will not progress if they have answered Print &amp; Digital News or Online Only in the previous question and no name or contact details are provided or no mention of a published editorial policy or set of guidelines, by providing the relevant URL or a brief summary.</p>		
Q16	Advance Funding	<p>Should your bid be successful, do you require upfront payment to be necessary before starting your project on the grounds of financial capacity?</p> <p>Given the financial challenges facing the industry, we recognise that some bidders may operate on limited budgets. While payment in arrears remains the strongly preferred method of payment for all Government grant funding, there may be some bidders who lack the cash reserves to initiate their projects after any funding is confirmed.</p> <p>We are therefore offering grant payments upfront at key milestones to bidders who consider this necessary. These bidders will need to demonstrate their current unrestricted cash reserves are less than 25% of the value of the grant they are bidding for, via signed confirmation from a chartered accountant on a letterheaded document, to be attached in the next question.</p>	Yes/No	N/A

		<p>Subsequent payments will also be paid upfront if the grantee continues to consider this necessary.</p> <p>While all grants will be subject to inflight monitoring, grants paid in advance of need may be subject to additional spot checks to minimise the risk of fraud</p> <p>NOT A PASS/FAIL QUESTION</p> <p>Bidders answering “Yes” must include a signed letter from a chartered accountant on a letterheaded document. These will be verified by the Department for Culture, Media &amp; Sport (DCMS).</p>		
Q17 optional	Advance Funding (further information)	<p>Applicants will need to demonstrate that their current unrestricted cash reserves are less than 25% of the value of the grant they are bidding for, via signed confirmation from a chartered accountant on a letterheaded document, to be attached here.</p> <p>Please provide the following details regarding your funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total grant amount requested.</li> <li>• Confirmation that current unrestricted cash reserves as of July 2026 are less than 25% of the value of the grant amount requested</li> </ul> <p>Further information may be collected from successful applicants at award stage</p> <p>Applicants who answer ‘Yes’ to Q16 are asked to upload a document in Q17 from a chartered accountant on a letterheaded document which will be verified by the Department for Culture, Media &amp; Sport (DCMS) with the above information</p> <p>Applicants who have answered ‘No’ to the previous question should leave this question blank or type N/A</p>	Document Upload	Pass/Not Met
Q18	Match Funding	<p>Please confirm if you are proposing to provide additional match funding for this project</p> <p>To maximise the impact of the fund, match funding is encouraged where organisations have the financial capacity and are seeking to deliver larger projects. We encourage those organisations not defined as small businesses on the basis of an annual turnover</p>	Yes/No	N/A

		<p>above £15m in particular to consider this as part of any bid.</p> <p>Please confirm 'yes' if you are proposing to provide additional match funding for this project or 'no' if this is not proposed.</p> <p>Match funding is optional but note that, where it is volunteered by applicants, we will require evidence of the grantee's own funding commitments having been met before releasing our own funding at payment milestones.</p> <p>NOT A PASS/FAIL QUESTION</p> <p>Bidders answering "Yes" are asked to attach a letter from their company director or finance director in the next question. These documents will be verified by DCMS.</p>		
Q19	Match Funding (further information)	<p>If you selected 'Yes' to the previous question and are proposing to provide additional match funding for this project, please provide further details</p> <p>Please provide the following details regarding your match funding in a letter from your company director or finance director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The total financial contribution you intend to provide.</li> <li>● Where the funding is coming from (e.g. cash reserves, external grants, sponsor, external partner).</li> <li>● A brief summary of how the match funding will contribute to the project (more detail should be provided in the applicant's completed Budget Management Tool)</li> <li>● In-kind support: A brief summary of any additional contribution which is not financial in nature (e.g. staff time).</li> </ul> <p>Further information may be collected from successful applicants at award stage and proof of eligible expenditure, including the match contribution, will be required at payment milestones.</p>	Document Upload	Pass/ Not Met

		<p>Applicants who have answered ‘Yes’ to the previous question are asked to attach a letter from their company director or finance director in this question. These documents will be verified by DCMS.</p> <p>Applicants who have answered ‘No’ to the previous question should leave this question blank or type N/A</p> <p>This question is optional, only to be answered if the previous question is answered ‘Yes’ and will be used to collect data at the award stage if the bid is successful. The response may be flagged to the department that further information will need to be requested, if required</p> <p>DCMS will be responsible for verifying the information provided by the applicant in their letter</p>		
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**Stage 2 Assessment of Eligible Applications (Scored)**

This section sets out the assessment framework that will be used to score applications that progress to Stage 2 of the application process.

Only applications that have passed all Stage 1 eligibility and due-diligence checks will be assessed against this framework. The assessment focuses on the quality, deliverability and impactfulness of the proposed activity, in line with the objectives of the Fund as stated in the advert.

A technical assessment of bids will be conducted by our grants administration service, and a strategic assessment is conducted by a Local News Fund Steering Board composed of independent industry experts to guide final decisions on awards by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Bids will be assessed according to a number of factors including their overall quality, deliverability and likely impact over the short and long term.

All scored responses will be assessed using a 1–4 scoring scale, reflecting the quality, clarity and strength of each response against the published assessment criteria, with a score of 0 for non submission of answers.

Scores are interpreted as follows:

**Score 0 - No Answer Provided/Fail**

**Score 1 – Unacceptable**

The response is insufficient, unclear or incomplete. It fails to address the question and does not meet the minimum requirements. Critical elements are missing, incorrect or unsupported.

**Score 2 – Adequate**

The response addresses the question at a basic level but lacks depth, clarity or specificity. Relevant points are made, but key aspects are under-developed, generic or weakly evidenced.

**Score 3 – Good**

The response is well developed and addresses the key elements of the question. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the proposal and provides relevant detail and examples. The response meets the requirements effectively, with only minor gaps or areas for improvement.

**Score 4 – Excellent**

The response is comprehensive, clear and well evidenced. It addresses all aspects of the question with strong, specific examples or evidence, demonstrates clear alignment with the fund’s objectives, and presents a compelling case for deliverability, impact, learning and value for money.

**Stage 2 Questions and Guidance - (LNOF)**

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q20	Project summary	<p>Please provide a clear summary of the project you intend to deliver if your application is successful.</p> <p>Describe what the project will do, who will be involved and what will be delivered during the funding period. This summary should be written for a non-specialist audience.</p> <p>This question is for information purposes only to give a high-level overview of what the organisation plans to do with the funding if they are successful.</p>	300

Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
N/A	N/A	<p>Informational (feeds into following questions)</p> <p>This response will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide context for assessors reviewing subsequent answers</li> <li>• support understanding of the overall proposal, particularly for non-specialist assessors</li> </ul> <p>Overall objectives of the funds as follows:</p> <p>Help ensure the long-term provision of high quality local news, supporting local media to continue innovating towards a digital-focused and sustainable future and thereby stemming closure of titles and journalist redundancies</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q21	Challenges and proposed outcomes	<p>Please describe the problems or challenges your organisation is currently facing and how your bid aims to address these.</p> <p>Provide a summary of the recent operational or financial challenges faced by your organisation (e.g. responding to the decline of print). It may be helpful to set your bid in the context of your particular circumstances. Useful contextual information could include audience size, geographical reach, staff numbers, revenue mix, primary audience channels, editorial strategy and/or long term business plans.</p> <p>Outline how your proposal will specifically address the challenges you have set out, and how it is tailored to your particular needs, and what outcomes you intend to achieve from the bid.</p>	500 words

Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
10%	Grants administration	<p>Higher scores will clearly articulate the problem, be highly specific, and demonstrate that it is critical to the organisation’s operational or financial needs</p> <p>Applicants should give a detailed description of intended outputs and outcomes with clear KPIs and measures of success eg what funding will be spent on, detailed outcomes that address the issues described, and provide KPIs and the ability to measure success</p> <p>There should be clear evidence of the bid being tailored to meet the particular needs of the bidder, for example through evidence of an options appraisal having been conducted</p> <p>The connection between the problem and the proposed project should be robust and compelling, with a clear, evidence-based rationale for how the project will effectively address the problem and deliver significant improvements.</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
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Q22	Objectives of the fund and sustainability	<p>Please explain how the proposal links to the objectives of the Fund, and in particular how it will support your organisation in becoming more financially sustainable in the short-medium term?</p> <p>Set out how your project links to the core objectives of the Local News Fund as set out in the advert for this Fund and in the Local Media Action Plan.</p> <p>Please also set out how funding would specifically be used to enhance your organisation’s financial sustainability, and what impact you envisage your proposal will have on revenues, costs and/or audience reach and engagement. Please draw out the extent to which innovation is a feature of your bid, noting that while innovation is a key lever for achieving or maintaining financial sustainability and should therefore be a consideration, it is most important that your bid is credible and rooted in your foundational commercial capacity.</p>	500 words
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
25%	Steering Board	<p>High scoring applicants will provide extensive detail provided on short term impact on revenues or other financial indicators</p> <p>There will be clearly explained links to multiple Local News Fund and/or Local Media Action Plan objectives, coupled with a clear understanding of how the bid relates to the wider challenges facing the industry as a whole</p> <p>The benefits discussed will be significant and well-evidenced</p> <p>Innovative thinking within the context of the bidder’s foundational commercial capacity will be integral to the bid</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q23	Project Management Approach	Please provide an overview of your project management approach and outline the resources available within your	1000 words

	and previous experience	<p>organisation to support your project delivery and ensure your approach is deliverable by 22nd March 2027.</p> <p>Include reference to staffing, technology, infrastructure, how these will be allocated during the project delivery window, and how risks to successful delivery will be managed.</p> <p>Please also set out your project milestones, key performance indicators and/or measures of success, as well as any details of plans for identifying and mitigating risks, and ensuring that public money is used effectively. In addition, applicants should demonstrate their capacity to deliver the proposed project, including the skills, expertise, and experience of the project team and/or organisation, and how these will support successful implementation and sustained impact. If applicable, please also include details of any previous experience of having delivered similar projects and how lessons learned from that experience would be applied.</p>	
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
20%	Steering Board	<p>High scoring applicants will provide extensive details of project management plans, including detail on milestones and risk assessment</p> <p>There will be evidence of previous experience of similar projects applied to the bid</p> <p>There will be detailed and well-evidenced description of how resources will be used to deliver the project</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q24	Delivery Plan	<p>Please complete and upload the Delivery Plan MS Excel Template to illustrate a profile of timelines, milestones, and how you plan to ensure the project remains on track for timely completion (i.e. by 22nd March 2027).</p> <p>The template document is available within the 'Supporting Documents' section of the grant advertisement. Please note, successful recipients will be requested to report on</p>	Document Upload

		progress against their delivery plan and spend (the Delivery Plan should correlate with your Financial Methodology - Budget Management Tool submission)	
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
20%	Grants administration	<p>Higher scoring will be given to applicants who upload and complete a comprehensive delivery plan.</p> <p>The delivery plan should contain key milestones with sub-tasks and activities within each milestone, resource allocation to each activity and specific timelines for task completion.</p> <p>The delivery plan should demonstrate a strong system for tracking progress and managing risks during the project.</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q25	Value for Money over longer term and benefits to industry	<p>How will you seek to optimise the impact of funding, maximising value for money over the longer term and ensuring a positive impact on your community? How will you ensure insights from your funding can be used to benefit the wider local media industry?</p> <p>It is important to stress that the Fund is intended to stimulate growth and sustainability in local media, including viable but undercapitalised business models, and not to subsidise existing activities or insulate unviable models. With this in mind, please set out how you intend to maximise initial effects from a grant and ensure a lasting impact.</p> <p>Bidders may wish to consider the impact on not only the newsroom but also the local community, how impacts will be sustained beyond the lifetime of the grant, or how insights and innovative thinking might be generated and made available for the benefit of other local news outlets.</p> <p>To maximise value for money, match funding is encouraged where feasible. Please include details if relevant.</p>	500 words

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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
15%	Steering Board	<p>Applicants will score higher if the case for longer term impact is inherent to the bid, with all of the following applying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of tangible plans to share lessons learned more widely;</li> <li>• Evidence of the bid being framed in the context of the organisation’s long-term business plan;</li> <li>• Consideration of the impact on both the local community as well as the newsroom</li> <li>• Longer term impact on revenues, content output or other financial indicators is likely to be transformative without the need for further funding (if match funding is proposed, evidence that it will amplify this impact)</li> </ul>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q26	Reaching underrepresented or diverse audiences or promoting diversity in local media	<p>Demonstrate how your bid supports the needs of diverse and/or underrepresented audiences in your area</p> <p>We are seeking to ensure that the Local News Fund has a broad impact across the country and across the diverse audiences which rely on local media.</p> <p>Therefore, merit will be given to bids that demonstrate a thoughtful approach to inclusion and diversity. This includes, but is not limited to, projects that seek to reach underserved, under represented or overlooked audiences within their target community (this could include socio-economic status or other demographics), as well as those promoting diversity within their communities and the local media industry.</p>	300 words

Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
10%	Steering Board	Higher scores will be given to applicants who can demonstrate their core objectives focus on inclusion and diversity, including those which seek to reach underserved, under represented or overlooked audiences, or those

		<p>which promote diversity within communities and/or local media, with significant evidence to demonstrate how.</p> <p>Higher scores also given where the impact is likely to be significant and sustainable</p>
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Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q27	Not Scored	<p>Please set out how your proposal will complement existing local journalism provision in your area?</p> <p>Funded proposals should complement existing local media markets as much as possible, avoiding any detrimental impact on current provision in the areas where funding is provided and enhancing provision where it is currently underserved.</p> <p>Please provide a brief description of the local media market in your area, including how communities are currently served or otherwise, together with how your proposal will strengthen overall provision and/or avoid harmful competition impacts.</p> <p>You may wish to consider for example the plurality of local media in your area, the extent to which different providers serve different audiences or audience needs, and your plans for sharing lessons learned from funding (linking to Question 23).</p> <p>Answers to this question will help inform decisions about overall allocation of funding across the Fund as a whole.</p>	300 words

Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
N/A	Steering Board	The Board will use answers to this question, as well as geographical distribution and variety in the types of different projects, to inform decisions about preferred bids in the event of multiple bidders achieving the same score, where only a portion of those bidders can be funded.

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
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<p>Q28</p>	<p>Budget Management Tool</p>	<p>Please complete and upload the Financial Methodology - Budget Management Tool MS Excel Template to profile expenditure needs</p> <p>Examples of eligible expenditure - what you can apply for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acquisition costs</li> <li>● Salaries of staff involved in funded projects (not content production, and not business as usual but demonstrates a business impact related to financial sustainability) (only evidenced via PAYE/HMRC or invoiced freelancer costs)</li> <li>● Overheads (where justified and reasonable)</li> <li>● Travel &amp; subsistence costs for staff related to the funded project/s i.e., petrol, food or accommodation (where wholly, exclusively, and necessarily reasonable and specifically related to the project). These should be in line with Civil Service Advisory benchmark rates / HMRC approved mileage allowance payments, and focus on ensuring value for money throughout Preparation, design and development of project delivery</li> <li>● Research and development (if applicable)</li> <li>● Associated office/administration costs</li> <li>● Training costs for staff, volunteers, beneficiaries or service users</li> </ul> <p>Examples of ineligible expenditure - what you cannot apply for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Core organisational running costs not directly related to project delivery</li> <li>● Tax liabilities</li> <li>● Costs incurred before the start of award of funding</li> <li>● Contribution to reserves</li> <li>● Property or property maintenance</li> <li>● Repayment of loans</li> <li>● Staff redundancy or redeployment costs</li> <li>● Gifts</li> <li>● Statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties, civil penalties, damage or associated legal costs</li> <li>● Payments for works or activities which the grant recipient, or any member of their partnership, has a statutory duty to undertake, or that are fully funded by other sources</li> </ul>	<p>Document Upload</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Payments for unfair dismissal or other compensation</li> <li>● Depreciation, amortisation or impairment of assets owned by the grant recipient</li> </ul> <p>Please refer to the supporting documents for further information on eligible and ineligible costs</p>	
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
N/A	Grants administration	<p>Not a weighted score but the following checks apply to the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The funding requested on the application should be in line with the total costs in the BMT (unless match funding has been clearly referenced)? NB the grant amount should not exceed the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ £125,000 for local news outlets funding (LNOF)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Spending period must not be prior to October 2026 or exceeding 22 March 2027</li> <li>● Correlation with Delivery Plan</li> <li>● Ratio of staff costs vs non-staff costs with no supporting justification</li> <li>● Allocated funding towards project specific activities, in line with eligible expenditure</li> </ul> <p>Applicants may be contacted for further information if one of the above checks is not passed</p> <p>Applicants will not pass this question if they have not uploaded or completed the BMT OR the total amount is in excess of the maximum grant value £125,000 for local news outlets funding (LNOF) and has not been explained by match funding</p>

**Infrastructure Funding (IF)****Stage 1 Objective / Eligibility Questions**

Stage 1 checks are used to confirm gateway eligibility, re-confirm baseline eligibility, and complete proportionate due-diligence and counter-fraud checks.

Only applications that meet all Stage 1 requirements will progress to Stage 2.

Stage 1 is assessed on a Pass / Not Met basis and is not scored.

Question	Area	Question	Source Checks	Scoring
Q1	Funding Stream	<p>The Local News Fund is divided into two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local News Outlet Funding (LNOF)</li> <li>• Infrastructure Funding (IF)</li> </ul> <p>Applicants must confirm they have selected the correct application form for the fund they are applying for otherwise the application will not proceed</p>	Tick-box confirmation	N/A
Q2	Data Sharing	Applicant data will be shared with our external evaluation partner in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.	Tick-box confirmation	N/A
Q3	Applicant Name	Organisations may complete one application as the lead applicant per funding pot (IF/LNOF) however they are allowed to be named as a partner in a consortium bid.	Short Answer (50 words)	Pass/ Not Met
Q4	Organisation Type	<p>What type of organisation is the lead applicant?</p> <p>Applicants must select either Non-Profit or Private Sector. Applications may not be submitted by individuals or local authorities.</p>	Multiple Choice	N/A
Q5	Basis for type of organisation	<p>Applicants will have to select in the previous question whether they are non-profit or private sector.</p> <p>Please describe the basis upon which you have classified your organisation in Question 4. This could reference your legal status, Companies House registration, ownership structure,</p>	Short Answer (100 words)	Pass/ Not Met

		<p>governing documents and/or primary purpose. Please include your charity registration number or companies house registration number if applicable.</p> <p>The criteria will not be met if the lead organisation cannot demonstrate they are non-profit or private sector</p>		
Q6	Registration in United Kingdom	<p>Can you confirm your organisation has been registered, with a published registered office or other business address in the United Kingdom , and operating in your relevant sector for at least one year at the point of the scheme opening for applications (7th July).</p> <p>To be eligible for this scheme, applicants must be registered and be operating in their relevant sectors for at least one year at the point of the scheme opening for applications (7th July).</p>	Self-certification	Pass/Not Met
Q7	Threshold for Minimum Financial Assistance	<p>Should your bid be successful, will you exceed the threshold for Minimum Financial Assistance under section 36 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022?</p> <p>Grants will be awarded as Minimum Financial Assistance, under Section 36 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022, meaning that all grantees must be in receipt of no more than £315,000 of Minimum Financial Assistance funding over the past three years, including from this Fund. Lead organisations in consortia bids will also need to consider this in relation to any partners receiving funding.</p> <p>If you answer “Yes” to this question, your bid will not be taken forward to the assessment stage.</p> <p>Successful bidders will be required to complete and sign a Minimum Financial Assistance proforma as part of the grant agreement paperwork, in order to confirm that they do not exceed this threshold. This form is available on the Supporting Documents section and will be requested at a later date, if successful</p>	Self-certification	Pass/Not Met

		A link to guidance on the Government website is available in the Eligibility Information section.		
Q8	Lead or consortium	Please specify if this application is being submitted by a single organisation or a consortium of partners.	Multiple Choice	N/A
Q9	Consortium Details	<p>If you are applying as the Lead Organisation for a Consortium Bid, please provide the following details of all the consortium partners:</p> <p>(1) Organisation legal names  (2) Organisation types (e.g. limited company)  (3) Registered addresses  (4) Charity Commission numbers (if applicable)  (5) Companies House number (if applicable)</p> <p>If you are not applying for a Consortium Bid, please answer with 'N/A'.</p> <p>The application will not proceed if the organisation is applying as a consortium, and has not provided the above details for all consortium members.</p>	Short Answer (300 words)	Pass/Not Met
Q10	Consortium financial due diligence	<p>If applying as part of a consortium, please can you confirm the following:</p> <p>1. As the lead organisation you have conducted due diligence on all partner organisations  2. You have reviewed their financial soundness as part of the application process referring to the section above.  3. You are able to confirm that your bid does not duplicate the proposed activities of any separate bid submitted by any of your partners  4. You can confirm that a successful bid would not lead anyone to exceed the minimum financial assistance threshold</p> <p>If you are not applying for a Consortium Bid, please select 'N/A - I am not applying as a consortium'</p>	Self-certification	Pass/Not Met
Q11	Primary location of	Please confirm the primary geographic location of the sector and/ or audience who will benefit from your bid.	Multiple Select	N/A

	beneficiary of bid	<p>Not scored but Applicants must choose any of the following and can select multiple options</p> <p>National, England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Greater London, South East, South West, East of England, East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and The Humber, North West, North East, Wales</p> <p>This is not scored but may be used to consider diversity in award allocation.</p>		
Q12	Recent and sustained track record	<p>Do you have experience of delivering a project or developing/providing tools, services or other initiatives in support of the journalism industry, at local or national level, or in another relevant field (e.g. publishing, advertising)? If so, please provide details.</p> <p>Organisations or their founders/directors must be able to demonstrate relevant previous experience in order to be eligible for funding. If you are unable to demonstrate this, your bid will not progress.</p> <p>Please provide a brief summary of relevant experience, including the nature of the experience, the role that your organisation or founders/directors played in it, and if necessary how that experience is relevant to the objectives of the Local News Fund.</p> <p>Applicants should provide an explanation of relevant experience which makes clear both how this relates to the bidder and how it is relevant to the journalism industry or related industries. This experience can derive from the bidding organisation, its founders or directors.</p> <p>Where relevant experience is not obviously related to the journalism industry or a related industry such as publishing or advertising, it should at least be relevant to the bid and therefore by extension to the journalism industry</p> <p>Applicants who cannot demonstrate relevant experience will not be eligible</p>	Short Answer (300 words max)	Pas/ Not Met

<p>Q13</p>	<p>Advance Funding</p>	<p>Should your bid be successful, do you require upfront payment to be necessary before starting your project on the grounds of financial capacity?</p> <p>We welcome bids from startups with innovative and early stage ideas for supporting local media, and recognise that some bidders may operate on limited budgets. While payment in arrears remains the strongly preferred method of payment for all Government grant funding, there may be some bidders who lack the cash reserves to initiate their projects after any funding is confirmed.</p> <p>We are therefore offering grant payments upfront at key milestones to bidders who consider this necessary. These bidders will need to demonstrate their current unrestricted cash reserves are less than 25% of the value of the grant they are bidding for, via signed confirmation from a chartered accountant on a letterheaded document, to be attached in the next question.</p> <p>Subsequent payments will also be paid upfront if the grantee continues to consider this necessary.</p> <p>While all grants will be subject to inflight monitoring, grants paid in advance of need may be subject to additional spot checks to minimise the risk of fraud</p> <p>NOT A PASS/FAIL QUESTION</p> <p>Bidders answering “Yes” must include a signed letter from a chartered accountant on a letterheaded document. These will be verified by the Department for Culture, Media &amp; Sport (DCMS).</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Q14 optional</p>	<p>Advance Funding (further information)</p>	<p>Applicants will need to demonstrate that their current unrestricted cash reserves are less than 25% of the value of the grant they are bidding for, via signed confirmation from a chartered</p>	<p>Document Upload</p>	<p>Pass/ Not Met</p>

		<p>accountant on a letterheaded document, to be attached here.</p> <p>Please provide the following details regarding your funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total grant amount requested.</li> <li>• Confirmation that current unrestricted cash reserves as of July 2026 are less than 25% of the value of the grant amount requested</li> </ul> <p>Further information may be collected from successful applicants at award stage</p> <p>Applicants who answer ‘Yes’ to Q13 are asked to upload a document in Q14 from a chartered accountant on a letterheaded document which will be verified by DCMS with the above information</p> <p>Applicants who have answered ‘No’ to the previous question should leave this question blank or type N/A</p>		
Q15	Match Funding	<p>Please confirm if you are proposing to provide additional match funding for this project</p> <p>To maximise the impact of the fund, match funding is encouraged where organisations have the financial capacity and are seeking to deliver larger projects. We encourage those organisations not defined as small businesses on the basis of an annual turnover above £15m in particular to consider this as part of any bid.</p> <p>Please confirm ‘yes’ if you are proposing to provide additional match funding for this project or ‘no’ if this is not proposed.</p> <p>Match funding is optional but note that, where it is volunteered by applicants, we will require evidence of the grantee’s own funding commitments having been met before releasing our own funding at payment milestones.</p> <p>NOT A PASS/FAIL QUESTION</p>	Yes/No	N/A

		Bidders answering “Yes” are asked to attach a letter from their company director or finance director in the next question. These documents will be verified by DCMS.		
Q16	Match Funding (further information)	<p>If you selected ‘Yes’ to the previous question and are proposing to provide additional match funding for this project, please provide further details</p> <p>Please provide the following details regarding your match funding in a letter from your company director or finance director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total financial contribution you intend to provide.</li> <li>• Where the funding is coming from (e.g. cash reserves, external grants, sponsor, external partner).</li> <li>• A brief summary of how the match funding will contribute to the project (more detail should be provided in the applicant’s completed Budget Management Tool)</li> <li>• In-kind support: A brief summary of any additional contribution which is not financial in nature (e.g. staff time).</li> </ul> <p>Further information may be collected from successful applicants at award stage and proof of eligible expenditure, including the match contribution, will be required at payment milestones.</p> <p>Applicants who have answered ‘Yes’ to the previous question are asked to attach a letter from their company director or finance director in this question. These documents will be verified by DCMS.</p> <p>Applicants who have answered ‘No’ to the previous question should leave this question blank or type N/A</p> <p>This question is optional, only to be answered if the previous question is answered ‘Yes’ and will be used to collect data at the award stage if the</p>	Document Upload	Pass/ Not Met

		<p>bid is successful. The response may be flagged to the department that further information will need to be requested, if required</p> <p>DCMS will be responsible for verifying the information provided by the applicant in their letter</p>		
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### Stage 2 Assessment of Eligible Applications (Scored)

This section sets out the assessment framework that will be used to score applications that progress to Stage 2 of the application process.

Only applications that have passed all Stage 1 eligibility and due-diligence checks will be assessed against this framework. The assessment focuses on the quality, deliverability and expected value of the proposed activity, in line with the objectives of the Fund

A technical assessment of bids will be conducted by our grants administration service, and a strategic assessment is conducted by a Local News Fund Steering Board composed of independent industry experts to guide final decisions on awards by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The assessment focuses on the quality, deliverability and impactfulness of the proposed activity, in line with the objectives of the Fund and the objectives in the advert.

All scored responses will be assessed using a 1–4 scoring scale, reflecting the quality, clarity and strength of each response against the published assessment criteria, with a score of 0 for non submission of answers.

Scores are interpreted as follows:

#### Score 0 - No Answer Provided/Fail

#### Score 1 – Unacceptable

The response is insufficient, unclear or incomplete. It fails to address the question and does not meet the minimum requirements. Critical elements are missing, incorrect or unsupported.

#### Score 2 – Adequate

The response addresses the question at a basic level but lacks depth, clarity or specificity. Relevant points are made, but key aspects are under-developed, generic or weakly evidenced.

#### Score 3 – Good

The response is well developed and addresses the key elements of the question. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the proposal and provides relevant detail and examples. The response meets the requirements effectively, with only minor gaps or areas for improvement.

#### Score 4 – Excellent

The response is comprehensive, clear and well evidenced. It addresses all aspects of the question with strong, specific examples or evidence, demonstrates clear alignment with the fund’s objectives, and presents a compelling case for deliverability, impact, learning and value for money.

## Stage 2 Questions and Guidance - (IF)

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q17	Project summary	<p>Please provide a clear summary of the project you intend to deliver if your application is successful.</p> <p>Describe what the project will do, who will be involved and what will be delivered during the funding period. This summary should be written for a non-specialist audience. Please include details of the intended beneficiaries of your bid, noting that infrastructure projects can be targeted at particular types of local media or journalists, or specific geographical areas, and that some benefit must be felt at least in England or Wales. Please also explain whether this relates to a new initiative, or expansion/improvement of an existing one</p> <p>This question is for information purposes only to give a high-level overview of what the organisation plans to do with the funding if they are successful.</p>	300

Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
N/A	N/A	<p>Informational (feeds into following questions)</p> <p>This response will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide context for assessors reviewing subsequent answers</li> <li>• support understanding of the overall proposal, particularly for non-specialist assessors</li> </ul> <p>Overall objectives of the funds as follows:</p> <p>Help ensure the long-term provision of high quality local news, supporting local media to continue innovating towards a digital-focused and sustainable future and thereby stemming closure of titles and journalist redundancies</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q18	Quality of bid, short term	Explain how your proposal will benefit local media by offering the tools, services, resources or other	1000

	<p>impactfulness and strategic fit</p>	<p>infrastructure which helps enable a digital-first and sustainable future for the industry.</p> <p>Set out how your project links to the core objectives of the Local News Fund as set out in the advert for this Fund and in the Local Media Action Plan. Provide a summary of the financial or practical challenges faced by local media which are relevant to your bid. Outline how your proposal will specifically address these challenges and be used to support the local media industry’s financial sustainability, with details of the intended outcomes from your bid.</p> <p>Please also explain why you consider that your proposal will have the intended effect on the industry, for example based on research or stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Please also specify how benefits would be felt at least by local media within England or Wales</p>	
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
30%	Steering Board	<p>High scoring bids will give a detailed description of intended outputs and outcomes with KPIs and measures of success</p> <p>There will be a detailed explanation of links to both Local News Fund objectives and wider Local Media Action Plan objectives</p> <p>Applicants will be able to give extensive evidence of how the bid relates to challenges facing the industry, based on extensive stakeholder engagement and/or primary research</p> <p>There will be evidence of how local media in England or Wales would benefit</p> <p>There should be extensive detail provided on short term impact on revenues or other financial indicators</p> <p>The applicant will show how the industry as a whole is likely to benefit and/or the impact on those likely to be affected would be transformative</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q19	Project Management	Please provide an overview of your project management approach and outline the resources available within your	1000 words

	<p>t Approach and previous experience</p>	<p>organisation to support your project delivery and ensure your approach is deliverable by 22nd March 2027.</p> <p>Include reference to staffing, technology, infrastructure, how these will be allocated during the project delivery window, and how risks to successful delivery will be managed.</p> <p>Please also set out your project milestones, key performance indicators and/or measures of success, as well as any details of plans for identifying and mitigating risks, and ensuring that public money is used effectively. In addition, applicants should demonstrate their capacity to deliver the proposed project, including the skills, expertise, and experience of the project team and/or organisation, and how these will support successful implementation and sustained impact. If applicable, please also include details of any previous experience of having delivered similar projects and how lessons learned from that experience would be applied.</p>	
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
20%	Steering Board	<p>High scoring applicants will provide extensive details of project management plans, including detail on milestones and risk assessment</p> <p>There will be evidence of previous experience of similar projects applied to the bid</p> <p>There will be detailed and well-evidenced description of how resources will be used to deliver the project</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q20	Delivery Plan	<p>Please complete and upload the Delivery Plan MS Excel Template to illustrate a profile of timelines, milestones, and how you plan to ensure the project remains on track for timely completion (i.e. by 22nd March 2027).</p> <p>The template document is available within the 'Supporting Documents' section of the grant advertisement. Please note, successful recipients will be requested to report on progress against their delivery plan and spend (the</p>	Document Upload

		Delivery Plan should correlate with your Financial Methodology - Budget Management Tool submission)	
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
20%	Grants administration	<p>Higher scoring will be given to applicants who upload and complete a comprehensive delivery plan.</p> <p>The delivery plan should contain key milestones with sub-tasks and activities within each milestone, resource allocation to each activity and specific timelines for task completion.</p> <p>The delivery plan should demonstrate a strong system for tracking progress and managing risks during the project.</p> <p>There should be comprehensive detail on how the project will remain on track and be completed by 22nd March 2027.</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q21	Value for Money over longer term and benefits to industry	<p>How will you seek to optimise the impact of funding, maximising value for money over the longer term and ensuring a positive impact on your community? How will you ensure insights from your funding can be used to benefit the wider local media industry?</p> <p>It is important to stress that the Fund is intended to stimulate growth and sustainability in local media. With this in mind, please set out how you intend to maximise the benefits from a grant, compounding initial effects and ensuring a lasting impact.</p> <p>If your proposal relates to a one-off project, how will you ensure that the positive effects from that project continue to be felt after its lifetime. Where proposals relate to provision of a tool or service on an ongoing basis, how will this be funded or otherwise sustained after the lifetime of the grant.</p> <p>To maximise value for money, match funding is encouraged where feasible. Please include details if relevant</p>	500 words

Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
15%	Steering Board	<p>Applicants will score higher if the case for longer term impact is inherent to the bid. For one-off projects, extensive evidence is provided of clear intention to extend the effects of the project beyond the lifetime of funding, with this built into the overarching purpose of the bid</p> <p>For ongoing projects/services/tools, a clear and tangible plan is set out to optimise long term benefits and encourage adoption or uptake, with this built into the overarching purpose of the bid</p> <p>Longer term impact on revenues or other financial indicators of those outlets which benefit is likely to be transformative without the need for further funding</p> <p>Sustained impact across the whole industry is likely</p> <p>If match funding is proposed, evidence that it will amplify impact</p>

Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q22	Foster collaboration and cooperation in local media	<p>How does your bid foster collaboration and cooperation in local media?</p> <p>As set out in the Local Media Action Plan, a collaborative approach is needed to address the breadth and complexity of the challenges facing local media. One of the goals of the Action Plan therefore is to support local media to collaborate in developing shared infrastructure and standards.</p> <p>Please summarise how your bid embeds collaboration and cooperation. This might involve for example consortium delivery of your project, consultation with industry in the design or delivery of your project, or the generation and sharing of insights and innovative thinking for wider benefit.</p>	300 words

Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
15%	Steering Board	Applicants will score higher if a central objective of the bid is to foster cooperation and collaboration across the industry and beyond the lifetime of the bid

		<p>Applicants may demonstrate affected stakeholders and likely partners in the project extend into other parts of the ecosystem e.g. local authorities/civil society/related industries</p> <p>Plans for both consultation with industry in the design or delivery of the project, and the sharing of insights from the project for wider benefit are embedded in the project and extensively detailed in the bid</p>
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Question	Assessment Area	Assessment Question	Word Count (max)
Q23	Budget Management Tool	<p>Please complete and upload the Financial Methodology - Budget Management Tool MS Excel Template to profile expenditure needs</p> <p>Examples of eligible expenditure - what you can apply for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acquisition costs</li> <li>● Salaries of staff involved in funded projects (not content production, and not business as usual but demonstrates a business impact related to financial sustainability) (only evidenced via PAYE/HMRC or invoiced freelancer costs)</li> <li>● Overheads (where justified and reasonable)</li> <li>● Travel &amp; subsistence costs for staff related to the funded project/s i.e., petrol, food or accommodation (where wholly, exclusively, and necessarily reasonable and specifically related to the project). These should be in line with Civil Service Advisory benchmark rates / HMRC approved mileage allowance payments, and focus on ensuring value for money throughout Preparation, design and development of project delivery</li> <li>● Research and development (if applicable)</li> <li>● Associated office/administration costs</li> <li>● Training costs for staff, volunteers, beneficiaries or service users</li> </ul> <p>Examples of ineligible expenditure - what you cannot apply for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Core organisational running costs not directly related to project delivery</li> <li>● Tax liabilities</li> </ul>	Document Upload

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Costs incurred before the start of award of funding</li> <li>● Contribution to reserves</li> <li>● Property or property maintenance</li> <li>● Repayment of loans</li> <li>● Staff redundancy or redeployment costs</li> <li>● Gifts</li> <li>● Statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties, civil penalties, damage or associated legal costs</li> <li>● Payments for works or activities which the grant recipient, or any member of their partnership, has a statutory duty to undertake, or that are fully funded by other sources</li> <li>● Payments for unfair dismissal or other compensation</li> <li>● Depreciation, amortisation or impairment of assets owned by the grant recipient</li> </ul> <p>Please refer to the supporting documents for further information on eligible and ineligible costs</p>	
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Weighting	Assessed By	Purpose
N/A	Grants administration	<p>Not a weighted score but the following checks apply to the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The funding requested on the application should be in line with the total costs in the BMT (unless match funding has been clearly referenced)? NB the grant amount should not exceed the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ £275,000 for infrastructure funding (IF)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Spending period must not be prior to October 2026 or exceeding 22 March 2027</li> <li>● Correlation with Delivery Plan</li> <li>● Ratio of staff costs vs non-staff costs with no supporting justification</li> <li>● Allocated funding towards project specific activities, in line with eligible expenditure</li> </ul> <p>Applicants may be contacted for further information if one of the above checks is not passed</p> <p>Applicants will not pass this question if they have not uploaded or completed the BMT OR the total amount is in excess of the maximum grant value £275,000 for infrastructure funding (IF) and has not been explained by match funding</p>