



Coimisiún  
na Meán

# Sound & Vision 4 Round 56

## Guide for Radio Applications

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## 1. Introduction

Coimisiún na Meán (An Coimisiún) is Ireland’s agency for developing and regulating a thriving, diverse, creative, safe and trusted media landscape. The Sound & Vision 4 Scheme is administered by An Coimisiún under the Broadcasting Fund, in accordance with the Broadcasting Act 2009 (as amended). A copy of the scheme can be found [here](#).

Sound & Vision 4 is a broadcasting funding scheme that supports independent producers and broadcasters in creating high-quality, accessible programming that reflects Ireland’s culture, history, language, and diversity. The scheme funds content for national, local, and community television and radio services, ensuring a rich and representative media landscape.

The Sound & Vision 4 Scheme is primarily financed from the Broadcast Fund, comprising 7% of the annual net receipts from the Television Licence Fee.

**All applications must be submitted via [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) before noon, Thursday, 29th May 2025.**

The purpose of this document (“Guide”) is to provide applicants and potential applicants guidance on what the Round can fund; who can apply for funding; and, how to apply for funding. It also provides information on the assessment process, notification of funding decisions and the next steps for successful applicants.

All Radio programming applicants should read this Guide for Applicants (“Guide”) before completing an official application form and submitting it on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie). The official RADIO Application Form can be downloaded [here](#). Applicants are responsible for ensuring they use the current version of the Guide and application form when preparing their application.

## 1.1 What's New

We would like to draw your attention to some of the changes made to this Guide since the previous funding round. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of amendments made, and applicants should continue to review the Guide in full.

- 2.1 Applicants should not use application forms from previous rounds
- 2.13 Representations & Warranties
- 2.14 Production Personnel incl. Revenue Guidelines
- 3.1.4 Education, Adult Literacy & Media Literacy Programming
- 4.2 Budget: Optional Excel
- 4.14 Artificial Intelligence



## 2. Procedures for making an application

Please note you must log in to [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) to access the links below!

### 2.1 Submitting an Application:

All applications must be made via An Coimisiún’s online application website, [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie).

Completed applications must be submitted via [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) by 12 noon on the closing date, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025.. Applications can only be submitted when a funding Round is open. Each funding Round will be open for a minimum of four weeks prior to the published closing date. Incomplete applications will be disqualified. An Coimisiún’s decision in this regard will be final.

### 2.2 Registration:

Anyone who wants to apply to the Scheme as an individual/sole trader, or on behalf of a company, or on behalf of a broadcaster must be registered as an Applicant on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie). **Prospective applicants should request registration no less than two working days before a funding Round closes.**

The contractor is the entity that will contract with An Coimisiún and receive the funding if successful. The contractor associated with the application must also be registered as a “Contractor” on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) so they can be selected on the list of available contractors when required. **Prospective Contractors must request registration no less than two working days before a funding Round closes. You can check if a Contractor is registered and/or register [here](#).**

Refer to S&V FAQs on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) if you are unsure how to submit an application or contact An Coimisiún at [sv4@cnam.ie](mailto:sv4@cnam.ie) for information.

### 2.3 Application checklist:

In order to be in a position to make an application for funding, you must be able to answer ‘yes’ to the following questions:

1	I have registered with <a href="http://www.cnamonline.ie">www.cnamonline.ie</a> .	Y/N
2	I have checked the Contractor for my programme is also registered with <a href="http://www.cnamonline.ie">www.cnamonline.ie</a> and that entity is entered in the “Contractor” field on my application.	Y/N
3	I have read the S&V4 Scheme; the current S&V4 Guide for Radio Applications (Round 56).	Y/N
4	I will complete the application form template and save it as <b>one PDF</b> prior to uploading this document to <a href="http://www.cnamonline.ie">www.cnamonline.ie</a> . All third-party confirmations are included within the application and all information in the application is legible.  Any material considered confidential is saved in an appendix as one PDF and the rationale for seeking confidentiality is clearly set out and uploaded to <a href="http://www.cnamonline.ie">www.cnamonline.ie</a> . If you are unable to upload this attachment, please contact <a href="mailto:sv4@cnam.ie">sv4@cnam.ie</a> for assistance.	Y/N
5	I will check the application document for computer viruses before it is uploaded to <a href="http://www.cnamonline.ie">www.cnamonline.ie</a> .	Y/N
6	My application has been submitted per Sections 4.2 and <a href="#">4.3</a> and contains <b>both</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a completed An Coimisiún Budget Template (either in the Application Form or Excel upload) <b>and</b></li><li>• Budget Notes</li></ul>	Y/N
7	I have completed all mandatory fields on the online part of the application form on <a href="http://www.cnamonline.ie">www.cnamonline.ie</a> .	Y/N
8	My proposed project is ready to go into production and I have all necessary rights to produce the project	Y/N
9	Production of my proposed project has not commenced.	Y/N
10	My proposed project is new.	Y/N
11	My proposed project is not a news and current affairs programme.	Y/N
12	My request for funding from An Coimisiún does not exceed <b>€500k</b> .	
13	The majority of other finance required to produce this project is demonstrated as secured per section <a href="#">4.6 of this Guide</a> .	Y/N

14	An eligible broadcaster has provided a recently dated letter of commitment with this proposal.	Y/N
15	Any personal information included with the application is necessary.	Y/N

**2.4 Verification of information:**

All information submitted as part of an application for funding must be true and correct.

**2.5 Closing Date:**

The application and any relevant attachments must be submitted via [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) by **12 noon on Thursday, 29th May 2025**. **An Coimisiún cannot accept any documentation or information on the proposal after the round closes.**

**2.6 Confidential Material:**

Information which an applicant considers to be confidential should be uploaded as a separate attachment to the application on the [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) application record submitted. An Coimisiún will ensure that such information is appropriately managed including on completion of the particular application process.

Documentation should not include external links. . If you are unable to attach this document to your cnamonline application, please contact [sv4@cnam.ie](mailto:sv4@cnam.ie) for assistance well in advance of the Round closing.

**2.7 Freedom of Information:**

An Coimisiún undertakes to use its best endeavours to hold confidential any material provided in response to this process, subject to An Coimisiún’s obligations under law, including the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (“FOI Act”). Applicants and Contractors are asked to consider if any of the information supplied to An Coimisiún in an application or during subsequent contracting should **not** be disclosed because of its information content, to identify same and to specify reasons for its sensitivity. An Coimisiún will consult with applicants about confidential, personal, or commercially sensitive information before deciding on any request received under the FOI Act. Such information may be released in response to an FOI request if information is not deemed to be commercially sensitive.

**2.8 Data Protection:**

In order to operate this funding round effectively, we will require information about the applicant and detailed information on the proposed content. This data and documentation may include personal information such as job titles, salaries, and e-mail addresses.

An Coimisiún shall comply with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation Directive, the Data Protection Act 2018 and any other applicable data privacy laws and regulations when handling and processing any such personal information submitted to this funding initiative.

The information submitted in an application, including any personal information, will be used to process the application and to consult with the applicant. Any personal information submitted (excluding the Contractor’s contact details used for the purposes of Cnamonline.ie) will only be retained if the application is successful. Such information would be required for the funding contract and subsequent measuring of the performance of the grant and the associated outcomes. The information may also be used for the purpose of reviewing Sound & Vision 4 and by external researchers. In such instances all personal information would be anonymised.

An Coimisiún is obligated and committed to protecting all personal data submitted in response to a call for applications to this funding round. An Coimisiún has an appointed Data Protection Officer who is registered

with the Data Protection Commission. You can find out more on how An Coimisiún processes personal information [here](#).

### **2.9 Conflicts of Interest:**

An Coimisiún must comply with the Ethics in Public Office Act (1995) and the Standards in Public Office Act (2001). In this regard, if, as an applicant, you become aware of circumstances which might give rise to a conflict of interest in the context of your application, you must promptly bring such circumstances to the attention of An Coimisiún.

### **2.10 State Aid Funding**

If a Contractor is offered funding greater than €100,000 An Coimisiún must submit details of such offers within six months for publication on the EU's Transparency Aid Module (TAM). This is to comply with Commission Regulation (EU) No. 2023/1315 of 23rd June 2023, amending General Block Exemption Regulation No.651/2014.

### **2.11 Children's First Act**

As a public body, An Coimisiún has obligations under the Children First Act (2015). Where An Coimisiún is funding a project or activity which involves children or vulnerable adults, both An Coimisiún and the contractor are obliged to comply with the provisions of the Act. If one or more of your proposed activities involve children or vulnerable adults, this must be indicated in the application form. Please note that as a condition of funding you will be asked to provide a copy of your Child Protection Policy/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and to provide assurances that your project is operating in compliance with the Children First Act. A National Guidance document in relation to Children First can be found [here](#).

### **2.12 Representations and Warranties**

Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring they adhere to all applicable Irish law and regulations.

### **2.13 Production Personnel:**

Applicants undertake that the production personnel for the production of any programmes funded by Sound & Vision shall be professionally competent, and that in engaging such personnel, applicants shall exercise a practice of equal opportunity for all qualified persons and that any employment, income tax and/or PRSI matters, including but not limited to Revenue Guidelines for Determining Employment Status for Taxation Purposes, relating to production personnel engaged by the applicant for any programme shall be a matter for the applicant and not An Coimisiún.

## **3. Assessment Procedures**

There are several stages in the evaluation process and each stage involves the assessment of an application against predetermined criteria which are underpinned by legislation and the policies of An Coimisiún. The assessment and decision phases are:

- Preliminary Evaluation
- Qualitative
- Strategic
- Ratification

For the guidance of applicants, the information below sets out how the procedures for each of the stages will be applied in assessing applications.

### 3.1 Preliminary Evaluation Phase

Applicants must meet several minimum criteria to be considered for funding. This includes: the status of an applicant's eligibility to apply; the application for funding must be for programming that is permitted by the scheme; and the funding sought must be within the limits permitted. Guidance on preliminary evaluation criteria is set out below and the Preliminary Evaluation Scoring Matrix is set out at [Appendix 1](#) for information and reference.

If any of these minimum criteria are not met, applications will be disqualified. An Coimisiún's decision in this regard will be final.

#### 3.1.1 Who can apply for funding?

Individuals and established legal entities are eligible to apply for funding under the Scheme. Individuals must be Irish or EU nationals/residents. Legal entities must be incorporated in Ireland or the EU.

#### 3.1.2 What can the Scheme fund?

Funding is available for the production costs of new programme content for particular programme formats, genres and themes that will be broadcast by an eligible broadcaster normally during the broadcaster's peak-time schedule.

The Scheme will only accept applications for programmes that are ready to go into production. The Scheme does not accept applications for programmes already in production or programmes that could be categorised as news & current affairs by the viewer.

#### **New Programmes:**

All programmes funded must be new and not already in production. An Coimisiún is open to considering applications for second or follow-on programmes, or series of programmes. In this case, the applicant must outline the following in their application form (online and in the pdf version of the completed application form):

- Set out how the proposed project is 'new;' and,
- Demonstrate that the original and/or subsequent programme or series is substantially complete when the application is submitted. If a follow-on programme/series is awarded funding in principle, the currently contracted programme/series must be substantially completed and delivered to An Coimisiún's satisfaction before a contract for the follow-on programme/series will be concluded. Please note that the standard 12-month deadline for concluding contract negotiations applies for a follow-on programme/series.

#### 3.1.3 What are the Scheme's programme themes & language requirements?

Programmes must deal with at least one of the themes outlined below and An Coimisiún welcomes broad and creative interpretations of these themes.

- Irish Culture, heritage, and experience, which can include but is not limited to: history; historical buildings; the natural environment; folk, rural and vernacular heritage; traditional and contemporary arts; the Irish language; and the Irish experience in European and international contexts;





- Improving adult or media literacy;
- Raising public awareness and understanding of global issues impacting on the State and countries other than the State; and,
- Any of the above programmes in the Irish language.

An Coimisiún takes a broad view of Irish culture, heritage and experience and includes all of its contemporary expressions. Programmes can be Irish, English, bilingual (Irish and English) or multilingual. Programmes must include a minimum of 30% Irish language content to be classified as bilingual.

### 3.1.4 What are the Scheme’s programme format and genre requirements?

The Scheme accepts a range of genres and formats for Radio as set out in the table below. The only exclusion is programming which is produced primarily for news and current affairs or could be categorised as news and current affairs due to the subject matter or treatment of the subject matter.

Accepted Formats:	Documentary; Education; Drama; and Entertainment
Accepted Genres:	Children’s; Arts/Culture; Contemporary Society; History/Heritage; Science/Nature/Environment; and Adult/Media Literacy
Excluded Genres:	News and Current Affairs

When applying, applicants must categorise their proposed programme(s) into one genre and format only based on the above matrix when making their online application. While some programmes like docu-drama may include elements of more than one format or genre, applicants should select the one that is most appropriate in the context of the overall programme. It is the responsibility of the applicant to select the most appropriate format and genre. Scripted comedy programmes can be submitted under the Drama format. Applicants are encouraged to support their selection, if required, in the application documentation.

For programmes categorised under the format of Education, or genre and/or theme of Media Literacy or Adult literacy, please note the following. These points can be addressed in Question 1 (N) of the Application Form.

- **Education projects must** demonstrate the learning outcomes for the audience and all relevant educational aspects of the proposal. Learning outcomes will be considered during assessment. Applicants should outline the approach to the development, delivery and review of the proposed project. The approach to delivery must include the proposed personnel and demonstrate the requisite skills, experience and expertise to deliver the stated outcomes and any partnerships that will be required to deliver the project.
- **Adult Literacy projects** must align with the definition of adult literacy in the Sound & Vision 4 Scheme document<sup>1</sup> and also demonstrate the learning outcomes for the audience and any other relevant information that supports the categorisation. Adult literacy outcomes will be considered during assessment. Applications should clearly demonstrate the intended outcome of the project, and the approach to development, delivery and review of the proposed project. The approach to delivery must include the proposed personnel and demonstrate the requisite skills, experience and expertise to deliver the stated outcomes and any partnerships that will be required to deliver the project.

<sup>1</sup> Under Section 4.2 (b) of the [Sound & Vision 4 Scheme](#), Adult Literacy is defined as involving speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and using everyday technology to communicate and handle information.

- **Media Literacy** projects **must** align with the Media Literacy Policy (available [here](#)). Applications should clearly demonstrate the intended outcome of the project, and the approach to development, delivery and review of the proposed project. The approach to delivery must include the proposed personnel and demonstrate the requisite skills, experience and expertise to deliver the stated outcomes and any partnerships that will be required to deliver the project. Best practice would also highlight how the project will be evaluated. It is recommended that applicants refer to the European Digital Media Observatory’s Guidelines for Effective Media Literacy Initiatives (available [here](#)). In addition, applicants are strongly encouraged to engage with Media Literacy Ireland (MLI) in advance of making an application. MLI may help in terms of identifying resources that might help the project, explaining the media literacy landscape in Ireland or matching the project with other organisations who are doing similar work.

Your application may include the following, among other any relevant aspects you may wish to cover:

- **Development:** outline the project’s goals and outcomes. How has the project been developed so far, and what further development is required? What is the intended audience? How have you identified the needs of this audience, and how will the project address those needs? What information and data were used to develop the proposal?
- **Delivery:** describe the approach to delivering the initiative, including who/what/how. What are the skills, experience and expertise of the team? What resources are required?
- **Review:** how and when will the project be evaluated, both during and following completion? Will the evaluation be shared?

***An Coimisiún retains the right to re-categorise applications during the assessment process if, in its view and based on the application documentation, a proposal is more closely aligned to a different format, genre or theme. An Coimisiún’s decision will be final.***

### **3.1.5 What is the Requirement to Broadcast?**

An Coimisiún will only fund the production of programmes that will be broadcast by an eligible broadcaster. At application stage, An Coimisiún requires applicants to provide a letter of commitment from a broadcaster which confirms agreement to broadcast the programme in line with An Coimisiún’s requirements.

The eligibility criteria for a broadcaster are set out below.

Radio programmes must be broadcast by a sound broadcasting service fully licensed by An Coimisiún or an RTÉ service to be eligible.

**Peak-time Broadcast:** The eligible broadcaster attached to the project must make a commitment to broadcast the proposed programmes at peak times. All applications must include a signed broadcaster’s letter of commitment to this effect, unless specifically exempted as set out above.

Peak listening times are:



Radio programmes	7 a.m. – 9 p.m.
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Some programmes are exempted from the peak time requirement. These are:

Children's Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are exempt from peak time requirement unless broadcast on a dedicated children's channel.</li> <li>• Peak time for such channels will be designated by An Coimisiún with reference to factors such as the nature of the channel and the programming being supported.</li> <li>• This general exemption excludes the 00.00 – 07.00 period.</li> </ul>
Educational programmes (including but not limited to adult/media literacy programmes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are exempt from peak time requirement.</li> <li>• This general exemption excludes the 00.00- 07.00 period.</li> </ul>
Irish language & long form programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The peak time requirement for programmes broadcast in the Irish language (whether radio or television), and long form programmes on television, extends to midnight.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.6 Is broadcasting the only way to distribute Scheme funded content?

The requirement for the 'digital first' release is that the audio programme/s must be made digitally available within 12 months of the delivery of the content to the broadcaster.

Also, funding for the delivery costs should be low given that the material provided, in whole or in part, would be produced as part of the linear broadcast. Indicatively, **costs for the delivery of 'digital first' should not exceed 5% of the project budget**. If an Applicant seeks 'digital' first costs, the Applicant must demonstrate value for money and will be required to report on the outcome of any 'digital first' initiative within a year of project completion. Digital first costs in excess of 5% of the eligible budget should be listed in the ineligible section of the budget. This amount should also be included in the ineligible section of the finance plan with the funder listed. Budget notes are also encouraged to provide information in relation to these costs.

The Applicant should also consider making provision for Access.

The approach to the 'digital first' principle must be agreed with the eligible Broadcaster and for guidance purposes only, could include: -

- all or part of the programme being made available digitally first e.g. a pre-transmission distribution via a Radio Station's website, social media platforms and apps such as a podcast, before appearing as a broadcast;
- using 'digital first' to promote the programme; with promo clips on social media, the use of hashtags, Instagram stories, photo sharing etc.; a focus on certain genres and formats, including children's content and short-form content in multiple genres, reflecting the tastes and behaviours of young audiences in particular;
- making additional material available in that material that was intended for the production was not used in the final cut e.g. extended interviews;

- facilitating and promoting audience engagement online via viewer polls, comments, and competitions etc.

### 3.1.7 When do I need to provide a rationale for difficult to make/low budget?

Applications for funding that meet all An Coimisiún’s criteria 1- 4 stated in the box below must provide a rationale as to how the proposed programme has the character of an audio-visual work that is difficult to make. To do this, select “No” in the drop down field on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) application form that asks “does the project meet the low budget criteria” and then input your rationale as to how the proposed programme has the character of an audio-visual work that is difficult to make in the mandatory field that should become available once you have made your selection.

Applications which do not meet all An Coimisiún’s criteria 1- 4 should select “Yes” for the “does the project meet the low budget criteria” question on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) and will not have to provide additional rationale.

the total budget exceeds €55,000, and  
 the total grant aid requested is more than 50% of the total budget, and  
 the programmes are not in the Irish language, and  
 the programme does not deal with adult literacy.

The criteria for assessing “difficult to make” include:

- Producer, broadcaster, or project resources.
- Lack of commercial potential.
- Lack of significant audience appeal.
- Specificity of the linguistic, educational, and cultural themes.
- The experimental nature and/or creative risk.

### 3.1.8 What are eligible costs?

The Scheme will only accept applications for programmes that are ready to go into production. The Scheme does not accept applications for programmes already in production. Applications for standalone development or completion funding are not eligible for submission to funding rounds.

The only costs that can be funded under S&V4 are eligible costs. Eligible costs are the costs associated with the production and delivery of the programme(s) and, in addition to general production costs, may include financial, legal, and banking costs. Development costs may be eligible provided they are directly related to the production of the programme and have been supported by budget notes.

Applicants should provide a rationale for all costs in their budget notes/ detailed budget breakdown.

Ineligible costs are costs that are related to the production and delivery but are not directly related to programme-making or delivery. Examples of ineligible costs include depreciation, general website costs, and general training<sup>2</sup>.

In most cases capital costs are ineligible. However, where the applicant is a community group engaged in programme production, some capital costs may be eligible for funding. In these cases, applicants must provide a full rationale as to why these capital costs are required and provide three quotes for the procurement of such equipment. These shall be assessed on a case-by-case and An Coimisiún will contribute up to a maximum of 80% of such capital costs.

The Scheme can fund a maximum of 95% of the costs in the eligible budget. For detailed information in relation to the amounts that can be sought for individual projects, applicants should consult the funding matrix as set out below:

Minimum award	Maximum award	Grant awarded will not represent more than the following percentage of the total eligible budget
	€20,000	Up to 95%
€20,001	€40,000	Up to 90%
€40,001	€55,000	Up to 85%
Greater than €55,001		To be negotiated on a case-by-case basis but will not exceed 85%

### 3.1.9 Commencement of Production

Please note that once an application has been submitted, the funding Round has closed for applications, and assessment is underway, production may commence but this is entirely at the applicant's own risk.

### 3.2 Qualitative Evaluation Phase

If the applicant and application are deemed eligible in the Preliminary Evaluation Assessment Phase, the application qualifies for consideration for the potential award of funding. The next stage is the Qualitative Evaluation Phase during which each application is assessed on its own merits in the context of the scheme objectives and predetermined qualitative criteria. The Qualitative Evaluation Scoring Matrix is set out at [Appendix 2](#) for information and reference.

An applicant must achieve a score of 50% of the available marks or more under each of these three mandatory criteria to qualify for further assessment for the award of funding.

Mandatory Criteria:

- *Additionality, Cultural Value & Innovation.*
- *Quality of the Application.*
- *Resources/Case made for Funding.*

<sup>2</sup> General training would be training that is not directly related to the production. However, training costs directly related to the production may be acceptable, for instance, the upskilling of a trainee working on the production etc. Any such training should be linked to the "Talent and Skills Development" section of your application. A budget note on any such training is advised.

### 3.3 Strategic Evaluation Phase

In instances where there are more qualifying applications than funds available arising from the Qualitative Assessment Phase An Coimisiún will have a further evaluation phase, the Strategic Evaluation Phase. This will focus on achieving a balance in the overall package of funded projects in the context of the scheme objectives. The recommendations for the qualitative phase will also be considered here. Final recommendations are then submitted to An Coimisiún for ratification.

The assessment criteria for this phase are:

Strategic Criteria:

- Diversity of content with references to genres, formats, content, and audiences served.
- Irish Language
- Talent & Skills Development
- Women in a Lead Creative Role
- Overall Qualitative assessment score

For more information, the Scoring Matrix for Qualitative and Strategic Assessment is set out at [Appendix 3](#).

### 3.4 Ratification

The final stage sees the An Coimisiún make final decisions on the applications, considering recommendations emerging from the previous assessment phases. Following ratification by Commissioners, applicants are informed of the outcome of their submission(s).

### 3.5 Decision-Making Process

The following procedure will be followed by An Coimisiún in determining the most suitable applicants for the award of funding: -

**3.5.1** An initial evaluation will be made of each application to ensure that it meets with the qualifying criteria of the scheme including applicant eligibility and that all the information and documentation required has been submitted. Any applicant that does not meet with any one of the listed criteria will be disqualified and will be excluded from the application process per [Appendix 1](#). An Coimisiún staff will check for any potential conflicts of interest with the assessors prior to distributing any applications to the next stage of assessment.

**3.5.2** The eligible applications are then arranged in groups. The groupings may be informed by proposal type (Radio or TV); format; genre; amount requested and so forth and assigned to a Qualitative Assessment Panel.

The Panel will be made up of An Coimisiún staff and external assessors and in the formation of each Panel, An Coimisiún will consider appropriate skills and experience required to assess the projects.

Each application is assessed by each external Panel member independently. A meeting is then convened to discuss each application. The panel will agree a Qualitative score for each application and a list of the funding recommendations will be agreed. The Executive will then circulate a draft of the matters agreed to each panel member for consideration and approval. On completion of all the panel assessment meetings, including signoff

on the assessment meeting documentation, the complete list of funding recommendations is compiled. If the recommended amount of funding exceeds that which is available for the round, a strategic assessment phase will be required.

**3.5.3** A Strategic Assessment Panel is established of senior members of An Coimisiún management and staff members involved with the administration of the round. This forum considers collectively the Qualitative Assessment Phase scores and Panel recommendations, and the strategic criteria. An Coimisiún is obligated to aim for a balance of content outcomes that facilitates the best mix of formats, genres, language and audiences based on the applications received for the round. The applications that are considered to best achieve the aims and objectives of the Scheme and accordingly achieve the highest scores, will be awarded funding.

**3.5.4** The final stage sees Commissioners make the final decisions on the applications, considering the recommendations emerging from the previous assessment phases.

## **3.6 Funding Decisions**

### ***Successful applications***

Where An Coimisiún has approved an application for funding, the following steps apply:

- An Coimisiún informs the applicant of the decision, setting out any condition(s) attaching to the offer.
- An Coimisiún will make public a list of the funding offers ratified by An Coimisiún.
- The successful applicant must confirm acceptance of the offer of funding and any condition(s) attached thereto by An Coimisiún.
- A successful applicant is required to enter into a contractual agreement with An Coimisiún, on terms to be specified by An Coimisiún. Such terms include a schedule relating to the drawdown of funds by an applicant. Funds are administered by An Coimisiún in accordance with the terms of the contractual agreement.
- The Applicant and the Contractor's main point of contact will have access to the Contract record created on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie).

### ***Unsuccessful applications***

Where An Coimisiún has rejected an application for funding, applicants are notified individually and provided with information on the performance of their application in the assessment process. The [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie) application status will indicate at what stage your application was rejected:

- If the application is rejected during the Preliminary Assessment Phase, the status will indicate 'Rejected - Preliminary' when the Round has been ratified.
- If an application is rejected during the Qualitative Assessment Phase, the online status will indicate it as 'Rejected – Stage 1' when the Round has been ratified.
- If an application is rejected during the Strategic Assessment Phase, the online status will indicate it as 'Rejected – Stage 2' when the Round has been ratified.

## **3.7 Contracting**

When contracting with An Coimisiún, a successful applicant will be required to provide certain deliverables to An Coimisiún. For information, below is a non-exhaustive list of what would be required at contracting. Note that these documents do not have to be in place when making an application; they are included here for guidance only.

1. Budget & Finance Plan
2. Treatment
3. Programme and Grant Details
4. Insurance Policy
5. Broadcaster Confirmation letter
6. No Set off agreement letter from a relevant bank in relation to the production bank account.
7. Tax Clearance Information
8. Confirmation of key role genders: If the gender of the Producer, Director, Editor or Writer was indicated as Female in the application, it is expected that the role will be filled by suitable female personnel

### **3.8 Disclaimer**

The information supplied in this document is not an exhaustive account of the statutory requirements and legal obligations on applicants for funding under the Scheme. It should not be regarded as a complete or authoritative statement of the law.

Persons to whom the present document is made available must make their own independent assessment after taking their own professional advice and making such further investigations as they deem necessary on all relevant matters. An Coimisiún makes no representation or warranty, express or implied, with respect to the information contained in the present document or with respect to any oral or written information made or to be made available to any potential applicant or its professional advisers. Any liability in this regard is expressly disclaimed.





## 4. Application Form

This section of the document explains the separate elements of the Official Application Form and sets out the information An Coimisiún requires under each element. This should be read in conjunction with the Application Form which is available [here](#). Applicants who fail to complete all mandatory sections of the Application Form and provide all mandatory documentation in the correct format will be rejected at preliminary evaluation stage. The table below identifies the items that are mandatory for each type of application.

The material outlined in the table below needs to be incorporated into one PDF document only. Links to documentation held external to the application document should not be included with the exception of Animation samples. Embedding documentation within the application attachment is not recommended due to the risk that it may not be readable/accessible to An Coimisiún.

#	Application Form Contents	Mandatory
1	Programme Specification, including Treatment	For all applications
2	Budget	For all applications
3	Budget Notes and/or a Detailed Budget	For all applications*
4	Finance Plan, including Territorial Spend	For all applications
5	Letter of Commitment from a Broadcaster	For all applications**
6	If proposing to use the 'Digital First' principle, letter of commitment from eligible Broadcaster should include confirmation of agreed approach to the creation of material for the digital first aspect of the proposal	For all applications if using the principle
7	Confirmation(s) of Commitment from other Funders	Advised but not mandatory***
8	Bios and confirmation(s) of Commitment (if applicable) from Key Personnel /Talent / Contributors	For all applications
9	Indicative Running Orders	Mandatory for radio applications except for scripted dramas
10	Scripts	For Drama applications
11	Series Outlines	For all multipart series

\* Budget notes are mandatory for Radio projects.

\*\*see [section 3.1.5](#) for details.

\*\*\*please read [section 4.6](#) for information on acceptable thresholds.

An Coimisiún reserves the right not to view or consider any material not submitted on the Online Form or the Application Form. All material listed from #1-11 in the table above should be incorporated into the application document, external links to any of this documentation will not be accepted.

### 4.1 Programme Specification

Use this part of the application form to convey what your programme is about to An Coimisiún's assessors. Complete each section per the guidance in the application form.

### 4.2 Budget

The Application Form includes a budget template. This template is divided into two sections – eligible costs and ineligible costs (see Section [3.1.8](#) for definitions and examples). Line items have been categorised under sub-headings in these sections.

All applications must include a completed budget template (“**Budget Template**”) for their project using the existing categorisation and breakdown. Please see An Coimisiún’s requirements for budgets below.

### **Completing the Budget Template**

Applicants may use **either one** of:

1. The template budget in the application Word document or
2. An Excel version that will help you by auto-calculating your budget, which is available for download [\[here\]](#). *If using this Excel sheet, please attach this budget as a separate attachment with your completed application form to the cnamonline application record.*

Radio applications must include the total figures for each relevant line item in the budget. Use the budget notes and/or detailed budget section to provide a breakdown of these figures, particularly if you are entering figures in the line items marked “Other.”

Itemise the cost of each budget item and indicate fully how this figure has been calculated. This should be set out with reference to the Unit Description, Number, and relevant Rate. If your project will incur costs not listed in the template, use the “Other” line item, and provide the necessary explanations in the Budget Notes. In the case of staffing and productions costs, a daily rate should be provided if less than one week is involved. An hourly rate should only be provided where less than a day is required. See below a sample completed line item where a producer is budgeting for their time in days. The total therefore is the number of days times the producer’s rate:

No.	Personnel	Unit Description	Number	Rate	Total
1	Producer	Day	x	€xxx	= number x rate

### **VAT**

Line items in the Budget must be submitted exclusive of VAT unless the applicant is **not registered** for VAT. Only in the instance that VAT is a non-deductible cost to the applicant can VAT be included.

- VAT: If you are registered for VAT, all line items in the budget should be inputted exclusive of VAT.
- If you are NOT registered for VAT, you may include the VAT cost for the line item. The rationale for inclusion of VAT (plus rate charged) must be set out in your budget notes.

An Coimisiún requires successful applicants to have a clear tax clearance status with the Irish Revenue Commissioners.

### **Currency**

The budget must be presented in the currency in which most of the production will be financed. If the production will not primarily be financed in Euro or Sterling, a Euro budget should also be provided. Contracts will be finalised and signed based on indicative Euro payments. This will be further explained during contract negotiations. All funding offered will be in Euros.

### **Travel and Subsistence**

Travel and subsistence costs should be in line with current Civil Service rates, the current rates are available [here](#).



### ***Overheads and Production Fee/Contingency Fee***

The overhead fee and production fee/contingency fee should be calculated as a percentage of the eligible costs.

For overheads, a maximum of up to 5% can be apportioned to this line. This is a contribution towards the related overhead costs incurred by the producer during production.

A production, or contingency fee may be included in the budget. This is generally up to a maximum of 10%; however, it can be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. The production/contingency fee is set with reference to factors like the complexity, duration and scale of the production and recognises the potential for changes in financial requirements that may arise over the course of programme production.

For some productions both a production and contingency fee may be permitted, this is considered on a case-by-case basis.

### ***Accounts***

Provision must be made in the budget for the cost of an accountant's report of the project under the M45 – Grant Claim standard i.e. the engagement of a qualified person to examine and sign off on a final cost statement etc

### ***Archiving (An Coimisiún Delivery)***

All programmes funded under the Scheme will be archived by An Coimisiún; provision should be made for this cost. For radio, a broadcast quality copy of the programme on a USB stick or card will be required.

## **4.3 Budget Notes**

This section is mandatory. All radio projects must provide budget notes. Use the budget notes to explain how you are going to achieve the programme described in the treatment using the resources listed in the budget. The notes should link to these parts of the application for the assessor. Applicants must adequately justify the time, rates, and costs for line items included in the budget. The notes should provide a breakdown of any costs that are 'bundled' in the budget, e.g., travel and subsistence, and they should explain why particular cost lines are necessary and justified in the context of the proposed programme. The notes should also clearly identify where the same person fulfils more than one role, and, if different rates are proposed, this must be justified in these notes. Applicants should also include a summary of the items that have been included in the overhead costs and an explanatory note on the production fee and or contingency if these lines have been included.

Where the applicant is a community group engaged in programme production, some capital costs may be eligible for funding. If requesting funding for capital costs, provide a rationale in the budget notes for these costs. Note the grant can fund up to a maximum of 80% of capital costs.

## **4.4 Finance Plan**

Set out all the funders (including in-kind funding) for the project under the eligible and/or ineligible section of the finance plan, as appropriate. The applicant can also be a funder to the project. Clearly state the total amount of funding you are seeking from the Scheme and calculate it as a percentage of the Eligible Cost total. The total amount in the finance plan must reflect the total amount in the budget. The Scheme cannot fund over 95% of the eligible costs, nor can it fund any ineligible costs. 95% is only available in the case of radio projects

with a total eligible budget of equal to, or less than, €20k. Please see above for details on the funding matrices that apply.

#### 4.5 Letter of Commitment from a Broadcaster

Letters of commitment from a broadcaster must meet the following requirements:

- It must be a commercial or community radio sound broadcaster fully licensed by An Coimisiún or an RTÉ radio service.
- It must be set on the broadcaster's headed paper, recently dated, and signed by the broadcaster.
- It must refer to the title of the applicant's project.
- It should indicate the channel on which the programme will be broadcast.
- It should commit to broadcasting the programme, or series of programmes, at peak times (see [Section 3.1.5](#) for definition of peak times).
- It should confirm any financial commitment to be provided by the broadcaster, if applicable.
- It should confirm any commitment to the Digital First Principle by the broadcaster, if applicable.

If a broadcaster letter is submitted within an application and it does not conform to the requirements set out above, An Coimisiún reserves the right to reject the application at the preliminary assessment stage.

#### 4.6 Confirmations(s) of Commitment from Other Funders/Confirming other funding is secured

If parties other than An Coimisiún and the applicant are proposing to provide funding for the project, confirmation(s) of commitment in this regard should be included in the application. The majority of funding required to produce the project must be demonstrated as secure.

**Applications should demonstrate that at least 85% of funding required to make the project has been secured, see below guidelines on funding letters and what is required to demonstrate funding is "secured."**

**If at least 85% of the funding is not demonstrated as secured at the time of application submission, An Coimisiún reserves the right to discount the project from the application process.**

**For the purpose of calculating secured funding, applicants may count the amount requested from An Coimisiún as secured, on the basis that no more than €500,000 is requested.**

#### Guidelines for funding confirmation letters:

- Letters of funding should be on headed paper,
- It should be adequately demonstrated that the letter of support will be valid up until the Round is ratified by An Coimisiún.
- In general, the letter should be signed and dated within three months of the relevant round closing date.
- The letter should identify the project by name and confirm: (i) the amount of support being provided, (ii) when it will be available, and (iii) any conditions attached to this support.

- If the supporting broadcaster is providing funding this funding should be committed in the broadcaster support letter.
- Funding letters are not mandatory, however, in the absence of such correspondence An Coimisiún reserves the right to consider in assessment that this funding support is not confirmed even though it may be listed as confirmed elsewhere in the application.
- If a significant level of funding is not confirmed as secured (more than what would equate to 15% of total eligible costs), the project may be discounted from the application process.
- Draft/unsigned documentation from funders will not be accepted as evidence of support.
- Confirmation of previous funding secured from an organisation such as development funding, is not considered to constitute confirmation of future production funding from that organisation.
- Letters from potential funders confirming that an applicant is eligible to apply for funding will not be considered adequate confirmation of funding.

#### **4.7 Biographies and Letters of Commitment from Key Personnel**

A professional profile or biography for key personnel highlighting relevant experience is mandatory. Please do not provide their CVs. You may also wish to provide letters or emails of commitment from key personnel where their involvement could be deemed difficult to secure. If any key personnel have worked on previous Sound & Vision projects for other contracting entities this information should be included in the biography submitted for these individuals.

Please note that personal data should only be provided if you believe it is required to assess the project. If personal data is included, it should be attached in the Confidential Material section on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie).

#### **4.8 Key Talent / Key Contributors**

Letters of Commitment from Talent/Key contributors should be submitted if relevant to the proposal. In this regard, applicants are encouraged to include letters of commitment from Talent/Key Contributors that are essential to the delivery of the project and/or difficult to confirm.

This material should correspond with the material listed in the Programme Specification outlined in your application. Please note that in the absence of such correspondence, An Coimisiún reserves the right to consider in assessment that participation by these individuals is not confirmed even though it may be listed as confirmed elsewhere in the application.

Please note that personal data should only be provided if you believe it is required to assess the project. If personal data is included, it should be attached in the Confidential Material section on [www.cnamonline.ie](http://www.cnamonline.ie).

#### **4.9 Indicative Running Orders and Outlines**

Radio applicants must include indicative running orders for their projects, except for radio drama applications that include a full script. All multipart series should include an outline for the entire series.

#### **4.10 Scripts**

Scripts must be provided for all Drama programmes and must be in the language in which the programme will be broadcast. For a programme series where all scripts are not available, applications must include at least

one script and outlines of all programmes in the series. Scripts are also advisable for other formats e.g., documentaries, where there is a significant drama element.

#### **4.11 Digital First Principle**

If an Applicant wishes to distribute audiovisual content prior to fulfilling the S&V4 broadcast requirement this should be set out in detail in the application. The information should include the approach to the digital release, including whether in whole or in part, any associated partnerships/funders, associated timeframes and any associated production costs should be clearly identified in the budget. An Coimisiún still requires a Broadcaster Confirmation letter, which should include a written commitment to the Digital First principle and will require the audiovisual content to be broadcast on an eligible broadcaster during the peak-time schedule within 12 months of the delivery of content to the Broadcaster. Applicants should refer to section [3.1.6](#) of the Guide in relation to what can be allocated towards Digital First.

#### **4.12 Artificial Intelligence**

To understand how emerging technologies are being used by content producers, we are asking applicants about the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the development of their project ideas or in the preparation of their funding applications. Please note that providing this information will not have any impact on how your application is assessed in this round.

#### **4.13 Sustainability**

To understand what if any sustainability measures are in place on your project we are asking applicants to set out these out in the application form.



## Appendix 1 – Preliminary Scoring Matrix

As outlined in section 3.1, S&V4 provides that an applicant and the application must meet a number of criteria to qualify for the assessment for the award of funding. The applicant should note that if they do not achieve a Pass score under each criterion, the application will not be eligible for assessment for the award of funding.

CRITERION		Pass/ Fail
<b>Eligibility: Is the applicant eligible to apply for funding under S&amp;V4 and does the application comply with the fundamental requirements of S&amp;V4? This has regard to whether:</b>	a) the status of the applicant complies with the requirements of the scheme	
	b) the proposed programme theme, language, format and genre fall within those permitted by S&V4	
	c) the funding amount requested falls within the limit permissions of S&V4	
	d) assuming that the amount requested from An Coimisiún is secure, at least 85% of total funding required to produce the project is demonstrated as secure	
	e) the applicant provided confirmation that production had not commenced prior to submitting the application to S&V4	
	f) it is demonstrated that an eligible broadcaster is confirmed to broadcast the project.	
<b>Additionality:</b> Has the applicant provided confirmation that the proposed programme content is new and would be difficult to produce without S&V4 funding?		
Is the Application complete, has the applicant complied with all application guidelines and submitted all relevant documentation?		

Achievement of a pass score in the preliminary evaluation phase will determine only whether the application is eligible to be considered for the award of funding. If the application is found to be eligible, the pass score awarded during the preliminary evaluation phase will thereafter be disregarded and will play no role in the consideration of the most suitable applications for funding which will be determined solely by reference to the criteria as set out in S&V4 guidance documentation (refer to [Appendices 2 and 3](#)).



## Appendix 2 – Qualitative Scoring Matrix

As outlined above in section 3.2, S&V4 provides for the consideration of an application for assessment for the award of funding if an application passes the Preliminary Evaluation Phase. This next phase of assessment, the Qualitative Assessment Phase, involves the establishment of assessment panels, made up of internal An Coimisiún staff and suitably qualified external assessors. Each application is independently assessed by external assessors using the criteria set out below, and a Panel meeting is convened to discuss each application and to reach consensus on the assessment and score achieved for each application. An applicant must score a minimum of 50% under each mandatory criterion to qualify for consideration of an award of funding. The qualitative criteria for Round 56 are set out below.

<b>MANDATORY CRITERIA</b>	<b>Available Score</b>
<p><b>Additionality, Cultural Value &amp; Innovation:</b> <i>To what extent does the content of the programme/s add to the range of viewing or listening options for audiences in Ireland? What access services will be provided? To what extent does the proposal address diversity in the content of the proposal? In this regard, does the application propose to show aspects of Irish culture, society, communities or people that are not commonly portrayed? How compelling and innovative is the application in terms of the programme pitch and the approach to programme production? Has the applicant demonstrated any other innovative aspects to the proposal, for example, incorporating Digital First?</i></p> <p><i>For Applicants associated with Community Broadcasters, how much does the proposal add to the range of groups or individuals actively participating in the station? Does the proposal involve the making of a programme by a community group that seldom engages and/or is heard in the media? Is it likely to lead to the development of a greater understanding of and participation in the production and dissemination of broadcast content?</i></p>	50
<p><b>Quality of the Application:</b> <i>To what extent does the proposal demonstrate that it will further the creation of culturally relevant quality content for Irish audiences and further the aims and objectives of Sound &amp; Vision 4? Does the proposal clearly demonstrate in terms of content, approach and production processes that the programme(s) will be high quality? Has the applicant concluded any partnerships, formal or informal, with relevant third parties? If yes, with a programme-maker or programme-makers, what level of enhancement will it bring to the programme-making process and resultant programme content? The track record of the Applicant, including with past Sound &amp; Vision applications or contracts?</i></p> <p><i>For Applicants associated with Community Broadcasters, what level of enhancement will the proposal bring to the social benefit outcomes of the community broadcaster (including in terms of greater diversity, community participations and social inclusion)?</i></p>	30
<p><b>Resources &amp; Case made for funding:</b> <i>Are the resources proposed clearly explained, and are they adequate and realistic in the context of the proposal? Does the budget and budget notes explain why particular cost lines are necessary and justified in the context of the proposed programme? Does the proposal represent value for money and is the amount of funding requested from An Coimisiún realistic? Would the project be difficult to make without An Coimisiún support? What is the level of need for this funding? Regard will be given to funding already allocated to the applicant by Sound &amp; Vision. Has the applicant concluded any formal or informal funding partnerships with relevant third parties? If yes, with a co-investor, what level of co-investment is involved, what level of enhancement will it bring to the project and does it provide greater leverage for An Coimisiún funding? If the Applicant is part financing the project, is the amount indicated coming from them realistic?</i></p> <p><i>The track record of the Applicant and key personnel involved in the project, including supporting details such as CVs as set out in the application and has the applicant demonstrated capacity to deliver?</i></p>	20



## Appendix 3 – Strategic Scoring Matrix

As outlined above in section 3.3, S&V4 provides for a Strategic Assessment phase where the number of qualifying applications from the Qualitative Assessment Phase exceeds the level of funding available. In this regard, the Strategic Assessment Phase is required to further scrutinise the allocation of funds.

STRATEGIC CRITERIA	Available Score
<b>Diversity of Formats, Genres, Content and Audiences Served:</b> To ensure a diverse range of culturally relevant content is produced, a balance of the award of funds across the permitted formats, genres and audiences needs to be achieved. Regard will also be given to the diversity in the proposed programme content, including gender, equality, diversity and inclusion, and the access services that will be provided for the production.	70
<b>Irish Language:</b> An Coimisiún must ensure that a minimum of 25% of the funding awarded annually is for Irish language / bi-lingual Programming. The application must demonstrate that at least 30% of the final broadcast will be in the Irish language to achieve any score under this criterion.	10
<b>Talent &amp; Skills Development:</b> Does the application provide an opportunity for new talent or skills development, particularly people that reflect Ireland's cultural and ethnic diversity and is the level of support as set out sufficient? Or the extent to which the applicant will create opportunities for talent and/or skills development?	10
<b>Women in a Lead Creative Role:</b> The extent to which the creative team includes women in a leadership role.	10
<b>Qualitative Assessment Score:</b> Score as awarded by the Qualitative Assessment Panel	--

