



Coimisiún
na Meán

Media Skills and Development Programme: Fact-checking Training Strand Guide for Applicants

**Publication date:
4 June 2026**

Deadline for response: 2nd July 2026

Introduction

This document is a guide for applicants who wish to apply to a dedicated strand under Coimisiún na Meán's Media Skills and Development Programme. This dedicated strand is to support the growth of fact-checking, pre-bunking and de-bunking expertise in Ireland in line with the [National Counter Disinformation Strategy \(NCDS\)](#). The guidance covers the following matters:

:1. About Coimisiún na Meán	3
2. Coimisiún na Meán's Media Skills and Development Programme	3
3. Who Can Apply?	4
4. What Can You Apply For?	4
5. Required information for an application	5
6. Funding available	6
7. State Aid Funding	6
8. Submitting an application	7
9. Assessment of applications	8
10. Decisions	9
11. Requirements for successful applications	9
12. Freedom of Information	10
13. Data Protection	11
Appendix One – Finance Plan	11
Appendix Two - Budget Template	12
	12

Applicants are advised to read this guidance before completing and submitting an application form. If you have any queries in relation to this specific strand under the Media Skills and Development Programme, contact mediaskillsdev@cnam.ie or (01) 644 1200.



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

Closing Date for Applications

Completed Coimisiún na Meán application forms must be submitted in **PDF** to mediaskillsdev@cnam.ie by **12 noon on 2nd July 2026**. Coimisiún na Meán will not accept late or incomplete applications.

1. About Coimisiún na Meán

[Coimisiún na Meán](#) is Ireland's agency for developing and regulating a thriving, diverse, creative, safe and trusted media landscape, as reflected in our [Strategy Statement](#). It was established under the provisions of the [Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022](#) on the 15th March 2023. Our responsibilities include:

- Implementing the regulatory regime for online safety.
- Regulating broadcasters and video-on-demand providers.
- Supporting the wider media sector

2. Coimisiún na Meán's Media Skills and Development Programme

An Coimisiún recognises the importance of ongoing training, and development activities for those working in media. Through our Media Skills and Development Programme, we aim to support training, learning and development activities that, in line with our [Strategy Statement](#), nurture a vibrant and trusted media landscape that is sustainable, pluralistic and participative, and that reflects and shapes who we are as a society.

[Our Media Skills and Development Programme Policy](#) facilitates the operation of dedicated strands. An Coimisiún is calling for applications to support the growth of fact-checking, pre-bunking, and de-bunking expertise in Irish media, through the provision of training and development activities. Such training is to support the growth of fact-checking expertise in Ireland in line with the [National Counter Disinformation Strategy \(NCDS\)](#)



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

3. Who Can Apply?

This dedicated strand is open to the following applicants:

- Academic Institutions and universities established and based in Ireland and with a proven track record of delivering journalism and media education and training. It is preferable that these academic institutions have previously delivered courses and / or initiatives incorporating fact-checking, pre-bunking and debunking education and disinformation awareness.
- Representative bodies of regulated media entities, including training bodies who have the capacity to deliver the required training.
- Accredited bodies with expertise on fact-checking in the Irish context
- Partnerships and collaborations will be considered. Applicants may partner with a media organisation. The media organisation must be either an entity regulated by Coimisiún na Meán or the Press Council, or a representative body for such entities.

4. What Can You Apply For?

Applications must demonstrate alignment with the NCDS, in particular commitments 3 and 5. Applicants must also demonstrate alignment with Coimisiún na Meán's [Strategy Statement](#), and at least one of our [Programme Policy specific objectives](#).

Funding can be sought for the following:

- To develop and execute training in fact-checking, pre-bunking, and de-bunking for graduate, early career and mid-career journalists and media professionals working in news and current affairs. Operational and overhead costs associated with the delivery of such activities, for example the coordination and implementation of training initiatives, are permissible.
- To provide mentorship or an internship specifically focused on fact-checking in media. Applicants must demonstrate in-house expertise to facilitate such mentorship and how any such proposal would be structured and rolled out either by the Applicant or any partner organisation.
- Partnerships that facilitate access to the training, for example between trainers and representative bodies or suitable networks will also be considered.

The proposed training or development activities must take place in 2026.



Coimisiún
na Meán

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

Other Important Information For Applicants

- 95% of the relevant budget may be requested. The budget can include a contribution towards participation / attendance fees.
- Multi-annual funding is not available.
- If an applicant is in receipt of funding under another Coimisiún na Meán funding scheme, the applicant cannot apply to this Programme to support the same activity / activities or event that is in receipt of funding via the other support mechanism.
- This Programme is not designed to support the day to day running costs of an organisation. Funding for such operational or overhead costs outside identified training and development activities is not permitted.

Application for funding for capital or infrastructure costs is not permitted.

5. Required information for an application

Applicants must complete the relevant official Coimisiún na Meán Media application form with the following information:

Details of the Applicant / Proposed Contractor, including:

- Details of the applicant / Proposed Contractor, including full name, address, telephone and email contact details and any website and/or social media accounts relevant to the application
- Confirmation of the Applicant / Proposed Contractor's status, (*eg: registered name of the applicant entity*).
- Brief background of the Applicant / Proposed Contractor, including relevant track record, qualifications of personnel involved, relevant experience and previous initiatives undertaken.

Details of the proposed training and development activities

A detailed description of the specific factcheck training being proposed including:

- Information on research, development and implementation;
- How the proposed training supports the commitments set out in the NCDS;
- Any specific themes or focus areas;
- Proposed trainers and educators;



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

- Proposed participants and how they will be targeted. Please note this training strand is specifically targeting **graduate, early career and mid-career journalists and media professionals working in news and current affairs**. An applicant will be required to demonstrate its selection process for participants to ensure it meets this requirement. Participants should be employed by a regulated media entity, for example a broadcaster or newspaper, or if operating as a freelancer, provide evidence of work undertaken for such an entity.
- Format and duration:
- Any proposed accreditation, micro-credentials or qualification level, if applicable;

Finance Details

- Amount requested from An Coimisiún. **Please note no more than 95% of the relevant budget may be requested.**
- Finance plan indicating other funding sources, for example An Coimisiún (if successful), funding to be provided by the Applicant, and any other partners. **(Template provided in Appendix One).**
- Budget, setting out line-item costs, for example; trainers, materials, venue, participant fees. **(Template provided in Appendix Two).** Please also provide explanatory notes regarding costs where relevant.

6. Funding available

Funding of **up to €400,000** is available to allocate under this dedicated strand of the Media Skills and Development Programme, subject to receipt of applications of sufficient standard. A number of recipients may be considered, depending on quality and quantity of applications.

7. State Aid Funding

An Coimisiún operates this Programme having regard to EU State Aid Rules, and uses the [De Minimis Regulation \(EU\) 2023/2831](#). Under this regulation, aid granted to one 'undertaking' cannot exceed €300,000 in a rolling 3-year period. It should be noted that De Minimis payments to one undertaking under a number of measures or schemes have to cumulatively observe the €300,000 limit.

Under De Minimis, the current ceiling for all De Minimis aid, regardless of the source of such De Minimis aid, awarded to any single undertaking by any State agency or public body over a three-year period is €300,000. De Minimis aid of up to €300,000 per undertaking over any period of three years is allowed by the European Commission under the De Minimis Regulation as this is considered to be



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

at a level which will not have a substantive effect on trade between Member States nor distort or threaten to distort competition and therefore can be awarded without notification to or clearance by the European Commission.

Applicants must declare to An Coimisiún any De Minimis aid received by them from any public body in the three years before funding is received from An Coimisiún (and any “in progress” applications for state funding). All projects will be checked for De Minimis applicability as part of the initial application and on submission of claims, and this may result in applications being ineligible for grant aid under this Scheme.

Applicants seeking support under the De Minimis Regulation will be required to submit a declaration to An Coimisiún declaring all De Minimis aid received over the past three years, in accordance with EU State Aid Rules. It should be noted that a false declaration resulting in the threshold of €300,000 being exceeded could later give rise to the aid being recovered by An Coimisiún with interest.

In addition, applicants should note that the name of the Applicant in receipt of the payment will be listed in the EU State Aid register, which is publicly available. This is a new EU requirement as of 1 January 2026.

Monitoring & Reporting Requirements

An Coimisiún will retain records with information and supporting documents to establish that all the conditions laid down in De Minimis are fulfilled for 10 years from the date of the last award of aid under the Programme.

For further information: [De Minimis Aid](#)

8. Submitting an application

Completed application forms must be submitted in **PDF format** to mediaskillsdev@cnam.ie by **12 noon on 2nd July 2026**. Coimisiún na Meán will not accept late or incomplete applications. Application forms are available to download on Coimisiún na Meán’s website. Applicants should retain a digital copy of the application submitted.

Note: Please do not complete the application form in a web browser. The form must be downloaded and saved before submitting.



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

9. Assessment of applications

Preliminary Evaluation: This stage ensures that an applicant is eligible for funding under this dedicated round of the Media Skills and Development programme. The focus here is to ensure that minimum criteria, have been met and all required documentation / information has been submitted.

Qualitative Assessment: An assessment panel, comprising a minimum of two industry experts, and a member of Coimisiún na Meán will assess the applications. Each application is assessed on its own merits in the context of the assessment criteria below.

Assessment Criteria	Marks Available %	Minimum score required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment and relevance Alignment and relevance to NCDS, in particular commitments 3 and 5, and alignment to Coimisiún na Meán's Strategy Statement, and the Programme Policy specific objectives. 	40	24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant experience and Track Record Relevant experience and track record of the Applicant. Track record will include the qualification and experience of the personnel involved. 	25	15
<p>(C) Realistic and Achievable</p> <p>The extent to which the proposal is realistic and achievable in the timeframe set out. This criterion will also have regard to quality control procedures in place, and whether there are sufficient supports to minimise risks associated with the project (e.g. administrative support, team/ trainer support).</p>	20	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget and Value for money The extent to which the proposed budget, including notes on costs, are clear and offers value for money. 	15	9
Total	100%	-



Strategic Assessment:

In instances where there are more qualifying applications than funds available, An Coimisiún will have a further assessment phase. This will focus on the quality of individual applications and the overall package of funding awards that best fulfils the aims of the Programme and dedicated strand.

A final package of recommendations is then submitted to the Commissioners for consideration and ratification.

The assessment criteria for this phase are:

Criteria	Available Score
Diversity of sources	30
Creativity of proposal and cross-platform applications, if relevant	20
Level of collaboration/ partnerships	20
Recommendations from qualitative assessment panel/ qualitative assessment score	20
Environmental Sustainability	5
Irish language	5

Please note that previous success in securing funding does not guarantee funding in this round.

10. Decisions

Coimisiún na Meán will communicate decisions to successful and unsuccessful applicants in 2026.

11. Requirements for successful applications

Contract: All offers of funding are subject to applicants formally accepting the offer and executing an agreement / contract with Coimisiún na Meán within timeframes specified by An Coimisiún.

Upon execution of a contract, an initial tranche of the funding allocated will be made. In order to drawdown remaining funds, applicants are required to comply fully with the terms of the contract. Requirements include submission of all the required deliverables set out in the contract to a satisfactory standard.



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

Funding offers may be withdrawn should a successful applicant not engage with An Coimisiún to finalise a contract in accordance with agreed timelines.

View an [indicative contract](#) for the Media Skills and Development Programme, with terms and conditions.

In addition, please note the following:

Funding drawdown: Generally, funding will be paid in two or three tranches and the percentage of funding in each tranche is agreed during contract negotiations between the successful applicant and Coimisiún na Meán.

Bank account: Funding may only be issued to a separate bank account for the activities being funded. The name on the bank account must match the successful applicant, and a No Set Off letter from the relevant bank is required.

Accounting: Successful applicants are required by the contract to use the MTS 45 accounting standard when preparing final cost statements for the funded activities. The final tranche of funding cannot be issued without this. Guidance on the MTS 45 accounting standard is available from An Coimisiún.

Tax clearance: Successful applicants must submit tax access and tax reference numbers to Coimisiún na Meán to demonstrate tax compliance before any funding may be issued.

VAT: Successful applicants who are VAT-registered must issue valid VAT invoices to Coimisiún na Meán in order to receive funding.

12. 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.



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

13. Data Protection

Coimisiún na Meán is subject to all applicable national and EU data protection laws, regulations and guidelines including, but not limited to, Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (the “General Data Protection Regulation”) and any guidelines and codes of practice issued by the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner or other supervisory authority for data protection in Ireland from time to time.

Coimisiún na Meán will be a data controller (where Data Controller has the meaning given to it under the Data Protection Laws) in respect of any Personal Data (where Personal Data has the meaning given to it under the Data Protection Laws) required to be provided by applicants for sponsorship funding.

The applicant, as data controller in respect of any data provided by it in its application, is required to confirm in writing that all data subjects (where data subject has the meaning given to it under the data protection Laws) whose personal data is provided by the applicant have consented to the processing of such personal data by the applicant, Coimisiún na Meán and the assessment panel for the purposes of participation in this Sponsorship Scheme OR that the applicant has a legal basis for providing such personal data to Coimisiún na Meán for the purposes of its participation in this Sponsorship Scheme.

Appendix One – Finance Plan

Funder	Amount	% of Total Budget	Confirmed? (Y/N)
Total			



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand

Appendix Two - Budget Template

Please add additional lines as needed and provide explanatory notes justifying line item costs where appropriate.

Training – Item descriptions	Funding Request – An Coimisiún	Contribution from Applicant	Contribution Other Funder (if applicable)	Total
Trainer (s)				
Venue				
Training/ course materials				
Fees				
Coordination/ Admin				
Total				

Overall Operational Costs	Funding Request – An Coimisiún	Contribution from Applicant	Contribution Other Funder	Total
Finance and accounting				
Insurance				
Overhead (no more than 5% of budget)				
Total				



**Coimisiún
na Meán**

Guide For Applicants- Dedicated Fact-checking Training Strand