



Coimisiún  
na Meán

# Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

# Courts Reporting Scheme: Frequently Asked Questions

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# LDRS and CRS

## Common Questions and Answers

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**What is meant by/regarded as a 'strong track record' in local democracy reporting?**

The Schemes require that applicants – be they established publishers/broadcasters or freelance journalists/agencies - have editorial expertise and a commitment to public interest journalism. This means that they have a proven record of publishing/broadcasting content about local democracy and/or courts reporting.

**How do I demonstrate my track record in public interest journalism?**

Your application should include copies of articles/broadcasts/links to online content which shows that an applicant/media service provider provides ongoing coverage of local democracy and local/regional courts reporting.

**Can more than one local newspaper/radio station be involved in an application?**

Yes, the Schemes encourage and would welcome collaboration among several different media partners - for example, if one/two local newspapers partnered with a local radio station to employ a journalist to cover all the urban/local authority meetings, joint policing committees, regional health fora in their area.

**Can I apply to all three Schemes?**

Yes, separate applications can be made to the LDRS, the CRS and the Ancillary Measures – Focus on Matters of Public Interest.

**Can I avail of the Scheme(s) if I'm a freelance journalist/agency?**

Yes, if the application is made in partnership with an established media service provider(s). The Schemes state that there must be a regulated outlet through which the content is published/broadcast.

**How long can a journalist be employed under either the LDRS or CRS?**

The Schemes will provide funding to employ a journalist or provide enhanced journalism hours for a part-time or freelance journalist for a 12-month period.

**My newspaper already covers two district courts in my area. Can I apply for funding for this existing coverage?**

No, the Scheme stipulates that the content funded must be 'additional', ie over and above what is currently being covered. However, if your newspaper used to cover three district courts and now only covers two, then the re-instated coverage of the third court could be deemed 'additional' content under the Scheme.

**How do I apply?**

The first step is to register via our online application system [[cnam.submit.com](http://cnam.submit.com)]

Once your registration has been approved you can then go into the application system and start creating your application.

Applications must be submitted through the application portal and must be received by 12 noon, September 17.



**Can grants be given to more than one project/application from a local authority area?**

Under the LDRS, funding will be allocated on a geographical basis, ie for Round 1 funding, an award will be made for each of the 31 local authority areas, subject to the appropriate standards being met. The applications that best fulfil the objectives of the funding round and Scheme, and achieve the highest scores, will be awarded funding. In this context, and noting the level of overall funding available, there may be the potential for some local authority areas to receive more than one funding award.

**Can the funding under the LDRS or CRS be used to employ more than one person, eg enhanced hours for two part-time journalists instead of one full-time journalism role?**

Yes – the budget plan supplied with an application must provide sufficient details for the roles being proposed.

**I'm a local historian/citizen journalist/social media influencer – can I apply?**

No, an applicant must have a proven track record in creating and publishing public interest journalism and must be partnered with a regulated media service provider with a verified reach in terms of readership, listenership, etc. [The Schemes are aimed at supporting the creation of accessible high quality public interest journalism by skilled journalists.]

**Costs:****What sort of costs can I apply for/claim for in my application?**

Applications must provide details about all the costs related to the journalist position or enhanced journalist role.

Overhead costs of up to 10pc of baseline costs can be claimed, but must be detailed/itemised in the application.

Specific eligible costs, such as transcripts and measures to meet access requirements are also allowed separately.

**Do I need to apply for a specific amount?**

Yes, you need to apply for a specific amount, with an itemised budget showing where the costs lie.

**Will the Schemes fund training of journalists?**

Because of the specialised nature of courts reporting, there is provision made for training in the eligible costs under the Courts Reporting Scheme (only).

**Accessibility****What do I need to do to make my content accessible under the terms of the Scheme?**

So that it can be accessed by people who are blind or visually impaired, or who are deaf or hard of hearing, funded digital content must be made available in a format that is accepted by An Coimisiún's Access Rules. For example, video material must have subtitles, while we would also encourage applicants to have audio description and/or ISL (Irish Sign Language) embedded.

The provision of accessible content is deemed an eligible cost under the Scheme and should be included in the application budget. An Coimisiún will issue further guidelines on this requirement.



- Any funded content created in audio or visual format must also be accompanied by a transcript when being submitted to An Coimisiún. This is also an eligible cost.

## **Ancillary Measures**

### **What is meant by ‘long form’ journalism pieces?**

Longform content is, by definition, longer than the average newspaper article or radio news item. (Longer articles with larger amounts of content)

It can be a series of articles or broadcasts exploring an issue of public interest in a more in-depth way than is possible on a day-to-day basis.

It could also be a series of online articles, with video or graphics embedded, to explore and illustrate an issue in a way that will engage readers and viewers, and broaden their knowledge of a matter.

Or it may be a piece of investigative journalism resulting in a series of articles (print/online) or a radio documentary/documentary series/podcast series.

The preference under the Scheme is for cross-platform content, eg a series of articles in print that are also published on a media service provider’s website, if available, with possibly additional video content.

For example, under the LDRS Ancillary Measures, an applicant could take an in-depth look at the effects on a community of successive planning decisions made by its local authority.

Under the CRS Ancillary Measures, an applicant project could, for example, investigate the prosecution/conviction rates for, say, domestic abuse in a particular court area.

### **Is the ancillary measures funding for content or a journalism role?**

Unlike the LDRS or CRS, the Ancillary Measures funding will support content, projects eg a series of articles/radio documentaries/podcasts/programme exploring issues in-depth, rather than the funding of an actual journalist job.

### **Is the ancillary measures funding for a 12-month period as well?**

Yes

### **How do I demonstrate/measure my sustainability?**

An applicant must outline what practices they employ to reduce the environmental impact of their editing/production/publishing activities.

### **Is there help available from CnaM regarding the application process, especially for those who have not applied for funding from An Coimisiún before?**

We can certainly help bring people through the application process – through answering queries, emails, etc – if there is anything you don’t understand. We can’t, however, provide formal feedback on your application before submission or direct the approach to your project as this would be unfair to other applicants.

Any queries can be directed to [journalism@cnam.ie](mailto:journalism@cnam.ie)



**Does a project have to meet every category of the assessment criteria?**

An application must meet all of the criteria of the preliminary evaluation (qualification) phase to proceed to the next stage.

An application must then score at least 50% in the next (qualitative) phase to be considered for funding.

Applications will be assessed by a panel of independent experts.

If there are more qualified applications than funds available, the criteria as outlined in the strategic assessment phase will come into play.

Applications will be assessed by a panel of independent experts.

**I don't want the funding I've received to be public knowledge. Can I keep it private?**

No, it's a condition of funding that the public can identify where public money has gone. [We believe this is particularly important in the case of journalism because transparency is paramount.] We will however hold commercial information you provide as part of the application confidential. Also note that GDPR and Data Protection applies to all our activities.

**Is there an appeal process for unsuccessful applicants?**

No, but unsuccessful applicants will be given feedback as to where their applications fell short or did not meet the required criteria.

