



Project partners:



**CALL  
FOR PROPOSALS  
FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS  
ON MEDIA IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

**Application deadline: 15 July 2013**



This project is funded by the European Union Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Civil Society Facility (CSF). The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

## **Introduction**

The Center for Independent Journalism Budapest seeks applications from investigative journalists to disclose corrupt practices undermining the proper functioning of free, independent, pluralistic and viable media in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia.

This call for proposals is part of the project **“South East European Media Observatory – Building Capacities and Coalitions for Monitoring Media Integrity and Advancing Media Reforms”** which aims at supporting integrity both in public service and commercial media in South East Europe.

The South East European Media Observatory is a regional instrument which is to be established as a long term activity by the South East European Network for Professionalization of the Media (SEENPM) to monitor media integrity based on common methodology, produce national reports and a regional overview, and provide information on media reform processes at national and regional levels.

The South East European Media Observatory project examines a whole set of indicators of the media sector which are crucial to serve the public interest and democratic processes in society. It puts an emphasis on the political economy of media, including ownership and its impact on press freedom, but also addresses the problems of structural weaknesses and improper performance of the industry.

This project, co-sponsored by the Civil Society Facility Partnership Programme of IPA/European Commission, is implemented in 2012-2014 by partnering media development civil society organisations in the South East European region: Peace Institute (project leader - Ljubljana); Albanian Media Institute (AMI - Tirana); Media and Civil Society Development Foundation “Mediacentar” (Media Center Sarajevo); Investigative Journalism Centre (IJC/CIN - Zagreb); Center for Independent Journalism, CIJ - Budapest); Macedonian Institute for Media (MIM - Skopje); Novi Sad School of Journalism (NNSJ).

On behalf of the project consortium, the Center for Independent Journalism, Budapest administers the granting scheme for investigative journalists.



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## **What we support with the investigative reporting grants?**

The call for proposal targets **teams of journalists from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia** to apply for reporting grants to produce investigative stories on corruption and clientelism in media in South East Europe.

This call for proposals aims to result in new, substantial information gained and presented through investigative journalism tools about practices and cases of corruption, clientelism and abusive, excessive control of the media by particular interests.

**Topics of local and/or regional relevance** can be related to the following or related areas:

- lack of transparency and concentration in media ownership
- lack of transparency in media privatization and financing
- influence of governments on media ownership and finances
- rise and fall of local, national and regional media empires in South East Europe
- corrupt practices in operating and governing public service media and regulatory bodies
- politically biased allocation of public resources (frequencies etc.) in the media sector
- political and economic dependence of the media outlets and partisan journalism
- media market irregularities
- distribution of state advertising in the media
- organized crime and the media
- irregularities in labour relations
- attacks and threats aimed at journalists engaged in disclosing corruption and clientelism.

The projects shall focus on the current situation, but can also explore cases and practices from the past if they have an impact on the present media situation.

**Applicants for the reporting grants are to:**

- submit a well-founded story idea requiring further research
- demonstrate their capacity to apply a variety of methods to gather research data, including cross-country research
- demonstrate their capacity to use multimedia tools for publishing the story
- elaborate a reasonable budget to carry out the research, documentation and travel in connection with the production of the story
- provide a timeline of their expected work on the story
- prove the local interest in their researched story idea by a letter of intent signed by an editor of a media organization to publish the investigative report.

One applicant is entitled to submit one proposal under this call. A proposal may include one or more story ideas.

**A maximum grant amount of EUR 5000 per country will be awarded.** The evaluation team may decide to award only one applicant, but may also split this amount between two or more proposals from a country.



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## **Who can apply?**

Under this call, teams of journalists, investigative journalism centres or project-based journalist coalitions from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia are encouraged to submit proposals.

Teams consisting of journalists from two or more countries who pool their competences for the investigation are also eligible to apply. The applicant team must include journalists who are citizens of the five countries listed above.

In exceptional cases of relevance, individual journalists may receive grants, if they fulfil all the requirements. Preference, however, will be given to co-operating journalists.

## **What is the application procedure?**

The deadline for submitting the applications is **24:00 on 15 July 2013**.

Applications should be submitted in English language via e-mail to the Center for Independent Journalism Budapest at: [seeapplications@cij.hu](mailto:seeapplications@cij.hu)

The Center for Independent Journalism Budapest will confirm the receipt of the submitted proposals by email. Additional documentation and information may be requested from the applicant during the evaluation process.

Applicants can ask further information from the Center for Independent Journalism Budapest in writing until 10 July 2013 by sending inquiries to [seeapplications@cij.hu](mailto:seeapplications@cij.hu).

Applicants will be informed about the decision of the three-member independent judging panel by **15 August, 2013**.

The Center for Independent Journalism Budapest will sign the contracts with the grantees.

Grantees are to publish their stories in English on the project webpage no later than **31 December 2013**.

Grantees will be invited to attend the **regional meeting of investigative journalists in Croatia** in partnership with The Guardian newspaper. The costs of participation in the regional meeting will be covered by the SEE Media Observatory.



## How to apply?

The application consists of the following parts:

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### **A) Application form with a budget plan and timeline projection**

Applicants are to submit a fully completed form with their contact data and a brief description of their project (story idea, their research methodology, the budget and timeline of their investigations). They must be able to demonstrate the feasibility of their project via a credible research plan. The application form can be downloaded at the web sites of the partner organisations: (Peace Institute: <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/>; Albanian Media Institute: <http://www.institutemedia.org/>; Media Center Sarajevo: <http://www.media.ba/>; Investigative Journalism Center – Zagreb: <http://cin-ijc.com/>; Center for Independent Journalism: <http://www.cij.hu/en/>; Macedonian Institute for Media: <http://www.mim.org.mk/> and Novi Sad School of Journalism: <http://www.novinarska-skola.org.rs/sr/>).

### **Budget plan**

Applicants are requested to submit their budget plan of direct expenses related to the story: time and work of research, production costs and fees for pay-databases, related trips, and translation expenses.

### **Timeline projection**

Applicants should demonstrate their plans for timing the activities related to research and the production of the final story.

### **B) Reference investigations**

Applicants must prove their professional capacities and therefore are required to submit three investigative articles (stories) published earlier on any subject. They can attach scanned copies or provide the existing links leading to these stories. Reference articles in local languages or in English are accepted.

### **C) Letter of intent**

A letter of intent from a publisher/editor-in-chief is required as a way to prove the relevance of the story idea at national level and also the applicant's capacities to write/produce the story.



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## What is the evaluation procedure?

After a pre-screening of the applications for formal requirements, a three-member, independent, international evaluation panel will assess the applications.

The evaluation team will review all proposals and may ask for further explanations on any part of the proposal.

A proposal can receive a maximum score of 100 from each of the evaluators. The final score of a proposal will be the average of the total scores reached.

Evaluation criteria	Scores
Relevance of the topic for the core subject of the project	20
Professional experience of the journalist (reference articles)	15
Amount and methods of data research work	20
Originality of the story idea	20
Creative plan for visualization of data and sources	10
Reasonable budget and timeline	10
Co-operation among colleagues at home and/or in the region	5
Total	100

The Center for Independent Journalism, Budapest and the evaluation team keeps all application data confidential.

## Publishing and copyrights

The supported stories are to be produced in local languages and need to be translated into English. Prior to the publication of the supported articles, authors are requested to inform the following local project partners about the outcome of their research:

- In Albania: Albanian Media Institute (AMI - Tirana)
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina: Media and Civil Society Development Foundation "Mediacentar" (Media Center Sarajevo)
- In Croatia: Investigative Journalism Centre (IJC/CIN - Zagreb)
- In Macedonia: Macedonian Institute for Media (MIM - Skopje)
- In Serbia: Novi Sad School of Journalism (NNSJ).

Upon request, legal advice will be arranged by the above mentioned local organizations.

The Grantee agrees to inform the Center for Independent Journalism, Budapest and project leader Peace Institute, Ljubljana about the date of publishing of the story which receives support.

If the story is relevant for an international audience, it can be re-published in other countries with due respect to copyright rules.



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SEE Media Observatory project partners reserve the right to publish in part, in whole or as a reference the final product on its website or in its publications.

Contracts with grantees will contain specific conditions and terms of copyrights and crediting the sponsors.

## **Contracts, reporting and final payments**

The grantees will receive 80% of the total grant amount after the contract signed. The final payment (20%) will be transferred after the approval of the final narrative and financial report.

Grantees accept to present a brief narrative interim report of their researched stories to the Center for Independent Journalism, Budapest and to share their experience with colleagues.

After the stories are published, the grantees are to submit a narrative and financial report according to the terms set forth in the grant contract.

## **Checklist of documents to be submitted:**

- A/ Application form with the budget plan and timeline
- B/ Three reference articles
- C/ Letter of intent from the publisher.

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**South East European Media Observatory** is a regional partnership of civil society organisations aimed at enhancing media freedom and pluralism, and influencing media reforms in the countries of South East Europe. It addresses obstacles to democratic development of media systems by providing a regional instrument for media research and monitoring, support to investigative journalism and civil society engagement. It also offers a regional framework for debates, consultations and coalitions among key stakeholders. SEE Media Observatory particularly addresses the problems with integrity of media and journalism in the region, focusing on harmful patterns of media ownership and media finances. In 2013 and 2014 the regional observatory concentrates on media integrity in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia. The partnership includes civil society organizations from two EU member neighbouring countries – Slovenia and Hungary, both with experience of media transition and ability to contribute to media reforms in the region by presenting lessons learned from successes and failures in democratic transition of media sector.

**SEE Media Observatory** is envisaged as a long term, continuous activity of the network of CSOs – South East European Network for Professionalization of the Media (SEENPM).

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### **Coordinator of the Call for proposals for investigative reports on media in SEE Europe:**

Center for Independent Journalism, Budapest, e-mail: [seeapplications@cij.hu](mailto:seeapplications@cij.hu).

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