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CRAOLACHÁIN
NA hÉIREANN

BROADCASTING
AUTHORITY
OF IRELAND

Guide S&V4 Social Benefit - Community Radio Funding Initiative

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1. Introduction

Sound and Vision 4 (“the Scheme”) is a scheme established under the provisions of the Broadcasting Act 2009 (“the Act”) for the granting of funds to support new television and radio programmes. There are six stated objectives set down in the Act, one of which is to *develop local and community broadcasting*. The 2009 Act makes a further provision that *the Authority in preparing a scheme, may have regard to the developmental needs of community broadcasters*.

To further the achievement of this objective and cognisant of the provision to have regard to developmental needs, the BAI is implementing this funding initiative to support the development of the community sound broadcasting sector in Ireland. The Authority defines Community Broadcasters as a distinct strand in Irish broadcasting as follows:

"A community radio station is characterised by its ownership and programming and the community it is authorised to serve. It is owned and controlled by a not-for-profit organisation whose structure provides for membership, management, operation and programming primarily by members of the community at large. Its programming should be based on community access and should reflect the special interests and needs of the listenership it is licensed to serve."

Community radio stations are expected to serve a clearly defined geographical community or community of interest; promote and support active participation by this community at all levels in the operation; and, operate in a manner which is in keeping with the ethos or value system which underpins community activity.

The BAI understands the financial pressures on community sound broadcasting contractors and in particular, the level of focus that must be given to securing funding for the on-going staffing and operations of the community sound broadcasting service. For a number of such services, this leads to less capacity to progress other areas of the service such as outreach, training and development, recruitment, and retention of volunteers. In this regard, it can limit the level to which a community sound broadcasting service fulfills its social benefit objects.

A key recommendation from the independent review of Sound & Vision 3¹ was to establish an ancillary measure to provide funding to support the development of the community radio sector. Such an approach could provide funding in a more efficient and effective manner than under the open round application process for programming proposals. The review noted *‘the impacts of these services, over and above the funding of public service content that would not otherwise be made, are widespread at local level, and include a contribution to skills development, greater social and cultural cohesion and promotion of regional diversity’*.

With this in mind, the Authority is making funding available under this funding initiative with the purpose of supporting the development of community radio, the ‘Social Benefit - Community Radio Funding Initiative (“Funding Initiative”)’. This Funding Initiative will operate on a pilot basis and will be reviewed two years after the implementation date. This round, round 41, marks the second such Funding Initiative implemented by the Authority for the sector.

In line with the Authority’s Strategy Statement, the objective of this pilot ancillary measure will be to facilitate better access to, and representation of, the diversity of local communities / communities of interest / communities of special interest in their respective community radio station. This active participation and representation will assist in the creation of more diverse broadcast content, in stronger community engagement and inclusiveness, and support for

¹ Mediatique Review of Sound & Vision 3, pgs. 4, 11, 27, 34 & 54.

communities to develop a greater understanding of, and participation in, the production and dissemination of broadcast content through their engagement with community radio.

This initiative should also provide an opportunity for the community sound broadcasting contractors to focus on building capacity to support the achievement of greater sustainability.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Funding Initiative

The aims of this Funding Initiative are to:

- Offer stations the opportunity to build capacity to better fulfil their social benefit objects as set out in their Programme Policy Statements² further to the legislative requirement that a community sound broadcasting contractor is *representative of, and accountable to the community*, and that its programming has the sole objective of *specifically addressing the interests of, and seeking to provide a social benefit to, the community*.

The definition and types of social benefit are set down in the Social Benefit Framework for community radio, published on the 19th June 2020: -

Definition

“Benefits to individuals or collective actors in the community that enhance their lives socially, culturally or economically, or in terms of development, empowerment and/or well-being, that otherwise would not have come about.”

Social Benefit Types

1. Individuals, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging, directly from engaging with the Station.
 2. Individuals are enhancing their employment prospects, through gaining skills and confidence.
 3. Community members are informed and aware of what is happening around their community.
 4. Community members are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to diverse viewpoints and to more and better information.
 5. Collective actors (CBOs, NGOs etc.) are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals.
 6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced.
- Support the development of the community broadcasting sector by helping to improve outcomes across the management, operations, production and broadcasting in community radio stations and assist in their sustainability.

3. Eligibility / Who can apply for funding?

The Funding Initiative is open to BAI licensed community, community of interest, and community of special interest sound broadcasting services and the special interest Christian / religious sound broadcasting service only.

In this regard, the measure offers grant funding to community sound broadcasting services licensed by the BAI and which:

²Schedule 3 in the BAI's Community Sound Broadcasting Contract

- Demonstrate effective Corporate Governance & Financial Management;
- Publish compliant annual accounts; and,
- Have a good compliance track record with the BAI.

4. Funding Available

There is a total funding of €500,000 being made available this year and the closing date for applications is 12 noon, Thursday, **7th October 2021**.

In line with the aims of this Funding Initiative, the Authority has agreed that the award amounts will be made having regard to the sound broadcasting service type. A higher level of funding is potentially available to community sound broadcasting services that are tasked and committed to providing social benefit to the wider local community than to community of interest / special interest that are tasked and committed to providing social benefit to a community of interest / special interest. This approach acknowledges the differing additional structural supports available, and provided to, community of interest / special interest services. In this context, the maximum funding award amounts are set out in the table below.

Sound Broadcasting Content	Maximum € Award
Community Sound Broadcasting Services	€40,000
Community of Interest / Special Interest	€30,000

The BAI reserves the right to offer a lower amount of funding to an applicant than is requested. Where this occurs, the BAI will offer feedback and rationale for this decision.

5. What can the Funding Initiative fund?

The ultimate aim of this Funding Initiative is social gain at a local level, and among communities and communities of interest / special interest, by providing financial support for the development of community / community of interest / special interest sound broadcasters that positively impacts their capacity and sustainability.

As this is only the second round of this new Funding Initiative, the scope of what will be funded is broad. The key is that the funding is sought for an activity or activities, the outcomes of which are grounded in added social benefit for the community. For illustrative purposes only, examples of what funding can be sought for are set out hereunder.

Funding could be sought to cover the costs of running the station such as lighting and heating and rent (however, no capital costs would be permitted). Or funding could be sought for a new outreach staff position and/or activity. It could aim to improve volunteer recruitment / community group partnerships, training and retention. In this regard, it could look to improve community access and active participation in the management, operations and/or programming of the service. This could be achieved through the introduction of a staff position that focuses on outreach activities or through providing mentoring and training and development initiatives and opportunities through partnerships with local voluntary groups and societies. Alternatively, a community sound broadcasting contractor may wish to add to the diversity of existing programming within the franchise area and assist in promoting and protecting cultural diversity within the community to be served. Activities could include training, mentoring, workshops, media

literacy initiatives, programme production, broadcasting and partnering with independent radio producers.

Applicants should note that the resulting programming should include active participation by the community members, individual/s and/or collective actors involved. The BAI would encourage programming in the Irish language. It should be noted that the BAI would require adherence to the requirements set out under the 2009 Act and Sound & Vision 4, including the acceptable range of genres and formats as set out in the table below. The only exclusion is programming which is produced primarily for news and current affairs.

Accepted Formats:	Documentary; Education; Animation; 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

The types of costs that the Funding Initiative will cover are:

- Staff & Salary costs for workers assigned to the delivery of the projects / activities (excluding any funding received from other sources that cover staff and salary costs).
- Associated administrative costs (excluding any funding received from other sources that cover administration & overhead costs).
- Associated utilities / running costs (excluding any funding received from other sources that cover administration & overhead costs).
- Project delivery costs.
- Relevant studio space costs.
- Station communications and promotions for awareness of station's activities relating to the funded project and/or activities.
- Training and development and mentoring costs.
- Programme production costs, including any required measures that must be applied in response to National Emergency obligations.
- Volunteer Expenses
- Travel and expenses for participants involved in the project/s.

The funding initiative will not cover the following costs:

Capital or Office Equipment Costs, Sponsorship/Fundraising Events, Debt and debt service charges, Interest owed, Bad debts, Work that has already taken place, Projects / activities / positions that are already receiving ongoing public funding from the Irish Government, or any other public source or the EU, charges / costs for any other projects funded by commercial or public (government & EU) sources, statutory fines, Licence fees / copyright, VAT, Shareholder costs / loans and any such types of costs.

6. The Application Process

An application submitted for the award of funding under this Funding Initiative must comply with all of the requirements set out in this Guide.

- **Application Form:** The BAI publishes a tailored application form and potential applicants to the Funding Initiative should complete the form:

Application Form: S&V4 Round 41 – Social Benefit - Community Radio Funding Initiative.

The Application Form requires certain information under a range of headings to enable the BAI to assess the application. Please ensure all relevant sections are complete.

- **Application Checklist:** In order to be in a position to make an application for funding, you should be able to answer 'Yes' to the following 6 questions:

1	I am applying on behalf of a broadcasting service that holds a community sound broadcasting contract with the BAI to provide a community / community of interest / community of special interest sound broadcasting service or a special interest sound broadcasting service contract for a Christian / religious quasi national service	Y/N
2	I have read the S&V Scheme and the current Guide for Applicants: S&V4 Social Benefit - Community Radio	Y/N
3	I will complete the application form template and save it as one MSWORD/PDF (less than 8MB) prior to emailing it to sv4@bai.ie Any material considered confidential is saved in an appendix and the rationale for seeking confidentiality is clearly set out and emailed in a separate document to sv4@bai.ie	Y/N
4	I have completed all mandatory fields on the application form	Y/N
5	The information provided in the completed form has been verified as true and correct by two authorised signatories from the station, including at least one member of the Board / Management Committee	Y/N
6	I have prepared all of the required supporting documentation (Staff list; Annual Audited Accounts or equivalent; Management accounts or equivalent; if training & development, an outline plan and expected outcomes)	Y/N

- **Applying:** The BAI will only accept one application form per station to this Funding Initiative.

Applications should be submitted to the BAI by email to sv4@bai.ie

- **Verification of Information:** All information submitted as part of an application for funding must be true and correct. You are required to include with your application a declaration by a suitable authorised person that the information contained in the application and in the additional documentation accompanying the application is true and correct to the best of that person's knowledge and belief. Should any amendments need

to be made by the applicant to the Application or its accompanying documents, the BAI should be informed immediately.

- **Confidential Information:** Information which an applicant considers to be confidential should be presented in an annex to the application which is clearly marked 'confidential'. The BAI will ensure that such information is appropriately handled during and on completion of the particular application process.
- **Freedom of Information:** The BAI undertakes to use its best endeavours to hold confidential any material provided in response to this process, subject to the BAI'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 the BAI 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. The BAI 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.
- **Data Protection:** In order to operate this funding initiative effectively, we will require information about the applicant, partner applicants and detailed information on the proposed project/s. This data and documentation will include personal information such as job titles, salaries and e-mail addresses.

The BAI 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 liaise with the applicant.

Any personal information submitted will only be retained in the event that 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 the funding initiative and by external researchers. In such instances all personal information would be anonymised.

The BAI is obligated and committed to protecting all personal data submitted in response to a call for applications to this funding initiative. The BAI has an appointed Data Protection Officer who is registered with the Data Protection Commission.

You can find out more on how the BAI processes personal information in the BAI's published policy at: <https://www.bai.ie/en/about-us/data-protection-policy/> and the BAI's terms and conditions at: <https://www.bai.ie/en/about-us/terms-conditions/>.

7. The Evaluation of Applications

The BAI will process applications as they are received and it is envisaged that there will be an evaluation period of approximately 6 weeks, depending on the quality of the application submitted. There are a number of stages in the evaluation process and each stage involves the assessment of an application against predetermined criteria which are

underpinned by the 2009 Act as reflected in the policies of the BAI. The assessment and decision phases are:

- Qualification
- Qualitative
- Strategic
- Authority

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

7.1 Qualification Phase: Applicants must meet a number of minimum criteria to be considered for funding. This includes that Applicants to the Funding Initiative must be eligible to apply and the application must be for activities that are permitted under this funding initiative (refer section 3 of this Guide) and the funding sought must be within the limits permitted. The Qualification Scoring Matrix is set out at Appendix 1. If any of these minimum criteria are not met, applications will not be considered further. The BAI will liaise with the Applicant and provide detailed feedback on any issues identified at this stage of the process. The applicant may then resubmit the application.

7.2 Qualitative Assessment Phase: If the applicant and the application are deemed eligible in the Qualification Assessment Phase, the application qualifies for consideration for the award of funding. The next stage is the Qualitative Assessment Phase during which the application is assessed on its own merits in the context of the funding initiative objectives and predetermined qualitative criteria. The Qualitative Assessment Scoring Matrix is set out at Appendix 1. We will assess how you demonstrate that the outcomes of what you propose will provide added social benefit, how necessary the funds are for the station and the level to which the application demonstrates that you meet with the other criteria.

The criteria are grouped into mandatory and supplementary categories. The mandatory criteria are fundamental to the Funding Initiative. An applicant must achieve a score of 50% or more in each of these criteria to qualify for further assessment for the award of funding. The supplementary criteria reflect the funding initiative requirements and also, importantly, reflect the current strategic objectives of the Authority and wider societal and industry concerns. The mandatory assessment criteria are as follows:

- Social benefit
- Diversity
- Resources & Need for Funding
- Feasibility & Track Record

Supplementary criteria:

- Irish language
- Gender Equality
- Skills & Personal Development

7.3 Strategic Assessment Phase: In instances where the call on the available funds is oversubscribed, the BAI will have a second evaluation phase. This will focus on the quality of the individual applications as well as on the overall package of funding awards

that best fulfils the aims of this funding initiative. A report in this regard is then submitted to the Authority for ratification. The Strategic Assessment Criteria are set out at Appendix 1, which are:

- Additionality & diversity of participants / participation or representation and programme content i.e on-air and off-air
- Sustainability & Capacity
- Recommendation of assessment panels

7.3 Authority Consideration: The final stage sees the Authority ratify the package of recommendations arising from the previous assessment phase. The Authority's funding decisions are also informed by its Strategy Statement 2021-2023 and in particular, the mission *to foster diverse and culturally relevant quality content for Irish audiences*, including in the Irish language.

8. The Decision Making Process:

The following procedures will be followed by the BAI in determining the suitability of an applicant for the award of funding:

8.1 An internal panel of BAI staff will firstly consider whether the application satisfies the qualification criteria as set out. This will include consideration of the application against the qualifying criteria and a summation of the application in this regard prepared by the Executive.

8.2 The internal panel, following discussion, will assign a Pass or Fail classification under each of the qualification criteria set out in the Scoring Matrix on page 9 of this Guide. Any applicant that does not meet with any one of the listed criteria will be disqualified and will receive detailed feedback from the BAI.

8.3 An eligible application is assigned to a Qualitative Assessment Panel by BAI staff comprised of staff with appropriate skills and any appropriately qualified external assessor when required. An application will be assessed by each panel member independently and then a meeting will be convened to discuss each application. The panel will agree a score for each application and determine the suitability of the application for the award of funding. The Executive will then circulate a draft of the matters agreed to each panel member for consideration and approval. On completion of the panel assessment meeting, including signoff on the assessment meeting documentation, a list of the funding recommendations is compiled. If the recommended amount exceeds that which is available for the round, a strategic assessment phase will be required.

8.4 A Strategic Assessment Panel, comprised of BAI staff is convened to consider outcomes and recommendations from the Qualitative Assessment Phase. This discussion includes regard to the applications, the strategic criteria and the recommendations of the assessors. The panel agrees the final assessment and corresponding score for each application and a package of funding recommendations is agreed. The panel members consider and approve the meeting documentation. On signoff of this documentation, a report is submitted to the Authority for consideration and ratification.

8.5 Once the overall package of recommendations is ratified by the Authority, the BAI Executive notify the applicant the reasons for the decision. Where the BAI has awarded funding, the applicant is notified, provided with feedback and informed of the requirements for the next phase of the process; the contracting phase. Where the BAI has rejected an application for funding, the applicant is notified and provided with information on the performance of their application in the assessment process. The Applicant can liaise with BAI staff to discuss any amendments required to make a resubmission.

For information, only the funding offers ratified by the Authority will be made public. Any applications rejected for funding will not be individually publicised.

9. Contracting

The award of a funding contract will be subject to the successful applicant confirming his/her acceptance of the offer of funding and any condition(s) attached thereto by the BAI. In this regard, a successful applicant is required to enter into a contractual agreement with the BAI, on terms to be specified by the BAI. A copy of the template contract is available on www.bai.ie/en

On signing of the funding contract, the BAI may release up to 85% of the funds awarded. The remaining 15% will be awarded on the submission of the Final Project Report.

When contracting with the BAI a successful applicant will be required to provide certain deliverables to the BAI. 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.

- Budget & Finance Plan
- Project plan, including milestones, outputs and outcomes
- Grant Details
- Signed Statement of Commitment from the Chairperson
- No Set off letter from the relevant Bank
- Tax Clearance Information³

10. Reporting

The grantee must report on the expenditure of the grant to confirm that it has been used for the purpose as outlined in the application for funding and as approved by the BAI on the award of funding. Project outcome reports will be required. The BAI will provide outcome report guidelines.

Project Reports

All grantees must submit a final report to drawdown the last payment tranche as set out in the grant agreement. All reports should contain information on how the money has been spent and the outcomes achieved. The social benefit outcomes can be presented using the

³ If such documentation is already on file at the BAI, there is no need to duplicate it. Simply inform the BAI that the documentation was previously submitted for another BAI activity.

Social Benefit Framework and should include copies and/or extracts of relevant broadcast content, depending on volume. Please use the Final Project Report form published by the BAI. As part of the reporting process an independent chartered accountant will need to provide an M45 report, prepared in accordance with the BAI's S&V Accounting Standard, on final project costs.

Audit

All grantees must retain documentary evidence of expenditure incurred against the grant for audit purposes. The BAI will conduct random audits as provided for in the BAI's funding contract.

Duplication of Funding

If successful you will be asked to certify that the costs of the activities proposed are not being met from any other source.

Appendix 1 – Assessment Scoring Matrices

Qualification Scoring Matrix:

CRITERION	Yes/ No
<p>Eligibility: Is the applicant eligible to apply for funding under the Funding Initiative and does the application comply with the fundamental requirements of S&V4? This has regard to whether:</p> <p>a) the status of the applicant complies with the requirements of the scheme and Funding Initiative; is the applicant an entity holding a current fulltime community sound broadcasting contract with the BAI?</p> <p>b) the community / community of interest / community of special interest sound broadcasting contractor demonstrates effective Corporate Governance and Financial Management</p> <p>c) the funding amount requested falls within the limit permissions of the Community Radio Fund.</p>	
<p>Development of Community Sound Broadcasting: Has the applicant provided confirmation that the proposed project is directly related to the development of community radio broadcasting? Does it specifically address the interests of, and seek to provide a social benefit to, the community concerned?</p>	
<p>Is the Application Complete?: Has the applicant complied with all of the competition guidelines and submitted all the relevant documentation? (this includes signed declaration from two authorised individuals)</p>	

If any of these minimum criteria are not met, applications will not be considered further. The BAI will liaise with the Applicant and provide detailed feedback on any issues identified at this stage of the process. Applicants can resubmit completed applications at any time.

Qualitative Assessment Scoring Matrix

MANDATORY CRITERIA	Available Score
Social benefit: To what extent does the proposal provide a social benefit to the community /community of interest / community of special interest (such as through social inclusion, audience empowerment, opportunities for community members and/or individuals to enhance and improve their personal and social skills, training and workshops, facilitation of collective actors, and so forth)? Will the project lead to greater representation of and accessibility to a greater diversity of the community to the community sound broadcasting service? Will it improve accountability? Has the applicant concluded any partnerships, formal or informal, with relevant third parties / actors? What level of enhancement will it bring to the project; greater diversity, community participation, social inclusion etc.?	40
Diversity: To what extent 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 seldom heard in the media? Is the approach likely to lead to the development of a greater understanding of, and community participation in, the production and dissemination of broadcast content?	20
Resources & Need for Funding: Are the resources proposed clearly explained and are they adequate and realistic in the context of the proposed proposal? Does the proposal represent value for money? What is the level of need for this funding? Regard will be given to the level of funding structures at the station, including funding allocated under Sound & Vision generally and in particular, recent / ongoing funding contracts.	10
Feasibility & Track Record: Does the proposal clearly demonstrate in terms of objectives, approach and planning that the project outcomes are feasible? Regard shall be had to the qualifications, experience and suitability of the person or team who / that will manage implementation. The track record of the applicant with its current Community Sound Broadcasting Contract, and past funding applications and contracts, will be considered and the capacity of the applicant to deliver.	10
SUPPLEMENTARY CRITERIA	
Irish Language: If the project includes the production of audio content, to what extent is it intended to use the Irish language (A minimum of 30% of the proposed programming must be in Irish for the proposal to be assessed and awarded marks under this criterion)?	5
Gender equality: To what extent does the project support and encourage gender equality?	5
Skills & Personal Development: Does the application provide an opportunity for local individuals or groups to learn new skills and/or support personal development? What is the extent of the support initiatives proposed?	5

An Applicant must score a minimum of 50% under each of the mandatory criterion to qualify for consideration of award of funding.

Strategic Scoring Matrix:

CRITERIA	Available Score
Additionality & Diversity of participants / participation, representation and content: The extent to which the proposal will add to the diversity of community members / actors participating in programme-making and/or station activities, and the impact on the diversity of programming and/or representation at the community station i.e. across both on-air and off-air activities. The extent to which the proposal will achieve the introduction and retention of new volunteers, including regard to training and development, and the impact on diversity of participation or representation and broadcast content. The extent to which the applicant has demonstrated the likelihood of the proposal meeting community needs and strengthening links within the community franchise area.	40
Sustainability / Capacity: The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the funding sought is necessary.	10
Qualitative Assessment Panel recommendation	--



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