

Development Fund 2023: Supporting information

Media Cymru x PDR x Alacrity Foundation

Please read this supporting information before applying to the Media Cymru Development Fund. Failing to do so may result in an unsuccessful application.

Developing innovation-driven products, services and experiences in the media sector.

Overview

Media Cymru's aim is to support the growth of the Cardiff Capital Region's thriving media sector by investing in research and development (R&D) to deliver outstanding innovation. Cardiff is the UK's third largest film and TV production centre, with a wealth of talent and networks.

We want to invest in people and companies that can match global competitors in their scale of ambition and skilled innovation. The Media Cymru Development Fund enables Wales-based enterprises to apply for an amount between £10,000 and £50,000 to research and develop innovation-driven products, services and experiences in the media sector.

At the Development Fund stage, we would like you to apply with a summary of the product, service or experience you would like to develop. We would like you to have done some initial work into assessing the feasibility of this product, service or experience, as well as its suitability in addressing a particular issue or challenge faced by the media sector.

We are looking for ideas that have long term potential for you or your business beyond the life of the project.

Deliverables

By the end of the project, we would like you to have developed a working prototype or minimum viable product as an output from your R&D. We would also like you to have developed a solid business plan, a cashflow forecast and a pitch deck ready for investors.

For this funding round, we are interested in the following:

- Virtual production
- Placemaking and tourism related content
- Immersive storytelling
- Extended reality technologies
- Tools that support environmentally sustainable media production, distribution and consumption
- Developing tools to improve the production process
- Gaming
- Tools that encourage the development of new and inclusive business models within the media sector
- Bilingual/multilingual production.

Previously funded Media Cymru Seed Projects are welcomed to apply for funding to further develop their existing idea.

In your thinking, please consider the following pillars of Media Cymru:

- **Growth:** to drive economic development through research, development and innovation (RD&I)
- **Global:** to increase international awareness of the media sector in Wales and encourage international collaborations

- **Fair:** to create a fair, equal and diverse media sector
- **Green:** to significantly reduce the negative environmental impact of the media sector.

The Development Fund is **not** suitable for:

- Content creation (for example, short films, feature films and pilots)
- One-off art commissions
- Feasibility studies.

If you require advice regarding your eligibility, need further information or have specific access requirements, online sessions to discuss the fund are available throughout August and September. If you are interested in arranging a 121, please contact: media.cymru@cardiff.ac.uk.

Deadline: 12pm noon, Friday, ~~15 September~~ **6 October 2023**

Due to extenuating circumstances we have extended the original deadline. If you have already submitted and would like to resubmit before the new deadline, please do – we will review the most recent submission.

Key dates

- **24 July 2023:** Applications open
- **6 October 2023:** Applications close **at noon** (applications will not be accepted after this time)
- **2 November 2023:** Applicants notified
- **November/December 2023:** Projects begin

Eligibility

With all our activity we are keen to reach the widest audience possible to ensure we hear the best ideas. We recognise that too often, R&D investment circulates around networks which are not representative of our wider community in its social and cultural diversity. We aim to change that pattern and are working to address these structural imbalances in our organisation and in the wider sector. We also hope to inspire transformative and inclusive lines of R&D that will challenge existing ways of producing and thinking.

We welcome applications from all different sizes and types of organisations including micro-businesses, sole-traders, freelancers and partnerships.

Eligibility criteria:

- Your company or practice is based in Wales
- You have a R&D idea
- You are in the media industry, or your idea directly benefits the media industry
- You are able to dedicate time and effort to complete a R&D project between October 2023 and October 2024
- You self-declare your eligibility to receive an MFA subsidy in line with the guidance below.

We will only accept one application per enterprise as a project lead. However, your organisation may be listed as a supporting team member on up to three applications.

Subsidy control

A subsidy is where a public authority provides support to an enterprise which gives that enterprise an economic advantage, meaning that equivalent support could not have been obtained on commercial terms. Subsidies that are awarded in compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 provide a legitimate way for public funding to support economic activity.

Media Cymru Development Fund support is offered as a Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) Subsidy, in the form of a cash grant from Cardiff University and additional support from the Alacrity Foundation and Cardiff Metropolitan University.

If your organisation is not able to meet the eligibility criteria to accept this award as an MFA Subsidy, as further outlined below, please contact us to discuss other options by emailing media.cymru@cardiff.ac.uk or calling 02922 511 434.

Minimal Financial Assistance

Under MFA rules, public authorities can award up to £315,000 of MFA subsidy to an enterprise over an 'applicable period' of three financial years. This 'applicable period' is:

- the elapsed part of the current financial year ending 30 March (i.e. from April) and
- the two financial years immediately preceding the current financial year.

In the application you will be asked to declare your eligibility to receive funding via the MFA route.

To establish your eligibility, we require you to confirm that the addition of our grant funding plus additional support (valued at no more than £2,500 as outlined in the Project support section below) does not exceed your £315,000 limit for MFA across the 'applicable period' of three financial years.

When assessing the previous assistance that you may have received over the applicable period, please include the following:

- De Minimus Aid
- Small Amounts of Financial Assistance (SAFA) given as Special Drawing Rights (SDR)
- Services of Public Economic Interest (SPEI) Financial Assistance
- Minimal Financial Assistance

Prior award or notification letters from public authorities should clearly state the basis and date of award. If in doubt, you should contact the public authority granting the assistance to confirm its nature. You do not need to include assistance granted on a different basis - for example a grant made under the EU State Aid General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER).

When assessing MFA, you must include all organisations in your group structure that operate under 'common control'. Further details on this can be found in Annex 1 of the [Statutory Guidance](#) for the [UK Subsidy Control Act 2022](#), para 15.40-15.46, pp. 174-176.

If you are unsure about your obligations under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, you can find further information in the [Statutory Guidance](#), Chapter 7. You may also wish to review the wider guidance materials available from the [Welsh Government Subsidy Control Unit](#), or take independent legal advice. **Cardiff University is unable to advise on individual eligibility or legal obligations.**

Project support

If successful, grant recipients will benefit from four mandatory sessions (totaling eight hours), plus an optional session (three hours) with world-leading design consultancy and applied research facility [PDR](#). These sessions will aim to support you on your innovation journey and will be based around established methodology for developing an approach to R&D projects:

Session one: **Challenge and plan**

Session two: **Making sense of research data**

Session three: **Ideation and prototyping**

Session four: **Findings and next steps**

There will also be four mandatory support sessions (totaling eight hours) provided by [The Alacrity Foundation](#) providing business development and commercialisation expertise to projects.

Where appropriate, the Media Cymru team will seek to supplement this support by drawing on experience from the [Media Cymru Innovation Spaces](#) project, academic partners and by exploring the potential for mentoring support from industry leaders.

Projects will also be supported by a Producer/Assistant Producer from Media Cymru.

This support is valued at no more than £2,500 and is provided to grant recipients as MFA. If you require further information on the support value please email media.cymru@cardiff.ac.uk or call 02922 511 434.

This total will be added to the grant you are requesting to determine the total MFA Subsidy offered to you. The total value is calculated as the combined gross cash equivalent of the support provided by Media Cymru partners including Cardiff Metropolitan University (PDR) and The Alacrity Foundation.

Role of lead applicants

While we encourage collaborations, each project application must be led by one enterprise. Depending on organisational type, the applicant must be legally entitled to work in the UK or be a UK-registered business or charity.

Responsibilities of the lead applicant:

- To be the 'contractual lead' or signatory to the Media Cymru Grant Agreement
- To lead, manage and deliver the project in accordance with the agreed proposal and budget
- To claim and receive grant funding, keeping appropriate financial records of all expenditure
- To be the point of contact for reporting and monitoring on the project to Media Cymru, liaising regularly with a dedicated Media Cymru team member.

Where a project requires the input of other organisations, please identify these organisations (if known) in the application form and outline the nature of your relationship with them and their expected contribution (for example, whether as sub-contractors, key suppliers or contributing team members). The lead applicant is responsible for:

- Putting in place any necessary sub-contracting or collaboration agreements with third parties, and overseeing/managing their contribution
- Dispersing funding to any third parties in accordance with the agreed project budget and Subsidy Control rules.

The lead applicant will be required to provide assurance that they have a business bank account, can manage the cash flow requirements of their projects, and have appropriate financial processes in place to deliver projects in accordance with our funding terms and conditions.

We will perform 'due diligence' checks on lead organisations as part of our project feasibility assessments, with outcomes considered against the scale of funds requested and the duration of project activities. The applicant and third parties must be willing to submit supporting documents on request.

A member of our team will be happy to talk to you about your project ideas, fit to scheme requirements and budget queries. Please contact media.cymru@cardiff.ac.uk.

Assessment criteria

Your application proposals will be assessed in five key areas:

1. Your R&D idea

We want you to clearly explain the idea for the product, service or experience you would like to develop through this R&D funding. Please also tell us about why this is important, what is the challenge or opportunity this work would support. We would also like you to articulate any feasibility work you have completed that would support your proposal.

2. The R&D activities you would like to undertake

We define R&D as a creative and systematic process of conducting research as you develop your new product, service or experience. R&D often begins with an identifiable problem, need or opportunity, rather than assuming a solution. The R&D process then allows you to identify how best to address that problem or need. You may have good ideas about how best to do this but expect these to change or evolve as part of the R&D process.

This is your opportunity to outline the areas of work that you would like to explore as part of this project. Please outline what you would like to do, how you propose to do it (your 'methodologies' or research process) and who will deliver these activities, including any support you require from other organisations. Be realistic here in terms of what you can achieve in the timeframe with the resource available.

3. Achievability of your proposed timeline

We want you to do an outline plan for your R&D that draws on appropriate expertise and takes into account other commitments on your time that gives us confidence that you are able to deliver within the proposed duration of the project.

Please also consider the mandatory 16 hours of support from PDR and The Alacrity Foundation in your plan.

4. Budget and grant payments

At the application stage we will only be asking for indicative costs and the maximum cash grant you are seeking. All costs must be necessary for the delivery of your project.

If your application is successful, we will ask you to provide a more detailed budget and brief justifications outlining the nature of these costs. We will also agree a schedule of payments with you which may include an advance grant payment.

To claim the final payment of your Grant, we will ask you to demonstrate that you have actually incurred all these costs during the grant period by providing us with a signed declaration supported by a list of all your expenditure.

Please consider the work you would like to undertake and who will be conducting this work. You should also note the requirement for attendance of up to three members of your team at the mandatory 16 hours of support from PDR and The Alacrity Foundation and ensure the time for this is included in your project plan.

5. Foreseen impact

a. Economic impact

The longer-term economic benefit of your R&D activity may be:

- It enables the growth of your company or practice (or the creation of a new company) by supporting the development of a new concept, product, service or experience
- It gives you a competitive advantage by increasing your efficiency
- It offers the potential for future additional revenue streams
- It creates broader economic benefits in the Welsh media sector.

Your response could refer to:

- The target markets for the product, service or experience you wish to create and any other potential markets (domestic, international or both)
- The size of the target markets for the product, service or experience you wish to create
- The long-term financial sustainability of the product, service or experience you will create through your R&D
- Reduced costs / increased production efficiency
- Increased revenue from sales
- Increased revenue from licensing
- Increased revenue from exports
- New business model
- Improved quality of products, services and/or experiences
- Increased employment of other staff
- Development of new intellectual property (IP)
- Exploitation of existing IP.

The more tangible and ambitious these benefits are, the stronger a project will score against these criteria.

b. Social and cultural impact

You need to consider the social and cultural impact of your R&D activity. Impacts here may include:

- Representation of Welsh culture, language, stories, landscapes
- Reaching underserved or diverse audiences or markets
- Increasing equality of access to the media sector
- Increasing people's levels of wellbeing or quality of life
- Increasing international awareness of the Welsh media sector and fostering international collaboration.

c. Environmental impact

You need to consider the environmental impact of your R&D activity. Impacts may include:

- Contribution to net zero targets
- Having a positive environmental impact for you/your company/wider industry
- Increasing audience awareness of the climate emergency.

Your response could refer to:

- Reduced environmental impact on your company and the sector as a result of this work
- Lowering emissions
- Reduced transport use
- Reducing or repurposing materials
- More energy efficient processes.

Application questions

Please note all applications must be submitted via the online form on our website:
www.media.cymru/innovation-pipeline

Should you wish to prepare your answers offline, the key application questions are*:

1. **Project title**
2. **Please introduce us to yourself/company/organisation and the work that you currently undertake (max. 300 words).**
3. **Please write a summary of the product, service or experience you would like to develop through this R&D project (max. 300 words).**
4. **Please tell us about any work you have undertaken to assess the feasibility of the idea you would like to develop (max. 300 words).**
5. **Please tell us about the Research and Development (R&D) activities you would like to undertake during this project and how this will support the development of a product, service or experience (max. 300 words).**
6. **What is your proposed duration for the project in months?**
Your project should last between 9 – 12 months.
7. **Please demonstrate how your R&D project activities are achievable in the timeframe you have proposed.**
It is important that you demonstrate a clear and achievable timescale for key deliverables. You may wish to use key dates and project milestones to answer this question.
8. **What is your estimated budget for the R&D phase?**
We are offering between £10,000 and £50,000 for this round of funding.
9. **Please provide an indication of the kind of costs you are likely to incur in the delivery of your project through the R&D phase.**

This budget is provisional. You will be asked to provide a more detailed budget at a later stage if your application is successful, with guidance as needed.

10. **Please explain how your R&D project might have a positive economic impact. This can include the impact for you, your company or the sector (max. 300 words).**

Your response could refer to:

See 'Application Assessment Criteria: Foreseen impact: Economic impact' above.

11. **Please explain how your project will have a positive social and cultural impact (max. 250 words).**

See 'Application Assessment Criteria: Foreseen impact: Social and cultural impact' above.

12. **Please explain how your project will have a positive environmental impact (max. 250 words).**

See 'Application Assessment Criteria: Foreseen impact: Environmental impact' above.

*To view the full application, please visit the online form on our website:
www.media.cymru/innovation-pipeline