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**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**DW** Akademie

# #SustainMedia

Support to Media Freedom and Pluralism  
in the Western Balkans





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**giz** German Development  
Cooperation

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# Info Session on Call for For Media Resource Centers

## #SustainMedia

Support to Media Freedom and Pluralism  
in the Western Balkans

Online:  
27.02.2026, 11:00

# Agenda:

1. Goals and Intervention areas of the Call for Media Resource Centers

2. Application process

3. Budget Guidelines

4. Q&A

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1. Mute your microphones when not speaking



2. Questions can be posted in the chat box during the presentation or can be asked at the end of the presentation. Questions can be posted in any of the WB6 local languages.



3. Please present yourself and the media you are representing when asking questions.



# About #SustainMedia:

1. #SustainMedia has successfully closed its first Phase. The Programme supported and enhanced capacities toward economic sustainability of 87 media organisations in Western Balkans.
2. A Multi-Donor Action is jointly co-financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, in cooperation DW Akademie
3. Overall Goal of the Programme: Enhanced economic sustainability and boosted competitiveness of independent media organizations in Western Balkans by 1. Strengthening Economic Performance, 2. Boosting Quality and Public Interest Journalism and 3. Fostering Media Cooperation and Networks
4. The duration of this Programme is scheduled from September 2025 to February 2029 (42 months)

# CALL FOR APPLICATIONS For Media Resource Centers

Number of Grants: approx. 15

Grant Amounts: from €10.000 to €80,000

Duration of the grant: up to 2 years

Deadline: 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2026

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Goal: to strengthen the economic sustainability, operational efficiency, and competitiveness of small, local media outlets and other relevant information ecosystem actors, by **supporting the establishment or strengthening of Media Resource Centers** that provide shared professional services tailored to the needs of small and local media outlets and emerging media initiatives.

# Intervention areas:

## 1. Business Development and Organizational Management

- Business planning and sustainability strategies
- Revenue diversification models
- Financial management and accounting services
- Project writing and fundraising support
- Governance and organizational development or optimization

## 2. Marketing, Audience Development, and Branding

- Marketing and communication strategies
- Branding and rebranding services
- Audience research and analytics
- Subscription, membership, and community engagement models
- Advertising and sales support

## 3. Digital Transformation and Technological Services

- Website development and maintenance
- Content management systems and digital publishing tools
- Data analytics and SEO services
- Cybersecurity and digital safety
- Multimedia production and innovation tools, including hardware and software provision
- AI (editorial) workflow integration

# Intervention areas:

## 4. Editorial and Journalistic Support Service

- Editorial mentoring and coaching
- Fact-checking and verification services
- Investigative journalism support
- Legal advice related to journalism and media law
- Ethical standards, editorial policies, and newsroom workflows
- Development of innovative formats and content adapted to new and emerging communication channels (e.g. short-form video, visual storytelling, creative infotainment formats, etc.)

## 5. Training, Capacity Building, and Knowledge Sharing

- Training programmes and workshops
- Peer-to-peer learning and mentoring
- Toolkits, guidelines, and manuals
- Helpdesks or on-demand advisory services
- One stop shop for media support services

# CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

## For Media Resource Centers

### Eligible Applicants

- Media organizations
- Media support organizations and associations
- Private companies, agencies, entrepreneurs or consultancies with demonstrated expertise in media-related services
- Non-governmental or non-profit organizations working in the media relevant sectors
- Start-Ups established by professionals with expertise in media-related services.
- Note: Public broadcasters and public institutions are not eligible as Lead Applicant.

### Eligible partners may include, but are not limited to:

- Media organizations
- Non-media actors that can contribute with relevant expertise or services, such as:
  - Academic and research institutions
  - Technology and digital service providers
  - Business and marketing entities
  - CSOs and professional associations
  - Legal, financial, or consulting organizations.
  - Etc.

## KEY REQUIREMENTS

- Clearly identify the target group(s) of media outlets/actors to be supported
- Describe the service model, including access, pricing (if any), and sustainability
- Explain how the project ensures inclusiveness and accessibility for resource-constrained media
- Include a realistic implementation plan and budget
- Demonstrate how the resource center will continue operating beyond the project period.

Note: Providing detailed and well-structured responses to the key requirements enables us to conduct a more accurate and thorough evaluation of your application.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- Relevance and Strategic Alignment
- Quality of the Proposed Intervention
- Capacity and Experience of the Applicant(s)
- Impact and Sustainability
- Cost-Effectiveness and Value for Money

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# Application forms

Forms to be completed and submitted together with the supporting documents via email ([wb6media@giz.de](mailto:wb6media@giz.de)) one consolidated application package titled: [Name of Media Outlet] \_Application For Media Recourse Centers.

**The Application** Form in word (Template: [The Application Form](#))  
**Annex 1:** Budget Template in excel (Template: [Budget Template](#))

## Supporting Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of legal registration of the applicant
- ✓ CV of the organization/s applying: A brief organisational profile, core expertise and services, relevant experience in media development, selected reference projects, etc. (If there is a partnership proposed, please include a CV/organizational profile of the partner too)
- ✓ Professional Bios of the staff/experts that will be involved in the implementation of the Project.
- ✓ Official Financial Reports of the applicant for 2024 and for 2025 (if available)
- ✓ Tax certificate on fiscal obligations

# Budget form

- The budget needs to be submitted in **EUR currency** (Exchange rate - Info Euro to be used- in cases where the exchange rate cannot be determined automatically)
- All budget lines must be estimated as 'up to' values
- Please keep the two-decimal-place format

Description	Code	to)	(person)	section 1. staff	compensation, procurement and unit)	in local currency	in local currency (up to)	financing in local currency (up to)
<b>1. Staff</b> (Note: Only direct costs for staff (monthly gross costs for the employer) may be settled. Add-ons such as staff overheads that are calculated pro-rata for staff are not eligible for support. Please indicate job functions, no names of individual persons. Staff costs are:  a) Prime costs for employees of the Recipient (staff employed by your organization). The evidence for this budget line must be provided in the form of payslips or, in the case of pro-rata working time for the financed project, in the form of payslips and time sheets.  b) Costs for integrated consultants (self-employed or employed by a third party and seconded to the Recipient) working under conditions similar to staff employed by the Recipient, provided that this is legally permissible under the law applicable to the	30010000							
			person		months		0.00	
			person		months		0.00	
			person		months		0.00	
<b>2. External services (type/content of service) (incl. event</b>	30020000						0.00	
				contract/contracts			0.00	
				contract/contracts			0.00	
				contract/contracts			0.00	
<b>3. Transportation / Travel Costs</b>	30030000						0.00	
				Unit			0.00	
				Unit			0.00	
				Unit			0.00	
<b>4. CO2-Compensation for flights</b>	30190000						0.00	
				compensation			0.00	
				compensation			0.00	
<b>5. Procurement of materials and equipment</b>	30040000						0.00	
				procurement			0.00	
				procurement			0.00	
				procurement			0.00	
<b>6. Medicine</b> (Note: A separate internal GIZ approval process is needed).	30080000						0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
<b>7. Pesticides and/or mineral fertilizers</b> (Note: A separate internal GIZ approval process is needed).	30090000						0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
<b>8. Other costs</b>	30050000						0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
<b>9. Construction measures</b> (Note: Only simple, low-complexity construction work with a small volume may be carried out).	30070000						0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
				unit			0.00	
Total GIZ funding - local contribution from GIZ (up to - on								

This budget format is used as a basis for settlement.

All items listed in the budget must be included in the project description to ensure that the project reference is clear.

Please do not add or change any columns. Please only add lines, if necessary!

Please do not change or delete any formulas. In column F, please only add the costs per Unit. Please choose a correct unit and add the quantities in columns B and D accordingly. The formula would do the calculation

Attention: in section "1. Staff" the shares in percent per person should be explicitly entered. Column F contains the gross salary per month and column B the share of the measures in percent per month. The formula then calculates the total value automatically. In all other cost lines, no percentage is calculated. They are always whole units.

In case of intended own contribution or third party financing, please contact a GIZ contract manager either way.

In case of any questions, please contact your GIZ contact person.

Funds in %

- **Reallocation** - You can go over budget in one headline by up to 20%, as long as you save enough in other budget headline to balance it out. (All reallocations should be communicated with the project in written)

## Budget lines

### 1. Budget line „Staff“

- Refers to own staff with employment contract from your organization/ and integrated consultants (self-employed or employed by a third party and seconded to you - **only where the law enables this option, for the moment applicable only for Serbia**). Staff can be allocated in full time (100%) or partly allocated- in this case, please indicate % of staff allocation.
- **Note:** Within preparation please only insert the **Job Function** (the budget line refers to job functions not individual persons)

### 2. Budget line „External services“

- Refers to services provided by third parties contracted under service contracts (companies or external experts). The budget line is subject to the requirements on procurement of goods and services.
- **Note:** Within preparation please only insert the **required expertise or service** (the budget line refers to required consultancy –not individual persons).
- If partnership is foreseen this should be indicated as services in this budget line. Partners would be considered as a service providers for the lead applicant (no subgrating allowed)

*Note: All units must be in contracts.*

Contract value	Type of procedure	Contract award documentation
<b>SUPPLIES and SERVICES</b>		
Up to EUR 1,000.00	Informal; direct order permissible	
from EUR 1,000.01 to EUR 20,000.00	Invitations to be sent to at least three suitable potential tenderers to submit a tender	Justification of contract award: written documentation of requests or invitations to tender and contract award decision  If a formal competitive tender is held, this is to be documented.
from EUR 20,000.01	Carry out formal competitive tender: as a rule, either a public or limited invitation to tender	Justification of contract award: documentation of competitive tender and contract award decision

Exceptional cases where a direct order may be issued are:

- Unique selling point (e.g. a monopoly position)
- Urgency (The service is especially urgent due to circumstances which the Recipient was unable to predict, and the reasons for the urgency cannot be ascribed to the Recipient's approach)
- Follow-on order (If additional services are to be procured from an original contractor and switching contractor is not possible or not without undue time and expense)
- Existing framework agreement

### 3. Budget line „Transport costs/travel expenses“

This budget line refers to all costs related to travel expenses (transport, accommodation, per-diem allowance etc.). This includes travel arrangements for your staff or travel related to implementation of activities. Travel expenses related to external service providers should be regulated in their specific contracts and not paid from this budget line. The costs of travelling by car are reimbursed at a unit rate of maximum 0,30 eur/km x google map distance.

Per diems and accommodation cost please use your internal organizational rates and afterwards can be crosschecked with the respective colleagues in the region before contracting.

### 4. Budget line „CO2-Compensation for flights“

- If applicable- CO2 emissions caused by flights can be compensated. Evidence of the flight compensation costs are vouchers from the compensation provider, which must show the flight route (start and destination, date, booking class and the calculated amount of CO2). **Not applicable** in our case!

### 5. Budget line „Procurement of materials and equipment“

- Materials and equipment include items used over a longer period of the Project. The budget line is subject to the requirements on procurement of goods and services (previous slide). All the materials and equipments bought with the GIZ money should be inventoried in the company inventory. No specific brands or company names should be listed!

### 6. Budget line „Medicine“

- A separate internal GIZ approval process is needed. **Not applicable** in our case!

### 7. Budget line „Pesticides and/or mineral fertilizers“

- A separate internal GIZ approval process is needed. **Not applicable** in our case!

## 8. Budget line „Other costs“

- These costs are also subject to the requirements on procurement of goods and services (previous slide). Here you propose supplies that cannot be allocated to other budget lines. ( see example in the second worksheet of the budget)

## 9. Budget line „Construction Measures“

- Only simple, low-complexity construction work with a small volume may be carried out.  
**Not applicable** in our case!

## 10. Budget line „Own contribution/third-party financing“

- The project can be partially financed by own contributions and/or by third parties. If the amount of this contribution at the end of the contract duration is less than stated in the contract/budget, GIZ shall be entitled to reduce its contribution in the same proportion. Please note that contributions can be made in kind (for example, through own contribution in goods or services instead of money). If a financial contribution is planned, it must be included in the financial report, and all related invoices must be submitted.

**Important note: With selected candidates there might be further adjustments to the budget withing the contract preparation process.**



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## Steps and Timeline For Application and Selection Process for Grants

Call for Applications



Deadline 15<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Selection based on:  
Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria**



March 2026

**GIZ Due Diligence Check  
Final Decision on Grant Award**



March – April 2026

**GRANTS CONTRACTING**



From April 2026

**Grant Implementation**



From April/May 2026



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# Q&A

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# Thank you!

For further questions please write to [wb6media@giz.de](mailto:wb6media@giz.de)

SustainMedia Team

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