

**STRAS4MEDIA SECOND EDITION SPECIFIC RULES  
FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PILOT PROJECT: “EXCHANGE OF MEDIA ‘RISING  
STARS’ TO SPEED UP INNOVATION AND INCREASE CROSS-BORDER COVERAGE”**

**1. Lump-sum Award**

The maximum grant per participant is 6,000 euros, out of which 90% EU contribution and 10% own contribution by the media organisation/freelancer participating in the exchange (or more if participating media devoted more time).

As a consequence of this co-financing, out of the total 6,000 euros, a lump-sum Award (“fixed allocation”) of 5,400 euros (which corresponds to the 90% co-funding) will be allocated to each participant.

Each media organisation can appoint a maximum of three people to work on an initiative. In order to get the lump-sum Award, all requirements stated in point 3 have to be met.

**2. Declarable costs**

The lump-sum Award can cover the following types of costs:

- a) all kinds of remote and presential work related to the implementation of the Initiatives;
- b) costs including, but not limited to, software, licenses, equipment, and digital tools;
- c) costs of training (remote and non) necessary for the good implementation of the Initiative (e.g. language skills; marketing; user experience design, etc);
- d) international travel, accommodation and subsistence costs (when possible).

**3. Payment modality and Timing**

The grant amount, allocated as a lump-sum to each participant, will be transferred either individually or to the Participating Media, in two installments.

**3.1 Initial lump-sum Award**

A 3,000 euros installment (initial lump-sum Award) will be transferred at the beginning of the Initiative either individually or to the Participating Media.

**3.1.1 Conditions for receiving the first instalment:**

- a) Successfully completing the Stars4Media Second Edition selection process and having a confirmed partnership agreement with a paired media organisation from another EU country. The confirmed partnership agreement should entail a self-declaration of sufficient command of linguistic knowledge from both partners;
- b) Participating in a Stars4Media Second Edition practical online workshop on how to manage the administrative aspects of the initiative, held after the selection of the initiatives;
- c) Signing the Stars4Media Agreement Project Coordinator VUB-Media organisation/ Freelancer;
- d) Providing a formal Commitment letter according to which each involved professional agrees to respect and fulfil the participation conditions necessary to access the second instalment, as stated in the Stars4Media Second Edition Specific Rules (this document) and the Stars4Media Second Edition General Terms and Conditions;
- e) Correctly and timely providing the necessary administrative information in order to process the first payment.

### 3.2 Second and final lump-sum Award

A 2,400 euros instalment (second and final lump-sum Award) will be allocated to each media professional at the end of the Initiative.

#### 3.2.1 Conditions for receiving the second instalment

For receiving this final installment, the media professionals implementing the Initiatives will be required to provide the following supporting documents:

- 1) **timesheets** reflecting the actual days spent on working on the Initiative, considered as virtual and/or presential exchange.  
In case an initiative is implemented fully virtually, each young media professional should work on the initiative for **a minimum of 40 working days spread over a maximum of 16 weeks**, including all days spent on virtual activities and physical mobility.  
In the given Covid-19 context, an initiative can be implemented fully virtually but, when possible, physical mobility is encouraged.
- 2) **proof of expenses** incurred to implement the Initiative, including, but not limited to: software, licenses, equipment, and digital tools; invoices or supporting documents for expenses related to any specific training they will follow during the Stars4Media programme; international travel, accommodation and subsistence (if international travel is possible);
- 3) **a midterm evaluation survey** to monitor and evaluate the status of the implementation of the initiatives.  
This will be an initiative-specific self-assessment provided by the participants, summarizing the exchange experience, the description of the activity, challenges faced, coaching needs, and the main learning outcomes.  
A specific midterm evaluation model report will be shared with the media professionals, based on the initial application form.
- 4) **final deliverable(s) of the initiatives**, as presented in the Proposal for Initiative application, reporting on the foreseen aims of the initiative; and **a final evaluation survey**, reflecting the initiative's impact/effectiveness; the lessons learned; the skills gained, and the sustainability of the initiative.

#### Nota Bene:

- The provision of the evidence above is considered as **a conditio sine qua non for receiving the second payment**. In case of failure to comply with the participation conditions, the Project Coordinator has the right to request the return of the first instalment.
- Original invoices and/or supporting documents for eligible expenditure (concerning point 2 above) must be submitted to the Coordinator (VUB) by the Media organisation or by the media professionals if they are freelancers. Copies of invoices and supporting documents are acceptable if regulation prohibits original accounting documents from being taken out of the local financial system. In the case of the latter, the Media outlet must be able to grant access to these documents at all times during the project.
- The reported expenses will not be reimbursed on top of the final installment. Having an overview of all incurred costs is important for understanding the real contribution of media organisations/freelancers and improving the co-financing scheme in the future.
- The beneficiary must maintain detailed accounting records and supporting documentation to show all costs incurred under this project for a period of 5 (five) years after the end of the project (end of the project is 30 June 2022 ). The Project Coordinator and the EU are entitled to inspect these documents at all times within the framework of their auditing remit.

- The participants strive to execute the actions promised in the proposal for initiative and their specific outcomes. The specific costs incurred are used according to the approved budget and during its period of execution.

#### **4. Exchange Rate**

Requests for payment and financial statements must be drafted in euros. Beneficiaries and affiliated entities with general accounts in a currency other than the euro must convert costs incurred in another currency into euros at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union*, determined over the corresponding reporting period (available at <http://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/exchange/eurofxref/html/index.en.html>).

If no daily euro exchange rate is published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* for the currency in question, the conversion must be made at the average of the monthly accounting rates established by the Commission and published on its website

([http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/infoeuro/infoeuro\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/infoeuro/infoeuro_en.cfm)), determined over the corresponding reporting period.

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities with general accounts in euros must convert costs incurred in another currency into euros in accordance with their usual accounting practices.

#### **5. Bank costs**

All bank costs related to the reimbursement of the cost of individual exchanges by media professionals are born by the media outlet.

#### **6. International travel - Optional, if possible**

- When choosing the means of transport, practicability, sustainability, and overall value for money must be taken into account.
- A ticket (plane, train, bus) in the economy class, plus any airport taxes and booking fees charged by the airline or travel agency can be considered.
- It is recommended to order a return ticket if traveling by plane because a one-way ticket can be more expensive than a return ticket.
- International travel cost means door-to-door travel (travel to and from the airport/station and plane/train/bus ticket).
- When traveling by car:
  - Proof of expenses for gasoline costs should be provided.
  - The cost of a rental car is not eligible.

#### **7. Housing - Optional, if possible**

- Accommodation costs only refer to costs incurred for nights in a hotel/dormitory/Airbnb/other officially recognized accommodation.
- The cost of accommodation always needs to be proven with an official invoice (e.g. staying with friends or family can not be charged).

#### **8. Training fee**

Participants will have to keep original invoices or supporting documents for expenses related to any specific training they will follow during the Stars4Media programme.

## **9. Insurance**

Each Party is responsible for the insurance coverage of its own employees in accordance with applicable national legal requirements for occupational injuries and occupational diseases. As a consequence, each Party must fulfill the required formalities and sustain all the costs, if any, involved in the insurance policies underwritten to cover its own employees and staff against these risks.

Insurance should minimally cover third party liability, health, personal injury (and repatriation). The sending media outlet and the professional in the exchange are expected to arrange proper insurance.