



THE SAMIR KASSIR FOUNDATION

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

DATE OF REQUEST:	Thursday, September 7, 2023
IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATION:	Samir Kassir Foundation (SKF)
PROJECT TITLE:	QARIB - Media Incubator
LOCATION:	Lebanon / Palestine
IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:	November 1, 2023 – August 30, 2024

A. Project Background

Since the Arab uprisings of 2011, various technological advancements have created new avenues of instigating public debates in the pursuit of a citizen-based perspective on freedoms, democracy, good governance, and media pluralism. Nevertheless, independent journalists who benefited from this opening, largely facilitated in the early stages by social media networks, were soon sidelined by the adaptation of dominant and more resourceful authoritarian regimes. This, however, does not negate the fact that the “new media” has played a crucial role in amplifying the voices and influence of youth, pro-democracy activists, and marginalised groups, especially as more innovative forms of web-based journalism emerged, connecting talents in journalism with talents in tech development and design.

On that basis, any pursuit pertaining to a freer and more democratic society necessitates a support system for journalists building independent media outlets. While the purpose of this support system is to further capacity-building mechanisms for such outlets, it also ought to incorporate an interactive trajectory in which their respective teams become capable of formulating and implementing a set plan.

This project will also further solidify the presence of the independent online outlets in their respective media ecosystems. As they develop their skills and their very business models, they will have the chance to broaden their scope of work and generate more impactful content, while simultaneously increasing their reach and overall influence on society.

Samir Kassir Foundation (SKF) is **launching a new call for applications** which aims to:

- Select 3 to 4 media outlets for the third round of the support programme.
- Contribute towards an alternative vision for the media in Lebanon and Palestine, which strengthens professional sustainability, ethical reliability, critical coverage, and inclusivity.
- Create an environment and alternative discourse centred on the promotion of ideals and principles such as good governance, pluralism, free speech, democratic representation, and the right to investigate corruption and scandals.
- Assist journalists growing across various alternative networks build more sustainable careers in line with their ethical and political considerations.

Supported media outlets will be:

1. Provided with the means, methodologies, and tools to fund their content in the most sustainable way possible via the implementation of innovative business models;
2. Supported in amplifying their platform traffic using our robust understanding of analytics;
3. Provided with necessary public relations advantage, i.e., promoting their work among like-minded platforms and local and regional NGOs;



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4. Supported to help them in amplifying their professional standards and content quality via focusing on team growth and technical capacity;
5. Assisted with formulating a consistent model for content publishing, distribution, and organisation;
6. Assisted in recurrently assessing their project in the most efficient and dynamic way possible;
7. Presented funding and monetisation opportunities and be guided in their application and implementation processes.

Once the selection process is finalised:

Together with the selected outlets, SKF will set SMART goals that are tailored to each outlet chosen. After that, the project can begin properly addressing the weaknesses and aims of each outlet, while using the current strengths and ingenuity of each, to create an advantage, increase reach, and maximise impact. Whether it is through developing journalistic/tech skills, boosting their network or online presence, and exploring all the possible monetisation avenues, the project will ensure that the outlets are supported and ready to grow more sustainably, while delivering quality content.

B. Eligibility criteria (*applicants must meet all requirements*)

- Media organisations which produce original content (not news aggregators).
- Organisations that produce content around news and current affairs.
- Organisations which are politically independent and transparent about funding sources
- Organisations must be based in Lebanon or in Palestine.
- Preference will be given to organisations that demonstrate diversity within staff and board members.

B.1. Criteria regarding editorial independence

1. Media is not owned or run by the state.
2. Media's decisions at every level are not influenced by state bodies.
3. Media doesn't have state officials (including members of the legislative and executive branches) on its governing board, capable of influencing its policies.
4. Media is not subsidised by authoritarian government entities, through budget support or grants, providing the survival of the media depends on such a support.
5. Media owners or key staff are not using the media outlet as a tool to gain political influence.
6. Media is not a corporate outlet (i.e., a publication created for employees or clients of a company, not the public reader).
7. Media is not a PR and lobbying tool for the owner.

B.2. Criteria regarding values

1. Media possesses democratic values.
2. Media is producing content meaningful to the community, beyond entertainment and consumerism.
3. Media does not promote intolerance.
4. Media upholds professional ethics.



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C. Application and Instructions

Please fill out the application form by clicking on [this link](#). For any questions, please reach out to the contacts below:

- **(For media outlets in Lebanon)** Mr. Wael Akiki wakiki@samirkassirfoundation.org
- **(For media outlets in Palestine)** Ms. Widad Jarbough wjarbough@samirkassirfoundation.org

The submission deadline for this third round of applications is Saturday, October 7, 2023.

Projects will be selected by Monday, October 30, 2023.

Selected applicants will be notified by Friday, November 10, 2023.

About the implementing organisation

The **Samir Kassir Foundation (SKF)** is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation, working to spread democratic culture in Lebanon and the Arab world and encourage new talents of free press. SKF hosts the SKeyes Center for Media and Cultural Freedom, which has become the largest operation to monitor and denounce violations of freedom of expression in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine. SKF provides high-level capacity building for journalists to improve their coverage of sensitive issues, with support from local and international trainers, and world class media development institutions. SKF also provides financial and legal support to journalists in distress and advocates for the reform of legislations and practices that curtail freedom of expression. SKF has developed an expertise in media analysis and qualitative research around media consumption patterns and media content.

This Call for Applications is launched within the frame of [QARIB](#), a regional programme implemented by [CFI](#), the French media development agency and funded by [AFD](#), the French development agency.

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