

The Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund

Guidelines

Background

The Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund is a funding scheme offered by Comhar, the Sustainable Development Council, for media projects focusing on sustainable development. The fund is open to all Irish media, and is aimed at promoting more and better coverage of sustainable development issues.

Comhar SDC is now inviting applications for funding.

Who can apply?

Any media organisation, media professional or media student can apply for funding.

Applications for print or broadcast projects will be accepted, as well as for photographic and new media projects.

Applications that involve crossover between, or the integration of, a number of different media outlets are welcome, for example, a series of newspaper articles that forms the basis of a radio panel discussion; or a photographic exhibition that is displayed in a gallery and published online on a high-traffic website.

Collaborative applications are also encouraged, for example, a joint application from a photographer and a print journalist.

Criteria

Applications must fulfil the following criteria:

- The proposed media project must be **new**, i.e. it must not have been broadcast or published in any format previously.
- The application must demonstrate proof of a commitment from at least one media outlet – based in Ireland – to broadcast or publish the proposed media project within three months if funding is granted.
- For broadcasting proposals, the media outlet that has committed to broadcast the proposed media project must be registered with the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland.
- Funding sought must be for **costs to facilitate the project**, for example, out-of-pocket expenses (travel, accommodation, etc.); research expenses (publications or attendance at a conference or event); resources (aids or tools to facilitate your project). Funding will not be granted for retrospective work, regular wages, freelance fees, or capital expenses (i.e. purchase of equipment, furnishings, etc.).
- Applicants must demonstrate their capacity to cover 'in-kind' costs (such as wage and production costs associated with publishing or broadcasting the proposed media project).
- Funding sought should not exceed **€2,000**.
- The proposed media project must focus on one or more of the **sustainable development themes** outlined in the following section.

Themes

The proposed media projects should focus on one or more broad themes of sustainable development, i.e.:

- **Climate change and clean energy**

For example:

- Addressing how Ireland could meet its target under the Kyoto Protocol and contribute to the overall EU target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to at least 20 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020.
- Raising awareness of climatic change and helping to mobilise different societal actors to address the problem and highlight their role in addressing it.
- Identifying the key areas where Ireland can provide credible leadership in regard to addressing climate change and low carbon energy.
- Examining carbon-proofing of fiscal measures as a means of stabilising and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Sustainable transport**

For example:

- Defining what sustainable transport means in an Irish context and presenting a vision of an alternative sustainable transport future to business as usual.
- Addressing user charging (including congestion charging), having regard to the availability of public transport options and the social justification for public transport, including the need to provide transport choices as a means of achieving more sustainable communities.

- **Sustainable consumption and production**

For example:

- Addressing sustainable consumption and production, including the integration of sustainable development criteria into procurement decisions.

- **Conservation and management of natural resources**

For example:

- Examining policy and actions to strengthen the protection of biodiversity.
- Examining policy and actions to enhance the protection of landscapes, including coastal zones.

- **Public health**

For example:

- Identifying how food labelling could be improved to provide consumers with appropriate information on the provenance and nutritional value of food.
- Addressing how land-use planning and transport planning at all levels of government could promote walking and cycling, as well as a shift to public transport, to encourage a more active lifestyle and the reduction of air pollution.
- Addressing compliance with relevant standards, for example, for drinking water.

- **Social inclusion, demography and migration**

For example:

- Examining policies and issues relating to social inclusion, including issues such as the number of people at risk of poverty, adult literacy, and the integration of migrants.

- **Global poverty and global sustainable development challenges**

For example:

- Addressing Ireland's commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals and contribution through official development assistance.

- **Spatial planning**

For example:

- Examining how the integration of spatial planning and transport infrastructure planning and delivery could counter the negative trends associated with urban sprawl.
- Examining the potential for reform of local government funding and taxation, particularly the recovery of some element of land value appreciation arising from planning gain.

- **Measuring sustainability**

For example:

- Examining the role of indicators as a basis of measuring progress on sustainability and a means to effectively communicate this to the general public.
- Addressing how Regulatory Impact Assessment methodologies for policy development can be strengthened in light of best practice on sustainability impact assessments.

- **Governance and sustainability**

For example:

- Examining how regional and local authorities can drive the implementation of regional and local sustainability, and how local structures – such as city and county development boards, city and county partnerships, LEADER groups and local energy agencies – can help deliver the local sustainability agenda in partnership with local communities.
- Exploring how macroeconomic and fiscal measures encourage more sustainable behaviour, for example through extension of the ‘polluter pays’ principle, phasing out environmentally harmful subsidies, and the greening of public procurement.
- Implementation of sustainable development policy from national to local level and highlighting best practice in sustainable local communities.

- **Communication, education and awareness**

For example:

- Addressing education for sustainable development.
- Examining how effective communications and awareness-raising measures can help motivate lifestyle change towards more sustainable living.

Selection of successful projects

Successful applications will be chosen by a panel made up of representatives from the following:

- Duncan Stewart, architect and presenter of ‘About The House’ on RTÉ Television (Chair of the judging panel).
- Noel Casserly, Director of Comhar, the Sustainable Development Council.
- Elaine Nevin, Director of ECO-UNESCO, Ireland’s Environmental Education and Youth Organisation.

Applications will be assessed by the panel for evidence of the following:

- Innovation in treatment of sustainable development themes.
- Innovation in project approach.
- Demonstrated experience and evidence of relevant expertise (for example, technical expertise if the proposal is for a television project).
- Collaboration across various types of media.
- Estimated audience / readership reach.
- Likely position on broadcast schedule / prominence in publication or online media.
- Value for money.

Based on the quality of applications received, the panel may decide to award partial funding to certain applicants.

Terms and conditions

Applications must be made by full completion of a funding application form. Application forms are available from Comhar, Sustainable Development Council, Tel: 01-8883990, Email: comhar@environ.ie, Website: www.comharsdc.ie.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 5pm on Friday, 20th June 2008.

Applications will be accepted by post or email, and should be sent to: Stephen Flood, Comhar, Sustainable Development Council, 17 St. Andrew Street, Dublin 2, Email: comhar@environ.ie.

Applications that promote any one agency or are of a campaigning nature will not be considered.

Applicants will receive official notification from Comhar once applications have been received and formally screened for compliance with the criteria of the Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund.

Successful applications will be notified by Friday, 25th July 2008.

Funding will be disbursed to successful projects when a contract has been signed between the applicant organisation and Comhar, the Sustainable Development Council.

Funding will typically not exceed €2,000. Successful applicants will be paid 80% when the grant is awarded and 20% on submission of a narrative and financial report.

Each project funded by Comhar must publicly acknowledge the support received and include a link to the Comhar website, using the following wording: 'Supported by the Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund, www.comharsdc.ie'.

The copyright of the final product will remain with the applicant. However, materials produced must be made available – free of charge – for potential future use by Comhar, the Sustainable Development Council. Comhar will at all times acknowledge copyright.

About Comhar

Comhar, the Sustainable Development Council, was established in 1999 as the forum for national consultation and dialogue on all issues relating to sustainable development. The Council has 25 members drawn from five pillars:

1. The State sector
2. The economic sector
3. Environmental NGOs
4. Social / community NGOs
5. The professional / academic sector

The current Chairperson of the Council is Professor Frank Convery, Heritage Trust Professor of Environmental Policy at UCD.

Comhar is supported by a full-time secretariat based in St. Andrew Street, Dublin 2. Further information is available from www.comharsdc.ie.

Further Information

If you have questions about the Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund, or any aspect of the application process, please contact: DHR Communications, 101 James's Street, The Digital Hub, Dublin 8. Tel: 01-4885808, Email: info@dhr.ie.