

# IMI Call for Projects

## Helping media fight misinformation and restore the public's trust

### 1. Context and goals

#### 1.1 Overview

For its first call for projects, the IMI wishes to tackle a key issue: misinformation, or *fake news* and the necessity for traditional media organizations to restore the public's trust. This topic is meant to be transversal and unifying, both in the media sector as well as in academia. It requires imagining novel multidisciplinary approaches that combine social and human sciences with engineering sciences, in a combined effort to seek out solutions based on collaborations between both professional and academic parties.

With this call for projects, the IMI intends to defend the principle of applied research allowing for media partners to carry on their digital transformation and their quest for sustainable solutions, and for scientific institutions to pursue novel research in their domain.

#### 1.2 Priorities

The IMI encourages the deposition of any applied research project falling under the topic outlined in the overview (1.1), corresponding to the types of research project expected (1.3) and corresponding to the criteria and conditions (1.4 et 2). While they are by no means exclusive, the following priority topics are of particular interest:

- Detection / mapping / typology of *fake news* (detection algorithms, pattern identification, dissemination mapping, identifying amplification mechanisms, etc.).
- Information certification and integration of source indicators (transparency, credibility).
- Innovative and creative media formats and narrative approaches to help restore the public's trust (conversational interfaces, immersive experiences, Internet of Things).
- Tools and experiences related to changes in journalistic practices in light of misinformation (comprehension of the mistrust of traditional media organizations by consumers and politicians, stigmatization of traditional media by populist discourses, exploitation of information by "alt" political fringe groups).
- Understanding the public's practices with regards to media consumption (new information consumption practices, the ability of the general public to identify fake news, information bubbles).

- Tools or interfaces encouraging audiences to participate and interact with media organizations.
- New public awareness and education campaigns (social and cultural aspects of media, pedagogical aspects).

### 1.3 Types of projects desired

The IMI supports the following types of projects:

- Applied and experimental projects beneficial to media organizations, by offering, for example, prototypes for possible solutions, tools, or practical approaches which could be tested and integrated into their workflow and implemented on their digital platforms. Collaborations with media organizations which are members of the IMI are expected to facilitate this process.
- Multidisciplinary research projects integrating technological, social, human and economic considerations as well as covering professional practices, narratives, etc.

### 1.4 Length, budget and beginning of projects

The IMI will only consider project proposals which respect the following criteria:

- The typical length of a project submitted to the IMI under this current call for projects is of 12 months. Subsidies could exceptionally be granted for longer periods (max. 18 months). Projects with shorter time frames can also be submitted.
- The amount allocated per project will not exceed CHF 150,000 for 12 months, omitting overheads.
- The budget allocated by the IMI are primarily intended for salaries (post-doc, scientific collaborator, etc.), to which some operating costs may be added, as well as overheads conforming to the regulations of the institution. The budget outline must reflect the intended collaborations.
- The funding allocated by the IMI shall be managed by the project coordinator belonging to a scientific institution which is a member of the IMI (see 2.1) who then has the possibility to transfer part of it to potential academic, media or industry partners.
- The projects financed by the IMI can benefit from additional financing from third-parties under certain conditions which must first be discussed with the IMI.
- The projects must begin between **1 June 2019** and **1 October 2019**.

## 2. Conditions and terms of engagement regarding IMI projects

### 2.1 Modalities to participate in research projects

In its pursuit of promoting applied research projects, the IMI will consider project proposals based on the following scheme:

- Any project financed by this current call for projects must be conducted by at least one scientific institution which is a member of the IMI (EPFL, University of Geneva, University of Lausanne, University of Neuchâtel) and must be managed by a project coordinator affiliated with one of these institutions.
- Collaborations between the scientific and media sectors are expected as part of these projects, through the participation of at least one media organization which is a member of the IMI and with which the coordinator will have to establish a partnership.
- Media organizations which are members of the IMI are also invited to submit proposals through joint coordination with a scientific institution.
- Project coordinators are asked to establish these partnerships either before submitting pre-proposals (see 3.1), but at the latest before submitting full proposals (see 3.2). Before these deadlines, project coordinators are invited to contact the IMI to facilitate this process.
- Collaborations with institutions outside of the IMI (including international collaborations), can also be considered, be they with academia, a media organization or an industry partner.
- There are no limits to the number of projects submitted by institution or by person, however the IMI will only finance one project per project coordinator.

### 2.2 Commitments of the project coordinator and of the IMI

Each project coordinator commits to:

- Create a brief financial and scientific report each semester. At most three months after the end of the financing period, he/she must submit a final financial and scientific report. The first report must describe how the allocated funds were used. The second report will also detail the accomplishments and results of the project, as well as possible perspectives for continuation (incubation, development, etc.).
- Participate in an event showcasing the accomplishments of the various projects financed by the IMI at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> year.
- Allow public access to all the results of the project as well as any potential technical development (source code, datasets, etc.).

- Offer the possibility to one or more members of the IMI who would wish to pursue the project, bilaterally, under conditions defined between them.

The IMI commits to:

- Guaranteeing that each project coordinator and each participant of the project remain the sole proprietors of the obtained results during the execution of the project and retain all the intellectual property and usage rights associated with them.
- Guaranteeing that every researcher and any academic institution implicated in the project can benefit from total freedom of research, instruction and publication.
- Guaranteeing that any media organization implicated in the project can benefit from total freedom of information and editorial freedom.

### 2.3 Research contract

Each project coordinator, via their institution, will have the obligation of signing a Grant Agreement prior to obtaining a subsidy from the IMI. This agreement will regulate, among other things, the timetable for payments, the reports to provide, scientific publications and establishes intellectual property rights and the modalities of result usage.

## 3. Submission of project proposals

The submission of projects will be done in two steps. A pre-proposal shall first present the main aspects of the project, its timetable as well as the budget envelope requested from the IMI. If the pre-proposal is selected, then the project coordinator shall be invited to submit a full proposal.

### 3.1 Pre-proposal for the first evaluation (max. 3 pages)

Pre-project proposals, maximum 3 pages long, written in English or in French, must be submitted at the latest on **7 January 2019 at 17:00** by email, to the following address [projects@media-initiative.ch](mailto:projects@media-initiative.ch) and must include:

1. The title of the project.
2. A general description of the project: goals, methods, expected results.
3. The benefits that the members of the IMI can expect (scientific innovation and benefits for media organizations).
4. The budget requested, the main expense categories and all the partners involved.

5. A presentation of the people involved in the project (coordinator, collaborator, partner, etc.), be they from the scientific or media sector<sup>1</sup>.

### 3.2 Full proposal for the final evaluation (max. 12 pages)

The submission for evaluation of full project proposals is reserved for project coordinators who have received approval on their initial pre-proposal submission. Full project proposals, maximum 12 pages long, written in English or in French, must be submitted at the latest on **25 February 2019 at 17:00** by email, to the following address [projects@media-initiative.ch](mailto:projects@media-initiative.ch) and must include:

1. The title of the project.
2. A summary (max. 300 characters) including key words (max. 6).
3. A full description of the project: goals, methods and expected results.
4. Benefits for academic research:
  - a. How does the proposed project benefit academic research?
  - b. A description outlining the multidisciplinary dimension of the project.
5. Innovation for media organizations:
  - a. How does the proposed project benefit the media sector?
  - b. What are the practical benefits for the media organizations which are members of the IMI (usability, replicability, sustainability)?
6. The details on the deliverables of the project (conception and implementation of tools, scientific publications, etc.).
7. The timetable for the project and the main steps.
8. A detailed budget outline (detailing if the funding is full or partial and what other sources of financing are involved, if any). The budget outline must also reflect the intended collaborations.
9. A description of the societal impact of the project.
10. A presentation of the project coordinator or co-coordinators (please attach the CVs to the submission) as well as the names, positions and contributions to the project of academic, media and industry partners. Support letters may also be attached to the submitted document.

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<sup>1</sup> At this stage of project submission, the project coordinators have the opportunity to contact the IMI to establish the appropriate partnerships

11. Additional observations you wish to communicate to the reviewers (intellectual property rights, patent applications, etc.).

## 4. Process, evaluation criteria and timetable

### 4.1 Process

The project proposals submitted within this call for projects will be evaluated by the IMI Scientific Committee (in two separate submissions, see 4.3), which will in turn submit recommendations to the IMI Board on the projects which will receive a subsidy.

### 4.2 Evaluation criteria

The main evaluation criteria are the following:

- Relevance to the topic of this call for projects.
- Collaboration between the academic, media and industry sectors.
- Potential for innovation and for academic research (project quality and scientific relevance).
- Multidisciplinary approach (including a social & human sciences perspective).
- Potential for innovation and exploitation for the media sector.
- Benefits for IMI members (usability, replicability, sustainability).
- Expertise of the project coordinator and of the partners involved.
- Societal impacts of the project.
- Objectives (realistic).
- Calendar (manageable).
- Budget (reasonable).

### 4.3 Timetable

The IMI Scientific Committee shall finish its evaluation of the pre-project proposals on **28 January 2019** and shall inform the project coordinators on the following day. The Scientific Committee shall then complete its evaluation of the full project proposals on **25 March 2019**, and shall send its recommendation to the IMI Board. The Board shall validate the selected projects during a meeting that will be held on **16 May 2019**, after which the IMI will get in touch with project coordinators.



## 5 About the IMI

### 5.1 Mission

The IMI drives the future of media through open innovation and at the interface between technology and people.

### 5.2 Description

The IMI brings together academic, public and private partners who have joined forces to support and develop innovation in the media and IT sector. The aim of this alliance is to initiate research projects with partner universities, and to gather and interact with a wider community that involves researchers, media professionals and investors.



### 5.3 Vision

- Open innovation that fosters new and exciting opportunities
- Academia-industry partnership
- Interdisciplinarity between technology and social & human sciences
- Connection with society and the general public

## 6 Contact

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