

2023/2024

Impact report



The
Guardian Foundation

In a time of growing threats to global press freedom, **reliable information is more important than ever** – yet the barriers to accessing it are increasing.



Disinformation was named as the number one risk to the global population by the World Economic Forum in 2024. Generative AI has the potential to be revolutionary, but it can also create the perfect conditions to rapidly spread rumours, conspiracies and lies.

There is an urgent need for citizens, journalists and news organisations to be adequately prepared for this new world we live in. We must create a thriving environment where trust in news can be regained.

News and media literacy is absent or insufficient within many countries' education systems. Journalists from underrepresented communities face more barriers to start and advance their careers. News organisations struggle to thrive amidst economic and political pressures.

In 2023/24, we responded to these challenges by expanding our proven programmes, as well as finding new ways to engage young people with news, elevate marginalised voices and support independent journalism.



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Welcome



from our
Executive
director,
Kelly Walls

In this critical year for democracy, there are two billion people in more than 50 countries voting in elections.

Over 80% will be exposed to false and misleading information online. The challenge is enormous, but I remain hopeful.

The creation and spread of disinformation is accelerating. Manipulation of information is not a new phenomenon, nor is technological disruption, but the speed at which the two are developing together poses a greater risk than ever before. A key aspect of Freedom of Expression is the right to receive and impart information and ideas without interference. If people are led to make decisions based on unreliable information, then that fundamental human right is undermined. Fact-checking after people have been exposed to deepfakes and other fabricated content isn't enough; we must build up societal awareness and competence so that people are more resilient in the moment.

Last year, we reached over 17,000 people, including equipping 12,500 young people with the skills to recognise quality, accurate news. We supported talented people from backgrounds underrepresented in journalism to become professionals in the industry.



from our Chair
of trustees,
Reverend
Professor
Keith Magee

Journalism is a cornerstone of democracy and justice.

The essential role the press plays in shaping the political agenda has rarely been more striking than in this year of elections. Almost a third of these elections are taking place under the auspices of undemocratic regimes, many of which actively stifle the media.

A free press is central to true democratic participation. It provides citizens with the information they need to make their voices heard. It creates a channel of communication for individuals to share their beliefs and opinions and for them to be fact-checked. Journalism also plays a vital role in justice. Far more than a fair hearing in court, justice is about a social commitment to equality. As the renowned lawyer and social advocate Bryan Stevenson says, "The opposite of poverty is not wealth. The opposite of poverty is justice."

Our board

Keith Magee (*Chair*)

Nina Blackwell

Mélody Patry

Tom Laing-Baker

Randeep Ramesh

Russell Scott

Raquel Vázquez Llorente

Gary Younge

Misoon El-Gomati

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Margaret Holborn

Sorcha Hughes

Esmat Jeraj

Emma Jones

James Marshall

Philippa Mole

Elli Narewska

Joshua Olakanpo

Charlie Shepherd

Mena Sultan

Our team

Kelly Walls (*Executive director*)

Mohamed Abdi

Emma Aitken

Max Cobain

We helped build resilience within independent media to enable reliable journalism and engage wider audiences. We built knowledge about what great journalism looks like, because while it's crucial for audiences to know they shouldn't trust everything they see, it's just as important that the next generation know what they *can* trust.

It gives me hope to read our groundbreaking collaborative research proving the link between news literacy and increased civic engagement in 9–11 year olds. It gives me hope to see the 16 and 17 year olds we've worked with in the UK over the last two years voting for the very first time, better prepared and more resilient to misinformation on social media. Looking ahead, I'm excited about our plans to extend our news literacy work across the UK and wider Europe, as well as supporting more talented journalists and news organisations to continue their vital work helping us navigate the world's biggest issues.

I want to thank our funders, donors, partners and volunteers who make our work possible, the brilliant Guardian Foundation team for their dedication and expertise, and our Board of Trustees for their guidance and engagement.

In the face of growing polarisation and tribalism, concern about the health of the news media is growing. Journalists in many countries are raising the alarm about attacks on media independence and broadcaster impartiality.

That is why I am so proud to lead the committed board of trustees; Nina Blackwell, Tom Laing-Baker, Mélody Patry, Randeep Ramesh, Russell Scott, Raquel Vázquez Llorente, and Gary Younge. We stand alongside the Foundation's wonderful staff – led by our brilliant Executive director, Kelly Walls – in working to ensure as many people as possible have access to reliable information from a diverse range of sources, reinforcing their ability to hold power to account.



Our mission

Our purpose is to promote global press freedom and access to liberal journalism

Our vision is a world where people have access to reliable information, from a diverse range of sources, strengthening their ability to hold power to account

Our goals

News & media literacy

Enhancing people's ability to evaluate news critically

Media viability

Fostering the capacity of liberal media to engage people with fact-based journalism

Voice & agency

Facilitating opportunities for inclusion in media

Our approach

To reach our goals, we must:

Create more connections with independent media around the world

Reach more people from underrepresented backgrounds

Ensure all our interactions have a lasting impact

Expand our media literacy programmes, equipping young people with the skills to identify and tackle unreliable information

Be innovative in our methods, ensuring our programmes are developed with and facilitated by the people who engage with us

Work more closely with regions, communities and organisations where needs are greatest

Our impact at a glance

Cultivating media literacy skills for the next generation

12,900+ young people
976 teachers

67,711 resources downloaded
220+ schools

A network of people more resilient to mis- and disinformation.

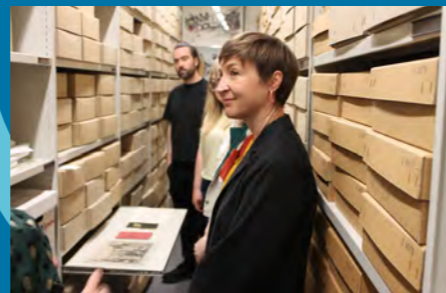
Research found that our NewsWise programme is increasing children's resilience to fake news¹. It also indicated that children with a better understanding of the news are more likely to follow current issues and engage with their community.

"These resources have not only opened up the world to the children. They have helped them realise they are important and have a place in our world with a voice that should be heard."

Teacher taking part in NewsWise

Our Media Literacy Ambassador pilot programme showed that peer learning was an effective tool to build news literacy skills. Young Ambassadors taught their peers to spot online mis- and disinformation while also gaining confidence in their own leadership potential.

Significantly more students could identify fake news after taking part



We opened up the **Guardian News and Media Archive** to over

500 people in 2023/24 by sharing records, hosting tours and welcoming researchers and journalists.

Championing more diverse voices and perspectives in the media

We empowered over **200** young people to develop their journalistic skills and gain experience.



Winners of our political opinion writing competition reached nearly **80,000** people with articles on issues that matter to them.

"Having lost my dad to alcoholism in 2022, the issue is a personal as well as political one, which makes it so gratifying that my piece resonated with the judges."

Georgia Mealings, Runner up

Supporting at-risk independent media to continue their work and engage audiences with fact-based journalism

We enabled **161+** media professionals to strengthen their work.



We supported **24** independent journalism projects in places where press freedom is under threat. Their content has engaged thousands of people with relevant, reliable information.

¹Harrison, T., Polizzi, G., McLoughlin, S. (2024) NewsWise in Primary Education: News Literacy and Civic Engagement. The Jubilee Centre. Available at: www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/project/news-literacy-and-civic-engagement [accessed 22/08/2024].

News and media literacy

The rise of misleading and false information continues to outpace the ability to counter it. This impacts the general public's trust and the way they form opinions on major global matters like conflict, climate and elections.

Our team of media and educational experts have worked with over 180,000 young people over the past two decades.

Through school workshops, teacher training and resources we're equipping young people with the skills to recognise quality, accurate news. We've supported research on our programmes and piloted new schemes, adapting our teaching in the face of disruptive technology and societal change.

NewsWise

NewsWise is our UNESCO-awarded cross-curricular news literacy programme for 7-11-year-olds. Through interactive workshops, teacher training, immersive resources and more, it generates curiosity and critical engagement with news, equipping primary-aged children with the skills and knowledge to make sense of the modern world.

Research: the lasting impact of news literacy

The NewsWise programme is an effective tool that has implications beyond the education system.

Research funded by the Nuffield Foundation, in partnership with NewsWise, the University of Birmingham, the University of Liverpool and the National Literacy Trust revealed a strong correlation between news literacy and civic engagement amongst 9-11-year-olds. This provides direction for future news literacy programmes to motivate children to become active and informed members of their communities.

Key NewsWise research findings

Fewer than half of children knew how to spot fake news before NewsWise > Pupils showed clear **long term improvement** in detecting fake news after completing the NewsWise programme

There is a **clear positive relationship between news literacy and civic engagement among NewsWise participants**. One can be used to predict the other.



News literacy has the potential to influence society more broadly – for example by increasing the likelihood that young people will vote; engage in local, national and international issues; and become more involved in their communities.

Increasing the reach of NewsWise to younger pupils

By the age of seven, children are likely to be online, and increasingly use social media platforms independently, leaving them vulnerable to harmful and misleading circulating media. We've seen increasing demand from teachers to expand NewsWise to a younger age range, as they witness this firsthand. In response, in 2023/24 we piloted workshops and lessons with younger children. From summer 2024, NewsWise is available for 7-11-year-olds.

Beyond schools

While the school environment represents a significant part of a young person's life, it doesn't capture all opportunities to reach them. We know that young people are heavily influenced by their home and community environments, so we've continued to innovate beyond schools.



This year we ran a pilot project in the West Midlands, introducing our family workshops into community settings such as libraries, community centres and holiday clubs. Afterwards, parents reported feeling more confident not only to help their children identify fake news, but to spot it themselves.

98% of parents felt very or quite confident in helping their children spot fake news

Responding to increasing global conflict in an era of fake news

The news can be particularly distressing and confusing for young people, and helping them navigate these feelings is a tricky task that falls on teachers and parents. As well as training to identify fake news, NewsWise has always included content on wellbeing and difficult news topics; this has been particularly crucial in recent years.

We've hosted additional webinars for teachers on 'Talking about the news and supporting children's wellbeing', and have made our [wellbeing resources](#) readily available on our website.



²Sean Simpson (2019). Fake News: A Global Epidemic Vast Majority (86%) of Online Global Citizens Have Been Exposed to it. Ipsos www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/cigi-fake-news-global-epidemic [accessed 22/08/2024].

The scale of the problem: disinformation

Research shows:

Over **80%** of people online have been exposed to fake news.

Nearly **9 in 10** admit to believing that fake news was real, at least once.

This is a problem for democracy. A citizenry that lacks basic news literacy skills may be less capable of making informed decisions and more vulnerable to manipulation. Often the most socio-economically disadvantaged fare worst, leaving them underserved.²

Behind the Headlines

Young people today are digital natives and, more than any generation before them, live much of their lives through mobile technology. Their exposure to online mis and disinformation is growing exponentially whilst engagement and trust in mainstream news media is declining.

For over 20 years, our award-winning [Behind the Headlines](#) programme has supported those in secondary school and beyond, empowering them to understand, critically analyse, engage with and participate in the media. The programme draws from a wealth of experience and benefits from a highly qualified team of educators.

Peer to peer learning: does it work?

In our innovative pilot project that started in January 2023 in the Midlands, Greater Manchester and South and West Yorkshire, 14-18-year-olds have been trained as Media Literacy Ambassadors, co-designing lessons that enhance media literacy skills in their schools and colleges.



Explained: our peer learning pilot

1.



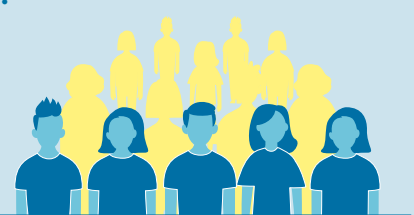
Our experts train a group of young Media Literacy Ambassadors and teachers in their schools. They follow this up with a virtual reflection session so that students can evaluate their work, and provide vital input that helps shape how the programme design evolves.

2.



The newly trained Ambassadors co-deliver media literacy workshops to at least three classes in their school or college. They cover topics like bias, rumour, clickbait, manipulation of images, truth and trustworthiness.

3.



Students across the school gain media literacy skills from people that they know, who are close to them in age. They have a more in-depth understanding of how the news is made, and what trustworthy information looks like, helping them to access quality sources of information and become well-informed, engaged citizens.

Ambassadors have since continued to develop resources and ideas to support news and media literacy where they are – they've independently trained new Ambassadors, hosted workshops, led assemblies and created corridor displays, videos and blogs. In 23/24, we trained 722 Ambassadors who went on to teach 3,413 students.

Having received feedback on the programme, we are now seeking funding to develop it and expand our reach.

A classroom in the newsroom

Throughout 2023/24, we have welcomed 2,299 young people to our London Education Centre, where they produce news in real time. Participating in a workshop offers practical, contextual learning that goes beyond what can be achieved in schools.

"I would say this is, probably in my 15 years of teaching, the most positive thing I have seen in terms of student impact."

Teacher

Evaluation published in June 2024 by the National Literacy Trust has shown that the Media Literacy Ambassador pilot programme improves media literacy skills in young people, setting them up for a more informed future.³ The peer-to-peer model promotes greater reach in schools, boosting engagement and learning, and has a positive impact on Ambassadors' transferable skills, particularly presentation, teamwork and leadership.

"The fact the workshop is happening in a real news organisation [...] made it so impactful. A lot of young people get news on apps and social media on their phones and don't have an understanding of the wider nature of news. The workshop made everything much more real for them."

Teacher



The Guardian News and Media Archive

Archives enrich our understanding of our past through objects, documents and imagery. They help us to understand organisational, collective or individual identities; why decisions were made, who made them and how they influenced our contemporary world.

Since 2002, The Guardian News and Media Archive collections have been preserving and sharing Guardian and Observer history. We hold original correspondence, diaries, notebooks, cartoons, oral history recordings and photographs stretching back more than 200 years, and are still collecting new records today.

Increase in demand for Archive access

External demand for our Archive collection is increasing as we make the collections more available and diverse.



The majority of researchers are UK-based, but this year we have also noted users in Western Australia, Singapore, the Czech Republic and New Zealand. We loaned 11 original cartoons from our archive to the Pompidou Centre in Paris for a four-month exhibition of the work of British newspaper cartoonist and writer Posy Simmonds. The exhibition was designed in close collaboration with the artist, and helped to cement her reputation in a sector where women have often been overlooked.

Historic imagery used in Guardian journalism

Our Archive team digitises historic imagery from the collection, making it available to Guardian journalists for use in articles that have a global audience – the

use of an archive photograph of a construction worker in 1960s London, taken by Jane Bown, brought it to more than 185,000 readers.



Our collection contributed to obituaries for prominent figures, including former MP Glenda Jackson, journalist John Vidal, and theatre school founder Anna Scher.

In this year alone the team have made

2,500

further images available for use.

Supporting research and archiving

This year we welcomed

62

Archive research visits.



Our collection is available to a wide variety of researchers, including family historians, academics and artists, who may also make use of our reading room in Kings Place, London.

As a reflection of our values, we provide Archive access to those wanting to gain experience in the industry. In the past year, we hosted 19 volunteers for week-long work experience placements. These volunteers were instrumental in helping us to preserve and open up records in our Archive, particularly our large photographic and cartoon collections. We are one of very few London repositories currently offering one-off placements for people without previous experience, opening up the media archiving sector to people who may not have had access previously.

³National Literacy Trust (2024). Evaluation of Behind the Headlines Media Literacy Ambassador project: Executive Summary. The Guardian Foundation Available at: the-guardian.foundation.org/assets/files/behind-the-headlines-mla-evaluation-summary-2024.pdf [accessed 22/08/2024].

Voice and agency

A central tenet of good journalism is the inclusion of diverse perspectives, from a range of sources, to reduce bias and tell a balanced story. When communities are excluded from participating in the creation of media, they can be misrepresented, stereotyped, or their stories forgotten entirely. This can lead to a breakdown of trust in the media, and cause people to turn to less reliable sources of information, leaving whole groups more vulnerable to misinformation and the more malicious disinformation.

While many in the news and media industry recognise that more inclusive and representative news organisations create better journalism and engage wider audiences, the industry is still not reflective of society as a whole. The Guardian Foundation is committed to removing the barriers to entry to journalism for those from underrepresented backgrounds.

That's why we're working hard to facilitate opportunities for inclusion in the media.

Scott Trust Bursary

The primary aim of the Scott Trust Bursary is to assist students who face financial difficulty in attaining the qualifications needed to pursue a career in journalism, in particular those from a lower socio-economic background, Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ and those with a disability. The bursary covers MA tuition fees, living expenses and paid work placements at the Guardian.

We partnered with Birmingham City, Leeds Trinity and Manchester Metropolitan Universities to expand the Bursary in September 2023, offering

three additional places specifically for aspiring Black journalists, a unique offering in the UK. The expansion is funded by the Scott Trust as part of its response to independent research into the Guardian's historical connections to transatlantic slavery.

A Reuters Institute study found that Black journalists make up only 0.2% of the workforce, while they constitute 3.7% of the UK population.⁴ Our aim is that by offering these places and working with universities across the country, we can reach more people from minority communities and disadvantaged backgrounds to increase diversity in news and media.



Alumni making waves

Scott Trust Bursary alumni continue to make a positive impact on the media industry. All those who completed the scheme in 2023 have started careers in journalism. Safi Bugel started a new job at Tate Magazine as Editorial Assistant and Sammy Gecsoyler and Mabel Banfield-Nwachi continue to work on the Guardian's news desk.

⁴ Neil Thurman, Alessio Cornia, and Jessica Kunert (2016). Journalists in the UK. Reuters Institute for the study of Journalism. Available at: reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/research/files/Journalists%20in%20the%20UK.pdf [accessed 22/08/2024].

How it feels to watch my home town disappear into the sea

In June 2023, our team interviewed Rachel Keenan for a place on the Scott Trust Bursary scheme. Rachel explained why she wanted to write about her hometown in rural northeast Scotland in the context of an industry that often fails to prioritise voices from regional and marginalised communities.

“I grew up in rural northeast Scotland. Lots happened, but, no matter how important, I never read about it in the newspaper. There was nobody to tell our stories; we were left behind. The news should represent everyone, and I felt I could use my skillset to make this happen.”

Rachel was awarded a place on the 2023/24 scheme and, during her work experience placement with the Guardian, was able to write the piece, which included interviews, powerful photography, and a moving portrait of the impact that the climate crisis has had on her hometown. Her perspective gives a voice to rural and forgotten communities around the UK.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to share this personal story, particularly in a prestigious newspaper like the Guardian. It has opened up a conversation along the northeast coast of Scotland about the impact climate change could have now and in years to come.

“The feedback from people in my hometown was extremely positive, they were relieved to finally be listened to. This community has been shouting about coastal erosion for years but without a platform or any power, they were easy to ignore.”

“**When a community feels they have been forgotten they should be able to turn to journalists they trust to not just tell their story but understand the issues they are facing first hand.**”



Morgan Ofori, a 2023 recipient, won the Football Writers' Association (FWA) Unheard Voices Award for a piece he wrote on club ownership in the Observer. He received a cash prize, six book titles by football writers shortlisted by the association and an award at the FWA Footballer of the Year dinner.



Previous Bursary recipient Hibaq Farah returned to the Guardian after completing the scheme. She led an investigation into moderation on TikTok, utilising expertise gained in her Bursary-supported MA dissertation on Gen Z and social media. In January 2024 she became an Editor at the New York Times.

Reaching future journalists

We are continually striving to expand our reach to attract a diverse range of applicants to the Scott Trust Bursary from underserved and underrepresented communities, and to make information about the application process as accessible as possible.

How did we spread the word?

University visits

We visited students at their place of study and had in-depth conversations about the Bursary with over 100 potential applicants. We learnt some of the most common concerns and barriers to applying to the Bursary.

Digital content

We updated application guidance on our website and partnered with Journo Resources, a non-profit dedicated to diversifying the media industry, to reach new, larger audiences. We also reached over 30,000 people with social media advertising.

Events

We partnered with the Tate Modern to host a free after-hours private viewing of 'A World in Common: Contemporary African Photography', an exhibition that addressed how art and media have been used to reimagine Africa's diverse cultures and historical narratives. This was an opportunity to engage with potential applicants in a relaxed setting.

Can you help us go further and reach more people? Email us info@theguardianfoundation.org

Media Makers

We supported four interns to gain valuable experience in the media industry through 6-month work placements at Cafeyn, an international subscriptions company.

Media Makers intern, Maysoon Sheikh said "during my time as a Media Maker, I've learnt how to track user engagement and report useful insights to my team. I've learnt how to adapt journalism for social media formats like Instagram, writing headlines that grab readers' attention. The Guardian Foundation and Cafeyn have given me a very beneficial learning experience that's shown me the inner workings of the media industry."

The programme concluded in December 2023 and we are now seeking new partners and funding for further internships. Could you help? Email us: info@theguardianfoundation.org

Winners of the 2024 Hugo Young Award

The Guardian Foundation's Hugo Young Award is a political opinion writing competition celebrating new voices and fresh perspectives in the UK, helping to secure the future of quality, independent journalism. We invite those aged 16-25 from a state school background to submit a short political opinion piece on a subject of their choice, particularly encouraging entries from underrepresented groups. This year, we received a record number of entries.

19-25 age category winner: accessing higher education in the UK as a prospective student with a disability

In April, Rosie Anfligoff was announced as the winner of the 2024 Hugo Young Award (19-25 category). Rosie's winning piece, Higher education was easily accessible to disabled people during Covid. Why are we being shut out now?, focused on the issues people with disabilities currently face in higher



Hugo Young award: Polly Toynbee presenting the award



Hugo Young award: Winner Beth Riding accepting her award

education in the UK, in particular after the reduction of online learning post-pandemic. She powerfully linked a national issue to her own experience of struggling to find suitable university courses that would provide reasonable adjustments, offering a vital perspective that is rarely seen in the media.

16-18 age category winner: access to dental care in the UK

Beth Riding won the younger age category award with her piece, *I'm 17 and haven't seen a dentist for four years. This is life in England's NHS dental deserts*, an exploration of inequality of access to dental care in rural southwest England, and the deepening class division this perpetuates.

"I'm honoured to have been selected for this award and so grateful to The Guardian Foundation for this opportunity. While the failure of higher education to adequately accommodate disabled students is something I face personally, the issue is so much bigger than me, and I hope my piece can bring attention to the unnecessary exclusion many students experience."

Rosie, winner of the Hugo Young Award 2024 (19-25 age category)

"The award has allowed me to explore my passion for writing, giving me the opportunity to craft an article on a topic I feel strongly about – health inequalities within dentistry. Having witnessed a decline in NHS dentists in my home county of Cornwall, I hope my piece will shine a light on just how extensive the crisis is, allowing others to see, and hopefully want to change, the way that oral health is managed across the UK."

Beth, winner of the Hugo Young Award 2024 (16-18 age category)



Hugo Young award: Rosie (on screen) making her acceptance speech

Masterclasses for aspiring young journalists

As part of the Hugo Young Award, we offered free masterclasses led by freelance journalist Erica Buist in the lead-up to the submission deadline. One of the judges from each age category also shared tips on how to write a winning piece and what they will be looking for.

We aimed to instill confidence in the 65 young people who attended to use their voice and agency to craft important pieces of writing, and to support them with valuable guidance from industry professionals.

Media viability

Quality journalism needs resources and freedom to thrive. It needs to be resilient to threats to press freedom, the pace of digital evolution and crises like pandemics and conflict – all while remaining financially viable.

In places where press freedom is under threat, we're working to support organisations and journalists to carry on operating, with mentoring, knowledge sharing and financial support, ensuring they can keep people informed and inspired in their area.

Especially important is supporting experienced, passionate and talented journalists to develop the acumen necessary to establish innovative independent media organisations. While these journalism leaders may have the knowledge and ability to produce excellent content, they may lack some of the skills and experience to manage an organisation, develop revenue models and coordinate teams in challenging social and economic contexts.

Incubator for independent media in Turkey

To date,

77 people

have taken part in our Incubator programme.

The Guardian Foundation has been working with a local partner NewsLabTurkey to provide opportunities for Turkish media professionals and organisations. They are supported to develop new journalism projects with mini-grants, training and resources in a four-year [Incubator for Independent Media programme](#). In 2023/24, we expanded our reach to ten towns in Turkey where we had not given support previously.

Explained: the challenge in Turkey

90% of the media is currently under government control (RSF, 2024)

With most of the media under government control and journalists facing prosecution and censorship, independent journalism that offers alternative perspectives is urgently in need of support and resources in Turkey.

“

Tiny pockets of independent journalism are trying their best to carry on with free, unbiased reporting and commentary [...] press freedom is still being suffocated by government censorship, lawsuits and criminal investigations.”

Murat, Journalist in Turkey

Knowledge exchange week

Every year as part of the Incubator programme, Turkish media professionals with a range of backgrounds and experience come to London for a week of workshops and knowledge-sharing. Professionals from the Guardian, Financial Times, Doncopolitan, Bristol Cable, Tortoise Media and other media organisations also attend the week, creating a collaborative and hopeful atmosphere.

The exchange of ideas over the week gives attendees a chance to reflect on the needs and future opportunities for their newsrooms, and to further the sustainability and resilience of independent media organisations in Turkey.

Case study

Transforming local media through reader engagement

Baha Okar, the owner of an independent local magazine in Seferihisar in western Turkey, took part in our knowledge exchange week.

“Before The Guardian Foundation’s knowledge exchange week in London, I must admit I was a bit anxious. As a journalist publishing a local magazine in a small town in Turkey, I wondered whether I could really benefit from the experiences of the Guardian, a well-established media organisation that operates on an international scale,” said Okar after attending the week.

However, Baha was inspired to trial new ways of engaging with loyal readers of his

magazine, Seferi Keçi, after learning that the Guardian still generates two-thirds of its total revenue from its readers: “[the Guardian] has established a lively and interactive relationship with its readers and doesn’t hesitate to ask them to contribute to its independent journalism. Why can’t Seferi Keçi, a local news organisation that has direct relationships with its readers, do this?”

When Baha returned to Turkey, he organised events focused on



locally relevant issues such as agriculture and climate activism. His session on community journalism also inspired him to think about how his community can support his content, and how they can collaborate on producing stories together.

He has also spoken about alternative business models at a network for local journalists from across Turkey. The interest he received meant he was able to share his own learnings even further and support other media.



Media based on a community, making people's voices heard, remains the most effective tool for bringing about positive change. So this is the port to which we have set sail – and my visit to the Guardian made me feel we will eventually get there."

Influencing and educating with digital content

Another element of the Incubator programme is NewsLabTurkey’s online educational content, including a research hub dedicated to conducting research on the future of journalism.

The programme's educational content reaches, on average, 1 million people annually.

This provides an open space for much needed discussions, research and commentary on Turkey’s media environment. Their research is already having an impact on media education in Turkey: four research reports produced by the Research Hub have been added to university curricula.





Regional academy

The Incubator's regional academy ensures that journalists outside of Turkey's urban centres, where communities are often underserved by news providers, have access to the training they need to thrive. Topics are grounded in running a sustainable digital news operation, including podcast production, revenue models, video journalism and newsroom management. 84% of participants said their skills had improved after taking part, and they told us how valuable making connections to other journalists was.

Long term impact

A central part of the Incubator is the mini-grants and support offered to around 24 participants each year. Over the last four years, we've seen these projects grow, engage audiences in new ways and secure the future of their independent journalism with new funding and revenue.

One participant, Munzur Press, started covering local stories about health, education and climate change around Turkey in 2020. Their challenges included consistent funding and staff retention, which they hoped to address through the programme. The support they received gave them the time and training to trial different funding models and secure further grants. They have since launched podcasts in Turkish, Kurdish and Zazaki.

Zazaki News was started from scratch during their participation in the Incubator. It aims to provide native language content to Zazaki speakers and increase visibility of the language. Taking part in the programme allowed them to establish the digital skills to start a website and social media accounts to reach their audiences. They now receive weekly contributions from four reporters and gain income through advertising and grants. A recent grant has enabled them to hire a full-time reporter. Their next goal is to diversify their content to include podcasts and video and to open an office.

Mentoring in a conflict zone

7 journalists from the Kyiv Independent have received mentoring from staff across the Guardian.



We continue to support the Kyiv Independent as they navigate the ongoing challenges and consequences of war in Ukraine. After establishing themselves just a few months before the full-scale invasion, they responded quickly to survive the sudden changes.

An ongoing partnership has been established between Kyiv Independent and Guardian editors, to exchange best practices, discuss shared challenges and gain advice on different working approaches to strengthen the young newsroom.

By encouraging agile support with involvement from journalists and media managers responsible for reader revenues at all levels, not just at the top, we helped foster lasting connections that have made a difference. The Kyiv Independent said that they have generated more supporter revenue as a result, that they were able to avoid pitfalls and improve the management of their newsroom more broadly.

We are now seeking funding to expand this model to other organisations facing similar challenges.





Financial summary

Financial activities	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total for 2023/24	Total for 2022/23
Income	£1,166,790	£750,436	£1,917,226	£1,420,716
Expenditure	(£1,043,020)	(£781,233)	(£1,824,253)	(£1,305,029)
Funds movement	£123,770	(£30,797)	£92,973	£115,687
Total funds brought forward	£216,986	£233,907	£450,893	£335,206
Total funds carried forward	£340,756	£203,110	£543,866	£450,893

Balance sheet	2023/24	2022/23
Debtors	£73,904	£68,490
Cash at bank and in hand	£576,116	£448,117
Gross assets	£650,020	£516,607
Creditors: amount falling due within one year	(£106,154)	(£65,714)
Net assets	£543,866	£450,893

Please refer to our annual report and financial statements for more detail.

Your support

Our volunteers, friends and funders help us make a difference to the media literacy of children and young people, empower underrepresented and aspiring journalists, and support media organisations working in difficult contexts. We could not do our work without them.

Thank you to our funders

We rely on the generosity of our funders to continue our world-leading programmes. We are immensely grateful for their support.

The Scott Trust

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George Cadbury Fund

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And to all the individuals who have made a donation in 2023/24.

Thank you to our partners

The Guardian

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National Literacy Trust

NewsLabTurkey

Oliver Wyman LLC

PSHE Association

University of Birmingham

University of Liverpool

And to all individuals who supported us with their expertise free of charge in 2023/24.

Support us

Donate

Donations help us to grow our work, like expanding our support to more media organisations producing independent journalism in countries where press freedom is under threat. Scan the QR code to make a one-off or regular donation.



Volunteering

We are always looking for journalists and other media professionals to support our programmes. Email info@theguardianfoundation.org to find out more.

Our purpose is to promote global press freedom and access to liberal journalism.

By engaging with audiences and educators, in schools and communities, our media literacy work tackles disinformation, enhancing people's ability to critically evaluate news. Through training, mentorship, bursaries and career guidance, we facilitate opportunities for people from underrepresented backgrounds to use their voice and agency and be included in the media. By collaborating with fellow journalists and news organisations operating in areas that challenge their viability, we foster their capacity to engage people with fact-based journalism.

Contact us

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