

Our consortium has extensive experience in implementing robust value for money strategies across our projects. We will use the 4E approach to ensure that value for money is prioritised and monitored at all levels of the programme.

Economy: An economical approach involves minimising costs and inputs, while maintaining the ability to deliver high quality outputs. During the inception phase, we will design and apply value for money economy indicators and maximise value for money over the lifetime of the contract in relation to:

- **Consultancy fees** – leveraging existing regional Baltics networks and using local experts for the majority of the delivery; and using experts with cross-cutting knowledge to reduce the number of consultants required.
- **Salaries and costs** – delivering a competitive fee rate budget from our CSSF rate card, with discounting where possible; and controlling and managing reimbursable costs.
- **Operational set-up** – using competitive, quality-assured procurement and due diligence processes (e.g. obtaining multiple quotes and sourcing locally) to maximise value for money across our supply chains.

Efficiency: Ensuring efficiency will involve: examining the systems, tools and methods used at the corporate, country, and project level; implementing robust management and monitoring systems; and incorporating quality assurance measures to generate better overall results and outcomes by reducing inefficiencies. Our approach includes:

- A streamlined management structure to minimise overheads and maximise the funding available for on-the-ground media development activities.
- A core delivery team ready to immediately deliver– Zinc, Thomson Reuters Foundation, British Council, and Baltics Centre for Media Excellence (BCME) employees – are already in place across the Baltics and the UK, meaning we are able to start the inception phase immediately, and with reduced operational set-up costs.
- An appropriate balance of international and national teams that capitalises on our extensive pool of Baltics contacts and partners to respond flexibly to FCO requirements.
- Capitalising on the emerging hub of digitally-led innovation and start-up growth in the Baltics, connecting media outlets with young digital talent and technologies which can extend audience share and reduce platform costs.

Added Value: Our consortium will maximise value for money by avoiding duplication with, and adding value to, existing projects. Including by: cross-referring investigative journalists to Zinc's Open Information Partnership for training; building media campaigns around the British Council's People to People Cultural Engagement programme, and; drawing on the Content Factory's high-quality Russian language shows to augment PSB On-Demand services.

Effectiveness: The mechanisms for promoting the effectiveness of the programme have been considered throughout our bidding process and will be reviewed during the inception phase. This will include an in-depth scoping exercise on programmes facilitated through other funding mechanisms and those by in-country civil society organisations. Activities will be monitored throughout the programme to feed back data into the delivery of the programme. This analysis has a direct focus on results and will best illustrate the value for money of the consortium. When considering effectiveness, we will balance investment in less complex and easily quantifiable interventions with investment in more innovative solutions to reach more vulnerable audiences. Our approach to meet and exceed expectations will include:

- Designing a robust Monitoring and Evaluation system to measure the effectiveness of the interventions and adaptive programme management structure to enable real-time change.
- Drawing on international best practice, such as Public Sector Broadcaster (PSB) crowdsourcing creativity models (e.g. BBC 3), which are proven to reduce costs and expand reach of both PSBs and influencers.
- Designing effective communication channels to disseminate and share best practice (e.g. enabling Embassies and partner governments to feed in and review project activities at the right time, and in the right way).
- Designing sustainable interventions to generate benefits beyond the lifetime of the programme (e.g. due diligence to ensure that we invest selectively in media outlets that have potential for sustainable growth).
- Building networks and collaborations to enable beneficiaries to share costs; learn from each other and cross-pollinate and benefit from each other's audiences. We will help beneficiaries to develop competitive, sustainable business models, with a focus on developing resilient, efficient supply chains in response to lessons learnt.

Added Value: To drive value for money in ongoing platform costs, we will invest in a Content Management System (CMS) to enable outlets to shared resources, branding, advertising and content assets. This is an evidence-based approach to creating commercially-sustainable local media through shared resourcing (e.g. *News Templ* is a news site constructor enabling website creation using 7 editable templates themes and 14 compatible plugins).

Equity will be placed at the core of the programme. During the inception phase, our analysis of equity will consider the needs of Baltic audiences who would benefit from this programme the most. Our approach will incorporate:

- Using technical expertise within our team to ensure that the design, approach and analysis undertaken carefully considers the rights and needs of specific groups (e.g. gender, age, disability, conflict-affected populations, etc.).
- Prioritising interventions and activities that demonstrate our capacity to target and empower women, young and old people and marginalised individuals and groups in the region.
- Implementing resilience-building activities which address the key barriers and risks faced by women and minority groups in the media sector, including harassment, threats of sexualised violence, abuse and online trolling.
- Embedding inclusivity into our recruitment, procurement and partner and beneficiary selection process.
- Using disaggregated data to continuously refine our approach to ensure that our project outcomes are equitably distributed among those most in need.