

Official Development Assistance Germany Grants

Call for Applications

Open date: 18 November 2025

Closing date: 8 January 2026, 17:00 CET

The [European Journalism Centre](#) (EJC) has launched the ODA Germany Grants Call to support journalistic projects being delivered by individuals or teams of freelance and/or staff journalists and by content creators on the topic of German 'Official Development Assistance'. This support will be allocated during three call for applicant rounds in 2025 - 2026.

Purpose: The ODA Germany Grants Call is a project that delivers grant funding and a bilingual handbook (DE/EN) on best practices for reporting on development cooperation.

Mission: To support explanatory and deep-dive journalism to improve the quality, visibility, and influence of journalism focused on Germany's foreign aid, thereby fostering a more informed public discourse and enabling evidence-based policymaking in one of the world's top ODA contributors.

This Call for Applications is providing grants of up to €15,000, with a minimum of €5,000 and a maximum of €15,000. The Call is aimed at staff and freelance journalists, and at content creators, publishing with opinion-forming media organisations that are based in and/or have significant reach to audiences in Germany.

Projects that are grounded in explanatory journalism and deep-dive reporting that have a strong emphasis on data-driven journalism, solutions journalism, and social media are encouraged to apply.

The Official Development Assistance Germany Grants call is supported by Gates Foundation.

Objectives of the Programme

1. Identify and fund up to 30 projects from Germany that can efficiently execute and fully produce ODA-related development journalism stories within a 6-month time period:
 - a. reveal new information
 - b. focus on under-reported subjects/ concepts and/or on different angles of already-reported subjects/ concepts
 - c. highlight:
 - i. target country priorities (Germany)
 - ii. how these priorities influence the scope and impact of Germany's Official Development Assistance
 - iii. how these priorities impact development assistance on a global scale
 - d. inform and encourage empathy across audiences in the target country
 - e. result in real-world action/ impact by decision makers and stakeholders
2. Produce a free bilingual handbook (DE/EN) on best practices for reporting on development cooperation.

Brief overview

Grant funding

Each of the funded media organisations/ freelance teams / individuals will be awarded up to €15,000 to help them deliver one journalism project comprising a 6-month reporting period.

Eligible story formats

- Print, web, audio (visual), video, multimedia, data stories
- Explanatory/deep-dive reports, series, or cross-platform collaborations
- Data visualisation stories, social media explainers, and a solutions-oriented approach are encouraged.

Thematic Scope

Funded stories should focus on how Germany's development assistance is used, its impact, and the consequences of its structure and/or decline.

Stories should explore the role of Germany's development assistance in:

- Disease prevention and vaccination access
- Health systems (e.g. HIV, malaria),
- Food security and climate adaptation
- Migration
- Declining and/or shifting global ODA trends and their impact
- Aid effectiveness, transparency, and accountability
- Innovative financing, multilateral mechanisms
- Ground-up perspectives from low and middle-income countries
- ODA role for German / regional security and more broadly for the stability of societies and for economic development

Selection Criteria

- Originality and relevance of the topic
- Underreported themes or fresh angles
- Evidence-based and ethical reporting
- Collaboration with non-European partners or local journalists (bonus)
- Audience reach, both on and off the page
- Impact potential (measured via engagement, reach, and influence): Grantees must publish or broadcast their work in German media outlets. They are encouraged to explore wider dissemination opportunities, including collaborations with international media organisations and innovative platforms.
- Emphasis on data, context, and solutions

Application Requirements

- Proposal (story pitch + approach)
- Budget breakdown
- Measuring impact

- Letters of interest from media partners (for freelance / consortium)
- Samples of previous work

Support Provided

1. Grant funding (flexible use: travel, data acquisition, expert fees, publication costs)
2. Community of practice

Publication & Visibility

- Grantees are responsible for pitching and publishing their work.
- Stories will be aggregated on a dedicated project page on ejc.net.
- The EJC will integrate a recurring feature or interview slot within its existing newsletter and digital channels to highlight selected grantees and their published work, amplify visibility, and contribute to storytelling impact.

Monitoring, Reporting & Impact

- Short progress reports
- Final impact report: reach metrics, learnings, challenges
- Encourage shared learning between grantees

In-depth overview

Eligibility to apply

Applicants meeting the following criteria are eligible to apply:

1. Media organisations or freelance (teams) with one Lead Applicant
2. Lead applicants must be opinion-forming media organisations or individuals or teams that publish with opinion-forming media organisations that are based in and/or have significant reach to audiences in Germany
3. Lead applicants should be signed up to a press regulator, trust initiative, or part of a press association
4. The Lead Applicant must complete, in full, the dedicated online application form and a project budget
5. The Lead Applicant must have a bank account that accepts international payments

Lead applicants must not,

6. be state-controlled. For the purpose of this Programme, state-controlled refers to editorial control by a government, which takes direct forms (e.g. through editorial guidelines or ownership structures) or indirect forms (e.g. state-controlled advertising revenue)
 - Organisations that can prove editorial independence through processes, statutes or external assessment are eligible
7. be state-funded. For the purpose of this Programme, state-funded refers to the direct funding of public service media organisations (whether state-owned or a private non-profits)
 - Organisations indirectly supported through tax reductions or exemptions and/or favourable rates for public utilities are eligible
 - Organisations that receive direct disbursements, or subsidisation of costs, are eligible
 - Organisations that have received COVID-19 support grants from governments are eligible
8. be a news aggregator
9. be an organisation that is not a publisher of their own original journalism
10. be directly funded by, directed by, financially invested in by or affiliated with a political party or political activist group, religious or church group or diocese
11. discriminate based on race, gender, gender identity, faith, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability

Conditions of the Grant

Reporting and publishing requirements

12. The scope and impact of Germany's Official Development Assistance as explained in the thematic scope must be the focus of the reporting.
13. The funded project must be published in German.
14. The published project can be either one comprehensive long-form story OR a story series comprising a 6-month reporting period.
15. The stories can be published in any format or a mix of formats, including print, web, audio(visual), video, multimedia, data visualisation stories.
16. Sponsored content, advocacy for a particular solution or single organisation or individual is not eligible

Copyright and distribution requirements

17. Once each story has been published, EJC might further distribute it via the EJC website and/or social channels
18. Lead applicants retain copyright in all productions
19. Publication under a Creative Commons Licence is encouraged in order to allow for global and free access. All original data generated or collected must be made reusable for other stories and investigations
20. Stories must be published under a universal open access policy, therefore, they cannot be published behind paywalls and must be freely accessible to an online audience
21. It is allowed to add advertisements
22. Organisations are required to state that their reporting is receiving support through this Programme and the Partners (details of this will be provided in the Grant Agreement).
- 23.

How to use the Grant

24. You may apply for full funding, or partial funding to top-up existing editorial budgets
25. The Grant may be used to cover direct costs that are related to creating, promoting, producing and editing the project
26. Expenses depend on what is necessary and appropriate for the project and can include:
 - proportional share of fees and salaries

- i. These should be at market rate and be a reasonable percentage of the overall budget
 - o cost of other expert/ specialist fees, including but not limited to photo- and videographers, graphic designers, data specialists, subject experts etc
 - o travel and accommodation costs and other expenses for international trips
 - o expenses for local partners
 - o technical costs to hire project-specific equipment or crew
 - o access to professional databases or original data gathering efforts
 - o renting of equipment for production and post-production work..

The Grant can not be used for...

- 27. costs that took place prior to the Grant Agreement being signed or for previously published work
- 28. indirect costs (overheads)
- 29. purchases of equipment, machines, real-estate, general-purpose software licences
- 30. bribes or otherwise unethical, illegal and undocumented expenses
- 31. activities violating the privacy of individuals
- 32. political campaigns or lobbying activities.

Financial, legal and output requirements of the Grant

- 33. Grantees will be asked to record progress, learnings, user data metrics and impact achieved and report it at the end of the Programme. This information (as well as the information provided in Grantees' applications) may be published along with other intelligence and data generated by the Programme Partners for the purposes of informing the end-of-Programme evaluation, and sharing learnings with other practitioners and the wider industry. All business-sensitive information will be anonymised before being published publicly
 - o Templates and instructions will be provided to Grantees
- 34. Grantees will be required to read, complete and agree to the Grant Agreement including annexes, EJC policies and Terms and Conditions
- 35. The Lead Applicant' who is completing and submitting an application on behalf of their organisation or team, should also be the person who will execute and have overall responsibility for their participation in the Programme

36. Grantees will be accountable for all expenses, which must be justified by keeping copies of receipts and invoices of all project-related costs and providing a financial report(s)
37. Grants are not considered for a supply and are a non-business activity that falls outside the scope of VAT. Grants include all and any taxes for which Grantees may be liable, and Grantees are responsible for their own tax declarations.

Grantees will have access to the EJC team delivering the Programme in order to seek ad-hoc guidance and support as necessary, for example where Grantees are delayed in delivering their objectives or facing barriers to utilising the Grant funding on the objectives they originally proposed at application.

Criteria for selection

The applications awarded funding will need to meet the eligibility criteria and conditions of the Grant (as described above) and will also be short listed, by an independent jury on the basis of the best/ most compelling match to the following criteria:

1. The application clearly demonstrates
 - how the story series is relevant to the thematic scope of the Call for Applications
 - which subjects/ concepts and/or which angles the story will focus on
 - how the story is linked to ODA Germany
 - what the aims of the project are and how the Grantee(s) will measure and meet these aims
 - what new information the story will reveal
 - which under-reported subjects/ concepts and/or which different angles of already-reported subjects/ concepts the story will focus on
2. There is capacity and ability by the applicant/ team to execute their project quickly and proficiently, and within the indicated timeframes.
3. The application demonstrates good technical knowledge, evidence-based research and strategic planning by the applicant/ team.
4. The project budget and indicated costs are realistic, necessary and appropriate for the project, and the individual/ organisation/ team delivering the project.
5. The required policy/ procedure/ supporting documents are:
 - up to date

- easily accessible and predominantly displayed on the applicant's website
 - clearly and accurately reflect other information provided in the application.
6. There is an ability and willingness to share ideas, experiences and learnings with the other grantees that will be participating in the Call.

How to apply

Applications must be received via the EJC's [online application platform](#) by 8 January 2026, 17:00 CET. Creating an account is free of charge. Applications must be completed in English but supporting documents that are provided by weblink or upload can be in applicant's native language.

The EJC will administer grant awards independently from Gates Foundation.

Successful applicants will be notified by 26 January 2026. We can not commit to notifying unsuccessful applicants should we receive a high number of applications.