

Call for Trainers: Podcast Storytelling and Production for Independent Media

Terms of Reference

1. Background

DW Akademie is seeking experienced podcast trainers to design and deliver an online or offline capacity-building program for independent media organizations participating in the SustainMedia II – Strengthening Economic Sustainability and Innovation of Independent Media in the Western Balkans project.

The training program aims to strengthen the editorial and technical capacities of media professionals to develop engaging, audience-oriented podcast formats that support public-interest journalism and contribute to audience growth and content diversification. Through a combination of storytelling techniques, production skills, and practical exercises, participants will gain the knowledge required to design, produce, and publish high-quality podcast content tailored to different audiences.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to design and deliver an interactive online or offline training program that equips journalists and media professionals with practical podcast production skills, from concept development and storytelling to recording, production, and publishing across different environments and platforms.

3. Scope of the Training

The selected trainers will jointly design and deliver a three-day online or offline training program combining presentations, demonstrations, practical exercises, peer learning, and individual feedback.

The program should provide participants with practical knowledge and hands-on experience covering the complete podcast production workflow, while allowing sufficient flexibility for trainers to integrate their own methodologies and examples.

The training is expected to cover, among others, the following thematic areas:

Module 1 – Podcast Storytelling and Editorial Development

(Storytelling, editorial planning, identifying podcast concepts, audience needs, content planning, scripting, interviewing techniques, developing engaging narratives, podcast formats, adapting content for different audiences.)

Module 2 – Podcast Production

(Studio recording, field recording, mobile podcast production, equipment selection, sound quality, editing workflows, production planning, publishing, distribution, and technical quality standards.)

Module 3 – Audience Development and Practical Production

(Podcast branding, audience engagement, content promotion, practical production exercises, review of participant productions, editorial feedback, and recommendations for sustainable podcast development.)

4. Tasks

The selected trainers will be expected to:

- jointly design and deliver a three-day interactive online or offline training program on podcast production;
- develop a training concept combining theoretical input with practical exercises and collaborative learning methods;
- provide expert input on podcast storytelling, editorial planning, studio production, and field production;
- introduce different podcast formats and approaches for reaching diverse audiences;
- facilitate practical exercises, group work, and feedback sessions;
- review participant assignments and monitor participant progress throughout the program;
- ensure a hands-on, practice-oriented learning environment;
- coordinate closely with the DW Akademie project team and fellow trainers before and during the implementation of the training.

5. Expected Trainer Profile

DW Akademie intends to contract up to four trainers for this assignment.

Applicants should demonstrate:

- proven professional experience in journalism, storytelling, and podcast production;
- practical experience in both studio-based and field podcast production;
- strong understanding of podcast formats, editorial development, and audience-focused content creation;
- experience producing content for different target audiences and digital platforms;
- demonstrated experience designing and delivering interactive trainings or workshops;
- strong facilitation, mentoring, and coaching skills;
- experience working with capacity-building programs;

- good understanding of the media landscape in the Western Balkans;
- excellent command of English.
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Knowledge of Albanian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (BCS), Macedonian, or Montenegrin is considered a strong asset.

Previous experience working with DW Akademie or similar international media development organizations is an advantage.

6. Duration

- Training format: Online or Offline
- Training duration: 3 training days
- Preparation: Up to 2 preparation days
- Implementation period: September – November 2026

7. Deliverables

The selected trainers will provide:

- a detailed training concept and agenda;
- training materials and practical exercises;
- delivery of the three online or offline training sessions;
- recommendations for further participant development where appropriate;
- Reporting on trainings.

8. Application

Interested applicants should submit:

- a short letter of interest (maximum one page);
- a CV highlighting relevant experience in podcast production and training;
- examples of relevant podcast productions and/or previous training experience;
- a financial offer indicating the proposed daily rate.

Applications should be submitted to:

dw-akademie.western.balkans@dw.com

Subject line: Application – Podcast Storytelling and Production Trainers – SustainMedia II

Deadline: ~~21st of August 2026 17:00 CET~~

31st of August 2026 17:00 CET