**Grant for Media Organizations to enhance Pre-publication Fact-checking Capabilities**

The Free Press Unlimited, in collaboration with Arab Fact-Checkers Network (AFCN) from Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ), is implementing a programme called “Core Support for Independent Media in the Southern Neighbourhood” funded by the European Union.

The main objective of this programme is to provide comprehensive bespoke core support to pluralism, independence, and resilience of the media sector in the Southern Neighbourhood to withstand existing threats.

The grant is designed to support media organisations in enhancing their pre-publication fact-checking capabilities, thereby promoting accountable and trusted journalism in the region.

**Aims**

* The overall strategy of the programme aims to:
	+ Improve sector capacities to safely produce and share more high-quality content within and outside the Southern Neighbourhood.
	+ Improve business viability and resilience among the independent media outlets in the Southern Neighbourhood.
	+ Strengthen existing regional networks to more efficiently convene communities of practice in the Southern Neighbourhood.

**Areas of Focus**

* **Area 1 - Secondment of a fact-checker**
	+ The grant will facilitate the integration of pre-publication fact-checking procedures into the editorial processes.
	+ An Arab fact-checker will be selected from the MENA region (based on the location of the organisation) through a pre-selection process conducted by the AFCN team and experts, to work with the organization on-site at their office and online.
	+ ARIJ/AFCN will provide coaching and mentorship to ensure a smooth and productive collaboration between the media organization and the seconded fact-checker.
	+ The process will be executed through the ARIJ - AFCN Marketplace, promoting cross-functional opportunities between media organizations and fact-checkers.
* **Area 2 - Capacity Building**
	+ Media organizations will present proposals for capacity-building initiatives focused on combating misinformation and enhancing fact-checking skills.
	+ ARIJ/AFCN will offer three spots for interested organisations to participate in its fact-checking workshop, held in conjunction with the 16th Annual Forum. In addition, ARIJ/AFCN will cover registration fees for media organizations interested in sending representatives to attend ARIJ 16th annual forum in Amman, Jordan between Dec 1 and 3.
* **Area 3 - Operational Support**
	+ This area focuses on supporting the operational costs, fostering a mindset that recognizes the importance of fact-checking before publication. Operational costs may include travel and logistics to approved events, tools and subscriptions, and editorial support for members/departments working with the seconded fact-checker.

**Funding Information**

* Within the framework of this programme and on the occasion of the International Day for Universal Access to Information 2023, a grant of 20,000 EURO maximum will be available for each media outlet who wins the tender.

**Geographic Region**

* This grant will be awarded to three media organisations operating in the MENA region, specifically targeting the following Arab countries: Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.