



The media sector calls for a dedicated funding scheme to support innovation and creativity in Europe

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Two leading EU-funded media projects, [I3](#) and [MediaRoad](#), gathered representatives from the European Parliament, European Commission and media organisations to discuss the challenges facing media innovation and the need for a common programme within the next European Financial Framework. The event was hosted and supported by **MEP Dr. Christian Ehler**, co-chair of the **Intergroup of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)**.

During the debate, the sector highlighted its needs to foster media research and innovation in Europe and ensure its competitiveness, jointly calling for a **dedicated funding programme integrating technology innovation and creativity in Europe**.

By creating an open and horizontal **innovation scheme**, the EU could bridge the existing gaps between technological innovation, creative content production and R&D. This would be essential to nourish know-how and skills in Europe, to accelerate the transition from ideas to commercial implementation, to attract young creatives and technology experts and benefit the users. Overall, such a scheme will ensure that European media can thrive in today's rapidly shifting media landscape.

Dr. Christian Ehler, Member of the European Parliament, stressed: *“CCIs and especially the media promise breakthroughs, potentials and are full of surprises for new ideas. They have to be able to profit from the benefits of research like any other industry. I can promise you that they will be the most promising addition to the new research framework program (Horizon Europe) to be made.”*

Indeed, according to the evidence collected by I3 through its consultation with more than 100 stakeholders, the media and creative sector is not sufficiently supported by EU funding programmes. In particular, the majority of participants asked to devote additional economic resources to the sector, to explore innovative business models for the industry, and to boost the support for technological innovation applied to content verification, data-driven content production, AI and accessibility services for media. More detailed findings from the I3 project can be found in the CSAs Joint Whitepaper to be published in September, while MediaRoad will present the results of its consultation in a *‘Vision Paper on the Future of Innovation in Media’* to be published in June.

Dr Hans Hoffmann, EBU's Senior Manager in Media Technology and Innovation emphasised: *“In Europe, we need well-resourced collaboration in media technology research. Programmes that provide effective ways for creatives and technology enthusiasts to create innovations and test them quickly in the market for both B2B and B2C audiences. MediaRoad is a recent programme that points into the right direction, by creating Sandboxes allowing participants to collaborate and innovate across Europe - like in a European-wide MediaLab - and we need more of these initiatives”.*

Andrea Nicolai, President of T6 Ecosystems stated *“Looking at the state of the art, resources for the media sector are too widely allocated and distributed in the framework. Technology innovation needs*



to line up with culture and the creative industries to nurture a more competitive European industry. I3 has identified major industry issues to address and we are looking forward to supporting new collaborations in media innovation research”

Only by aligning media initiatives and working together, will it possible to achieve concrete results in terms of innovation and market positioning, creating a strong base to compete in a globally convergent market. Realising the importance of driving this change, MediaRoad and I3 have launched an open call to media and cultural stakeholders and European institutions to work together and commit to ensuring that the new financial framework will allow Europe to remain at the forefront of media innovation, quality and independence.

About the Media Road Project: European Media Ecosystem for Innovation

MediaRoad project aspires to reawaken a ‘start-up mentality’ in the media sector, reshaping the way organizations collaborate and deploy new ideas in the market. The European Broadcasting Union is leading a consortium in which some of Europe’s most prominent broadcasters (BBC, RAI, VRT, Association of European Radios) work alongside leading media research institutes (IRT, EPFL, IMEC) and independent producers (CEPI TV). Project partners are developing a long-term policy vision for the future of the audio-visual and radio sector, covering areas such as the EU research agenda, data, 5G, security, immersive media, investment and training.

About the i3-impact, innovate, invest- project

I3 – Impact Innovation Invest- co-financed by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Program. The project started in January 2016 and provides research projects under the call ICT 19-2015 of an integrated approach from research to market deployment. I3 identifies emerging, promising solutions in the European Convergence and Social Media research sector providing a self-assessment methodology. Then, the support action helps their makers to evaluate technology and business potential. The i3 ecosystem will help to connect and foster synergies with the market. Also, i3 engages the relevant stakeholders and provides the stage for a policy dialogue among main actors in the sector.