VOICES

Voices Awards 2024

Call for Entries

Focus: Media Literacy

About the Voices Awards

The **Voices Awards** are an annual international competition rewarding innovative ideas and changemakers around the topics of journalism and media literacy.

The Voices Awards are organised within the **Voices Festival**, a brand-new itinerant event co-funded by the European Commission to celebrate Journalism and Media Literacy in Europe.[1]

The Voices Festival has a European focus and aims to help create a European public sphere and change the way we perceive and engage with the media. It will serve as a platform for dialogue, connecting the dots between the press, media literacy advocates, and European citizens. This Festival adopts a dual focus because it delves into the evolving role of journalism within our rapidly changing media landscape while simultaneously supporting citizens in critically assessing information and navigating technology meaningfully.

The Voices Awards will recognize the works of journalists, teachers and media literacy advocates that best convey the values and goals of the Voices Festival.

The **Voices Awards for Media Literacy (ML)** comprises **five distinct categories[2]:**

1. **AI Trending Now:** clever ways to use Artificial Intelligence technology for ML
2. **Digital Well-Being**: nurture mindfulness to contribute to a healthier digital environment
3. **Digital Parenting & Generations**: media literacy initiatives to benefit parents, children, young and older people
4. **Empowering Citizens' Engagement and Participation**: initiatives to fight disinformation and election integrity
5. **ML Multipliers**: effective practices to replicate, multiply and transfer media literacy knowledge and skills.

The Voices Awards for Media Literacy will celebrate **5 remarkable achievements,** each with a **€1,000 monetary prize**.

The prizes are inclusive of the expenses to join the Voices Festival 2024 in Florence on 15-16 March 2024, where the winners will be publicly awarded.

The deadline for submissions is **11:59PM (CET) on January 31, 2024**.

For any questions, please contact the European Festival of Journalism and Media Literacy Secretariat at voices.festival@eui.eu

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[1] The Voices Festival is organised by a consortium led by the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom at the European University Institute together with prominent European organisations in the fields of journalism and media literacy: the European Federation of Journalists, the EBU-UER European Broadcasting Union, EAVI the European Association for Viewers Interests, Journalism et Citoyenneté, Lie Detectors, and Savoir*Devenir

[2] Definitions of these categories can be found on page 3 of this document, together with information on the eligibility and selection criteria.

Entry procedures for all categories

- All entries must be submitted **online** through the **application form** available at https://voicesfestival.eu/get-involved/
- Entries must be submitted in English. The material attached can be in any of the EU27 languages.
- Incomplete entries will not be considered.
- The entry may be submitted in one category only. In case of doubts, please contact the European Festival of Journalism and Media Literacy Secretariat at voices.festival@eui.eu
- Entries may not be submitted by the members of the Selection Committee nor the Voices Consortium.
- By submitting an entry, the applicant agrees to the processing and sharing of data in accordance with the EUI Privacy Policy.
- Receipt of an entry dossier will be acknowledged by an automated message Receipt of an entry dossier will be acknowledged by the European Festival of Journalism and Media Literacy Secretariat.

Definition of Media Literacy

According to the European Commission definition, Media Literacy is the ability to access, use, evaluate, create and share media content appropriately, including for participation in society[3]. It applies to all kinds of media. UNESCO defines media information literacy[4] as the knowledge and skills required to find, analyse, critically evaluate and generate information in various media and contexts.

General eligibility criteria for all entries

Entries for the Voices Awards may only be submitted from applicants legally residing or established in the 27 EU Member States.

Applicants may be natural persons or legal entities (public or private bodies).

Anonymous submissions will not be accepted.

Entries in all categories must demonstrate clearly how they contribute to building one or more media literacy properties[5] (access, use, critical thinking, participation), skills, attitudes and values to the final beneficiary.

Entries may refer to any traditional media such as TV, books, and radio or digital media (internet, mobile, AI, etc.). Any content, product or service, tools and resources can be the object of the initiative: Apps, websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, campaigns, publications, debates and so on.

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[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32007L0065
[4] https://shorturl.at/puvR0
[5] https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/library/studies/literacy-criteria-report_en.pdf

Awards Categories for Media Literacy

1 - AI Trending Now: clever ways to use Artificial Intelligence technology in Media Literacy

Purpose

This category will reward initiatives that are using media and technology, and especially Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications, in a clever way to tackle effectively ML-related needs and domains. Entries should demonstrate how creatively using existing tech tools, software, and AI apps and programmes can result in making ML activities more effective and impactful.

Eligibility Criteria

- Entries may be submitted by individuals, team groups, schools or organisations showing how **AI was used to constitute new projects or enhance the effectiveness of an existing one.**
- Entries should demonstrate the creative use of AI, media and technology to enhance ML efforts;
- Entries must have been implemented within the last two years from the publication of this call;
- Entries should align with the goals and principles of ML (including so-called AI literacy) as described above, and applicants must clearly show how their initiative builds ML skills, attitudes and values.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Personal references and/or references to the work are welcomed;
- Any documents, links, videos or other useful information to assess the entry.

Selection Criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- **Relevance**: Explain how your project aligns with the specific ML-related needs and domains it targets. Briefly describe your initiative or project that leverages media and AI technology to address media literacy needs and domains. Include details about the innovative use of tech tools, software, apps, or any other technologies to enhance the effectiveness and impact of ML activities.
- **Innovation and Sustainability**: Explain how your initiative demonstrates a clever and creative use of AI media and technology to address ML needs. Outline concise plans for the sustainability and scalability of your AI initiative use in ML, if applicable.
- **Impact and Effectiveness**: Describe the impact of your initiative, including any measurable outcomes or improvements achieved. Detail how your project effectively addresses ML-related challenges and contributes to the broader goals of media literacy.

- **Ethical Standards and Public Interest:** Describe how your initiative adheres to ethical standards and promotes ethical behaviour in the context of ML.

2 - Digital Well-Being category: nurture life skills and mindfulness to contribute to a healthier digital environment

Purpose

This category recognises initiatives promoting digital well-being, using media to reduce stress and anxiety, experience calm and clarity and show care for others, encourage meaningful interactions between individuals, nurture mindfulness and creativity, raise individual awareness, and promote positive media usage. It may also be related to any of the following non-inclusive ML physical and mental health-related issues: stereotypes, hate speech, cyberbullying, privacy, surveillance and screen addiction.

The initiatives may, for instance, demonstrate how to develop better reflexes, gain more control over digital devices, social media and games, improve the quality of time spent online, or make better quality human connections.

Eligibility Criteria

- Entries should show how media can be used to help people feel better or mitigate the risks of its abuse.
- Entries should align with ML's goals, principles values and ethical standards.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Personal references and/or references to the work are welcomed;
- Any documents, links, videos or other useful information to assess the entry.

Selection Criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- **Relevance:** Explain how your initiative actively promotes good digital use. Describe how your project demonstrates care, encourages meaningful interactions, and benefits individuals' well-being in online spaces.
- **Awareness and Mindfulness**: Detail how your initiative addresses emotional and health aspects. How it nurtures mindfulness, or developing attention to what matters most, and how it raises personal awareness or connects people in the context of digital well-being and ML issues.
- **Impact and Scalability**: Describe the measurable impact the initiative has had so far. Does the initiative make its resources and tools accessible to a diverse and wide-reaching audience? Can it be adapted and fit for scalability?
- **Ethical Standards and Public Interest:** Describe how your initiative adheres to ethical standards and promotes ethical behaviour.

3 - Digital Parenting & Generations: media literacy initiatives to benefit parents, children, young and older people

Purpose

This category seeks to recognise and celebrate creative, far-reaching, and scalable initiatives that demonstrate effectiveness in the realms of digital parenting and media literacy. These initiatives aim to bring benefits to parents and children. They may encompass a wide spectrum of relevant activities, including but not limited to online campaigns, educational resources, debates, and other impactful endeavours.

Alternatively, entries may aim to spotlight efforts that effectively bridge the digital generation gap and empower individuals of all ages to navigate the digital landscape more confidently and competently.

Eligibility Criteria

- Entries must have been implemented within the last three years from the publication of this call;
- Entries should demonstrate a measurable and positive impact on people in either of one of their capacities of parents, children, young or older people;
- Entries should have the potential for scalability, meaning they can be expanded or adapted to reach a broader audience or address different demographics.
- Entries should adhere to ethical standards and promote responsible digital behaviour.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Personal references and/or references to the work are welcomed;
- Any documents, links, videos or other useful information to assess the entry.

Selection Criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- **Relevance**: Initiatives should be related to digital parenting and media literacy as described and aligned with internationally recognised concepts pertaining to digital parenting and intergenerational digital gaps.
- **Impact** and Effectiveness on Parents and Children: Describe the measurable impact the initiative has had on parents and children in terms of their media literacy skills, attitudes and values. If applicable, please explain how the initiative effectively bridges the digital generation gap and empowers individuals of all ages to navigate the digital landscape more confidently and competently. To what extent has the initiative effectively addressed the challenges and goals of digital parenting or affected young or older people?
- **Scalability**: Does the initiative have the potential for scalability, and if so, how can it be expanded or adapted for a broader impact?
- **Ethical Standards and Public Interest:** Describe how your initiative adheres to ethical standards and promotes ethical behaviour.

4 - Empowering Citizens' Engagement and Participation: initiatives to encourage participation, fight disinformation and protect election integrity

Purpose

This category seeks to recognise and celebrate initiatives that empower citizens, including in their roles as voters, contributing to enhancing their engagement and participation in the respective online communities and in public life. These initiatives may encompass a range of efforts, including but not limited to counter-narrative disinformation strategies, using alternative media, initiatives promoting election integrity and fighting biased propaganda, including during electoral periods. We are looking for initiatives that contribute to empowering citizens to be well-informed, active, and engaged participants in the digital landscape.

Activities may include activists' online campaigns with a strong focus on civic participation, tools and platforms designed to foster citizenship, projects that creatively address the challenges posed by disinformation and biased propaganda or any other endeavours that align with the overarching goal of empowering citizens for active participation in public life.

Eligibility Criteria

- Entries should be submitted by passionate advocates, collaborative group efforts aimed at enhancing civic engagement or initiatives organised by educational institutions such as schools;
- The initiative must have been implemented within the last three years from the publication of this call;
- Entries should demonstrate the effective use of media to promote citizens' participation in public life, and applicants must clearly show how their initiative contributes to better communication and welfare and to be more capable of relating to one another for the common good.
- Entries should align with ML's goals and principles, especially regarding its participation dimension.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Personal references and/or references to the work are welcomed;
- Any documents, links, videos or other useful information to assess the entry.

Selection Criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- **Relevance:** Explain the relevance of the initiative in addressing peoples' participation issues related to civic engagement. Although it is not a requirement, you may also refer specifically to citizens' participation in elections. Other possibilities include building meaningful participation in movements of global concerns such as climate change, global peace or social inequalities;

- **Impactful Engagement and Effectiveness**: Describe the impact of your initiative. To what extent does the initiative effectively empower citizens to engage in their online communities and participate in public life? How does the initiative effectively address the challenges related to civic engagement, disinformation, and biased propaganda?
- **Scalability**: Does the initiative make its resources and tools accessible to a diverse and wide-reaching audience? What plans are in place to ensure the long-term sustainability and scalability of the initiative?
- **Ethical Standards and Public Interest:** Describe how your initiative adheres to ethical standards and promotes ethical behaviour in the context of MIL.

5 - MIL Multipliers: effective practices to replicate, multiply and transfer media literacy knowledge and skills

Purpose

This category is dedicated to recognising the most efficient practices demonstrated by teachers, teacher-trainers, librarians, journalists, and communities of practice in the realm of MIL. It highlights strategies contributing to replicating, multiplying, and transferring MIL knowledge and skills. These strategies may encompass a wide array of initiatives, such as media campaigns, massive online courses and other multiplier events. The goal is to identify and reward initiatives that excel in MIL and serve as exemplars for others seeking to promote MIL awareness and competence.

Eligibility

- Entries must be submitted by
    - teachers who have implemented highly effective MIL practices in their educational settings;
    - Teacher-trainers who have successfully equipped educators with MIL competencies;
    - Librarians who have facilitated MIL-related programs and resources;
    - Organisations who have contributed to MIL advocacy and awareness;
    - Any other community of practice dedicated to enhancing MIL knowledge and skills.
- Entries must have developed and implemented replicable MIL strategies, such as media campaigns, online courses, MIL caravans, and other multiplier events.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Personal references and/or references to the work are welcomed;
- Any documents, links, videos or other useful information to assess the entry.

Selection Criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- **Relevance**: Explain the relevance of the initiative's MIL practices in addressing current and pressing media and information literacy needs as those described above.
- **Efficiency and Impact**: To what extent has the initiative demonstrated efficiency in advancing MIL knowledge and skills, particularly in the context of replication, multiplication, and transfer? How does the initiative employ the strategies in promoting MIL awareness and competence? Describe the measurable impact of the initiative on MIL awareness and competence among its target audience.
- **Scalability and Transferability**: Does the initiative have the potential to be replicated? And if so, how can it be expanded to reach a wider audience? How effectively does the initiative facilitate the transfer of MIL knowledge and skills to other individuals and contexts?
- **Ethical Standards and Public Interest:** Describe how your initiative adheres to ethical standards and promotes ethical behaviour.

The Selection Process

- Preliminary screening of the entries against the eligibility criteria will be carried out by the Voices Festival Executive Committee, composed by representatives of the Voices consortium. The Executive Committee reserves the right to ask for additional supporting documents or information to verify the eligibility of the entries.
- Examination of the eligible entries and preparation of the shortlist for each category (up to 5 entries) for Media Literacy will be carried out by the Executive Committee chaired by the European Association for Viewers.
- The Selection Committee will evaluate the shortlisted entries and make the final selection of the award winners. The Selection Committee is composed of the Advisory Board members of the Voices Festival.[6]
- In case no entry meets the eligibility criteria or the quality selection criteria for a given category, the Selection Committee reserves the right not to award the category and award instead more than one in another category.
- Applicants will be informed of the decision of the Selection Committee via email by February 19, 2024.

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[6] The complete list of the Advisory Board members is available here https://voicesfestival.eu/about/

Award ceremony and visibility

- The award winners will receive a monetary award of €1.000 each.
- The public announcement of the award winners will be coordinated by the Voices Festival's Communication Team.
- The award winners will be celebrated during the first edition of the Voices Festival in Florence on 15-16 March 2024 (exact date TBC). The winners will have a dedicated space to present their work to the Festival community.
- The award winners will be contacted by the Voices Festival's Secretariat to arrange their participation in situ.
- The Voices team and its communication unit are committed to enhancing the visibility of awardees' work with ad-hoc communication activities throughout the project.