

## Call for Proposals

### Story Grants for Moroccan journalists to Report on the Mediterranean Sea



**EJN is offering reporting grants to journalists from Morocco interested in developing in-depth stories exposing the scale of unsustainable marine management and biodiversity loss in the Mediterranean Sea.**

*Please read the following sections carefully, as they contain important information on eligibility and the application process.*

**Deadline: 17 December 2022**

#### **Overview**

Today, with the total population of the Mediterranean countries estimated at around 512 million, and set to grow by another 180 million by 2050, the once abundant Mediterranean sea is at the center of an overfishing crisis. Increased fishing capacity has ultimately placed these waters under unsustainable pressure, leading to recent estimates that over 87% of assessed Mediterranean fish stocks are overfished. The decline of the overall health of the Med sea is disrupting the robustness of ecosystems, with an increasing number of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems being put

forward for regional protection to try to safeguard some of the legacy of the Med for future generations to enjoy.

Despite the startling statistics which have become synonymous with the Med crisis, not enough information is either being made available or easily accessible, resulting in a public that is largely unaware of the scale of the unfolding crisis. EJN is seeking to support journalists interested in learning more about these issues and wishing to report on them.

Launched in March 2022, the [Mediterranean Media Initiative](#) aims to build the capacity of journalists to produce independent reports on the current state of the Mediterranean Sea, cover solution-based approaches proposed through technology and citizen-led innovations and investigate criminality and corruption which is either transboundary in nature or within national waters.

With support from the Adessium Foundation, EJN is pleased to offer **story grants** for this first round of story grants to selected Moroccan journalists to report on overfishing and the biodiversity crisis in the Mediterranean region. In addition to funding, selected journalists will receive support from experienced mentors through the story production process.

## Story Themes

We welcome story ideas that focus on the following themes:

- Biodiversity loss in the Mediterranean Sea
- Endangered marine species
- Marine protected areas
- Marine pollution
- The deep sea
- Illegal and destructive fishing
- Destructive impact of bottom trawling
- Destructive fishing practices (trawling, nets, dynamite)
- Overfishing of species such as blackspot seabreams, European hake, blue and red shrimp, deep-water rose shrimp, sardines, anchovies, sardinellas, red mullets, Black Sea turbot, European eels and common dolphinfish as well as the impact of incidental catch of vulnerable species including sharks, seabirds and sea turtles

EJN is looking to receive proposals which highlight the impact of these practices on coastal communities, including the loss of sustainable livelihoods, the challenges of small-scale fishermen, the decline of valuable ecosystems and the loss of natural and cultural heritage.

We also welcome story proposals which highlight solutions or actions put forward by governments, commissions, local NGOs, fishing communities, as well as non-state actors and companies working on developments relating to AI and maritime surveillance, including the use of drone, satellite technology to help tackle the Med marine issues.

## Eligibility

Applicants must be based in Morocco.

Groups of journalists are eligible, however, the application must be made in the name of one lead applicant. Lead applicants are responsible for communicating with EJN and receiving funds on the group's behalf, if awarded.

For the purposes of this grant opportunity, we will only be accepting written applications in English or French. Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity to consider applications in other languages at this time. Applicants must either have a working understanding of English and French or have a translator available to assist with communication with Internews staff.

Applications are open to journalists working in any medium (online, print, television, radio) and other expert media practitioners with professional reporting experience. We welcome applications from early-career journalists and experienced reporters with a track record of environmental issues. We encourage applications from freelance reporters and staff from all types of media organizations – international, national, local and community-based.

EJN reserves the right to disqualify applicants from consideration if they have been found to have engaged in unethical or improper professional conduct.

## Story logistics

Deadline: 17 December 2022

We expect to award five grants with a budget of **up to 500 Euros each**.

We plan to issue grants in January 2023 with the expectation that **all stories will be published by 31<sup>st</sup> of March** at the latest. Applicants should consider this timeline when drafting their workplan.

**Safety:** We encourage reporters to follow [best practices](#) for Covid-19 when out in the field so you do not endanger yourself or the people you're interviewing. If needed, you should include any Covid-related costs, such as tests or personal protective equipment, in your budget.

**Language of publication:** Stories can be produced in any language. However, applicants who intend to write or produce stories in their local language need to also include an English translation. Please include the cost for translation in the budget, if necessary.

**Story budget:** All applicants are required to provide a detailed budget with justification for the amount requested using the template provided below. We ask that the budgets be reasonable and account for costs necessary for reporting, such as travel and accommodation. Please also note on your budget form if you are receiving funding from any other donors for the story.

Generally speaking, applications with smaller budgets will be more competitive, but we will consider larger grant amounts for stories using innovative, collaborative or investigative approaches that may be more resource-intensive and time-consuming.

We expect that proposals will largely reflect what equipment the applicant already has access to (including cameras, drones, lighting, tripods, etc.) and will not consider budgets that heavily focus on procuring new equipment.

We will consider a stipend for the reporters' salary, particularly if the applicant is a freelancer. Please estimate the time you'll need to complete this story and propose compensation you believe reflects a fair market rate. We ask, however, that this comprises no more than 30% of the total budget.

**Acknowledgement of EJN support:** Published stories and/or broadcasts must disclose EJN support by including this tagline: "This story was produced with support from Internews' Earth Journalism Network."

**Republication rights:** Those who are awarded grants are free to publish or broadcast their stories first in their affiliated media as long as Internews' EJN, its partners and the grant funder, Adessium Foundation are also given rights to edit, publish, broadcast and distribute them freely.

## Judging criteria

Applicants should consider the following points when devising their story proposals.

- **Relevance:** Does the proposal meet the criteria and objectives of the call? Why does this story matter and to whom? Is the main idea, context and overall value to the target audience clearly defined?
- **Angle:** If the story has been covered, does your proposal bring new insights to the topic or offer a fresh angle?
- **Impact:** Does the proposal have a compelling narrative or investigative element that will inform and engage, draw attention, trigger debate and spur action?
- **Innovative storytelling:** The use of creative approaches, multimedia and data visualization will be considered a plus.
- **Plan for timely publication:** Reporters, whether freelance or employed at a media outlet, will need to include a letter of support from an editor in their application, committing to publish the stories by **March 31, 2023**.

## Application process

- Click the 'Apply now' button at the top of the page.
- If you have an existing account, you'll need to log in. Since we recently updated our website, you might have to reset your password by clicking the "Forgot password?" link in the log in page. If you don't have an account, you must register by clicking "Log in" on the top right of the page and click the "Sign up" link at the bottom of the page that opens.

- Click [here](#) for detailed instructions on how to create an account, and [here](#) for detailed instructions on how to reset your password.
- If you start the application and want to come back and complete it later, you can click 'Save Draft.' To return to the draft, you'll need to go back to the opportunity and click 'Apply now' again to finalize the application.
  - Applications should provide a detailed budget in an Excel spreadsheet with justification for the amount requested. Download the budget template now by clicking on [this link](#).
  - All applicants are required to provide a signed letter of support from their editor, explicitly stating that the media outlet will publish the stories produced as a result of this grant.
  - Applicants will also need to submit two samples of stories or links to relevant work.

*Note: You'll be asked to upload these supporting documents once you start the application process, so please have them handy.*

*If you encounter difficulties with submitting your application or have questions about the grants, please email [info.ejn@internews.org](mailto:info.ejn@internews.org). Do not contact any other Internews email regarding this opportunity, as we will not receive it.*

*Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.*

*Image: Fishing boats in the port of Essaouira, Morocco, 2021 / Credit: Andreea Munteanu via Unsplash*