**JournalismAI Innovation Challenge,**

**supported by the Google News Initiative**

**Application Form - 2024**

| **You can make a copy of this document. This Google Doc is not needed for the application, it is just a resource to help you prepare to fill the application form.** |
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\* = required question

### **Section 1: Applicant Information**

As the person completing this application, note that you will be the main point of contact during the application process and would be the main point of contact during the programme if accepted.

1. Lead applicant’s first and last name\* Rajesh Upadhyay
2. Lead applicant’s job title\* Editor-in-Chief and Executive President
3. Lead applicant’s email\* rajesh.upadhyay@jagrannewmedia.com
4. Which thematic area are you applying for? [Select only one]

⭘ Fight misinformation and disinformation

⭘ Experiment with new formats to engage new and existing audiences (mobile, video, audio)

⭘ Identify ways to grow subscription and support diverse forms of revenue

1. Which grant are you applying for? [Select only one]

⭘ USD $50,000

⭘ USD $250,000

### **Section 2: About your organisation**

1. Organisation’s name\* Jagran English, Jagran New Media
2. Name of parent group (if applicable)\*.
3. Please provide a link to your publication's website\* [Copy & paste URL]

<https://english.jagran.com/>

1. Organisation’s address\*

Plot No, C-1, 2001, 20th floor, Tower B, WTT, Sector 16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh 201301

1. Country of organisation\* [Select only one] India
2. Founding year\* [Select only one]

2008

1. What is your publication's geographical focus?\* [Select only one]  
   ⭘ Global  
   ⭘ National  
   ⭘ Regional  
   ⭘ Metropolitan  
   ⭘ Community/Local  
   ⭘ Hyper-local

National

1. On what channels does your organisation publish?\* [Select all that apply]

* ~~Website~~
* Print
* Television
* Radio
* Podcasts
* Newsletters
* ~~Social media~~
* ~~Mobile App~~
* ~~Messaging apps (Telegram, Whatsapp, etc.)~~
* Other
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How do you engage with your audience?\* [Select all that apply]

* Newsletters
* In-person events
* Online events and webinars
* Comment sections
* Social Media
* Web forums
* Email communication
* Direct private messages (like WhatsApp or Telegram)
* Group communication apps (like Discord or Slack)
* Website interactive resources (like forms, feedback session or quizzes)
* Other

1. What is the primary language your media publishes in?\* [Select only one]

English

1. Number of employees / headcount\* [Select only one]

⭘ 10-20

⭘ 21-50

⭘ 51-100

⭘ 100-200

### **Section 3: Your project proposal**

1. Project title\* SamuhIQ: Collective Intelligence for Multi-platform Audiences
2. Elevator pitch: Sell us your idea or project. Who is the audience you are serving and why is it important to implement now?\* (max. 100 words)

We propose a system to automatically collect and combine heterogeneous audience data, optimizing the content served to multi-regional Indian audiences based on identified preferences. In the creator economy, digital newsrooms have to maintain a multi-platform presence from YouTube and Instagram channels to broadcast messaging. Yet, even leading audience analytics systems rely only on single-channel data in optimizing the content that visitors are served, limiting the potential to bridge audiences across platforms, increasing content diversity. Our solution combines GenAI and social listening, to cater relevant content to multi-platform audiences at a fraction of the cost.

1. Project Description Part 1: Tell us your ideas' value proposition: what gap, challenge or need is your project proposal addressing? (max. 150 words)

The creator economy is growing at a 22% CAGR compared to 5% for digital news. Even if content creation is a smaller market, it is a massive opportunity for newsrooms to grow their audiences, especially considering the long-established role of journalists as ‘reliable content creators’. In order to identify opportunities to tap into their audiences, newsrooms will need a solution to bridge their audience understanding across platforms to inform news creation. Yet, most newsrooms cannot afford investing in a digital team or audience analytics solutions beyond Google Analytics, which uses demographic data (age, gender, country), pageviews, clicks, and series of past page visits to group users. Chartbeat, Parse.ly, Smartlook, build on this with AI-informed behavioral analyses but are still limited to on-site visitors and data. Our solution comprehensively tackles the upstream question of “what content a newsroom’s audiences engage with on social media” and “what drives them to news websites”.

1. Project Description Part 2: If you were to receive the programme grant, how would it help in realising this project? List the activities you will undertake to prototype a new product or any other part of launching and building your new venture. (max. 250 words)

The funds will help build a novel system using social listening to understand audiences on Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and combine that data with Google Analytics to deliver (1) automated performance monitoring plugin for authors and articles (2) audience landscape visualization (3) digital strategy recommendations that increase content diversity, boost engagement and improve revenues without needing bespoke tools for each platform. This grant would offset a majority of the technical development cost, stimulating our additional investment in dedicated staff, comprehensive testing, and real-world deployment of the system. We propose a collaboration with SimPPL, formerly a partner with JournalismAI Team Parrot in developing social listening systems for Twitter viz. <https://parrot.report> and discuss concrete technical steps below:

1. Design a social listening system / API endpoints to collect audience analytics data and corresponding content details from YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram handles of Jagran English News.
2. Standardize the metrics and design a common schema to homogenize the data.
3. Develop a plugin to extract Google Analytics Data (GA4 supports this) and disaggregate audience data using unique identifiers. The plugin ensures compatibility of this system with any organization using GA.
4. Use LLMs, embedded topic models, and time-series forecasts to combine the datasets and create an audience “landscape”, generating embeddings per audience member that can be visualized in atlas.nomic.ai or DataMapPlot.
5. A/B Test digital strategies and content recommendations generated using the audience landscape and embeddings, using feedback to improve the product.
6. What is the maximum, best output you would deliver by the end of the programme period? (max. 100 words)

We will deliver a cross-platform audience analytics platform and case study that lays out how Jagran English News used GenAI and aggregated heterogeneous data sources to increase content diversity, boost audience engagement, and improve revenues. We will deliver technical talks, publish reports, host workshops, and train staff members to be AI-aware and learn to use the system in practice. We will also offer a guide to other newsrooms to implement some of our proposed steps to build a cross-platform audience analytics system without the need to have multiple siloed audience teams working on digital strategy.

1. What is the minimum output you would deliver by the end of the programme period? (max. 100 words)

At a minimum we aim to deliver an “audience landscapes” exploration tool that will help newsrooms disaggregate audience interests across multiple platforms for topics that they engage with over time, using GenAI. It will additionally support deep learning for content recommendation, automated paywall generation, and other forms of predictive modeling. We will aim to provide a technical whitepaper describing our approach for creating audience landscapes to share with the JournalismAI community.

1. What support would you need from JournalismAI? (max. 100 words)

We are a news channel catering largely to pan-Indian audiences, and aim to provide a first-of-its-kind perspective on how regional audiences treat social media as a news consumption vector. We would love to draw on the cohort and alumni in the JournalismAI community to facilitate knowledge-sharing about how organizations see social media as a new, growing revenue stream and what interests them about audiences across a variety of mainstream, alternative, and emergent social platforms. We would like to understand the challenges in their digital growth, how they value audiences, and their current practices to cater engaging, personalized, and informative content to visitors.

1. Please fill in and upload the [itemised budget](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1b-Saig-3AMTENAy5MMpxWQm5PDqN9y4zylXq2tbOq-0/edit?usp=sharing) template provided to describe the financial resources you will need for your project to succeed (e.g. technology costs, web development, human resources, costs required to reach audiences).

[Jagran JournalismAI | Itemised budget JournalismAI Innovation Challenge supported by the Google News Initiative](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Mk5_pkrUXrIpvd1_l0AaUemGegGoVaMxLkkq5Z6jqWc/edit?usp=sharing)

### **Section 4: About your core team**

We require an interdisciplinary core team of at least two candidates (one editorial, one technical) from your organisation to participate and work on the project.

1. How many members of your organisation will form the core team for this project? [Insert only digits]
   1. 4
2. Please list the names, designations, and emails, of all candidates who will work on your project (Paragraph)
   1. Devika Mehta [devika.mehta@jagrannewmedia.com](mailto:devika.mehta@jagrannewmedia.com)
   2. Rajesh Updahyay [rajesh.upadhyay@jagrannewmedia.com](mailto:rajesh.upadhyay@jagrannewmedia.com)
   3. Newsroom editor-equivalent with product understanding for daily checkins (devika to suggest) Subhasish Dutta, [subhasish.dutta@jagrannewmedia.com](mailto:subhasish.dutta@jagrannewmedia.com)
   4. Newsroom audience analytics team member with data understanding for daily checkins (devika to suggest) Jai Sharma [jai.sharma@jagrannewmedia.com](mailto:jai.sharma@jagrannewmedia.com)
   5. Swapneel Mehta, founder, SimPPL
   6. Dhara Mungra, cofounder, SimPPL
3. Tell us about the mix of skills/experience in your team and why it is the best team to deliver this project. (max. 250 words)

Our team brings extensive experience in engaging multi-regional audiences, developing AI-driven products for journalism, and working at social media companies building algorithmic classifiers and recommendation systems. Rajesh Upadhyay, Editor-in-Chief and Executive President at Jagran New Media, is a seasoned journalist with over 30 years of experience in print and digital media. He has successfully transformed platforms like livehindustan.com and dainikbhaskar.com into leading digital news sites. Subhasish Dutta, Senior Editor at Jagran New Media, has more than a decade of experience across major media organisations like ESPN-Star Sports and India Today, excelling in digital content strategies and user experience. Devika Mehta, a Deputy Editor and media literacy trainer, has over 16 years of experience and is a PhD candidate researching AI’s impact on Indian journalism. She has trained over 10,000 people in media literacy. Jai Sharma, AGM Technology at Jagran, is a tech lead with over 12 years of experience in software development, specialising in AI-driven innovations. He has certifications in Generative AI and machine learning. Our team will collaborate with SimPPL, a Google, MIT, and Mozilla award-winning nonprofit experienced in social listening and audience analytics, having partnered with past JournalismAI’s Team Parrot and has built analytics systems for decision-makers at Deutsche Welle, NEST Center for Journalism, New York Public Radio, VTDigger, and others. Dr. Swapneel Mehta, a postdoctoral candidate at Boston University and MIT, researches platforms, misinformation, and AI, while Ms. Dhara Mungra, holding an MS in Data Science, brings expertise from 4 years at Bombora in audience analytics.

1. Please select all options that best identify the different races/ethnicities your core team members belong to: [Select all that apply]

* African-American or Black
* Asian
* Hispanic/LatinX
* Indigenous group or tribe
* Middle East or North African
* Pacific Islander
* White
* Multiracial
* Other
* Prefer not to answer

1. How would you rate your core team’s data Literacy?\* [Select only one]

* Novice
* Intermediate
* Proficient
* Advanced
* Expert

1. Do members of your core team have experience using AI in your organisation?\* [Select only one]

* Yes, customer-facing
* Yes, internal processes
* Yes, both customer-facing and internal processes
* Just experimenting at this stage
* No

1. Describe your motivation to take part in the programme and the key outcomes you expect upon completing it. (max 100 words)\*

My motivation to join the JournalismAI Innovation Challenge stems from a desire to explore how regional and national audiences in my country engage with social media as a news source. I aim to leverage insights from the JournalismAI community to understand the evolving dynamics of audience value and digital growth challenges. Upon completion, I expect to gain strategies for developing engaging, personalized content and to identify new revenue opportunities through social media platforms. This program will enhance my ability to contribute meaningfully to our channel's mission of delivering innovative news perspectives across India.

### **Section 5: About AI in your organisation**

1. How well-defined is your organisation’s AI strategy?\* [Select only one]

* No clear strategy
* Evolving vision and strategy
* Clear, embedded vision and strategy

1. What is your AI strategy/guidelines/policy? (Please share a copy of it below as a Google doc or PDF link or share a brief outline of the main details in it))\* <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vLC8tP1wQVrG1vv_Pqjg91sCYYlDj1G8rmAfG93EMXA/edit>
2. What are the main challenges for your organisation to reach its AI goals? [Select all that apply]\*
   * Finding the right talent
   * Adapting to new technologies
   * Unclear strategy
   * Building brand presence
   * Data capabilities
   * Financial constraints
   * Other:

### **Closing section**

1. I have submitted the completed budget template
   * :
2. Would you like to receive occasional updates from JournalismAI, including information related to programmes and opportunities??

⭘ Yes

⭘ I already receive these updates

⭘ No

—///—////—

### **Confirmation**

These [**application terms and conditions**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1otpG9-KCvbT341y0eE1NcDFxVwWxdiYZPj2WTJ9IsV0/edit?usp=sharing) describe the eligibility conditions for participating in the JournalismAI Innovation Challenge, supported by the Google News Initiative.

By clicking submit, JournalismAI will process your information for the purposes of your application to the programme. I give the JournalismAI team permission to contact me to follow up on the answers in this form.

For more information about how we use your data, please refer to LSE’s [privacy and cookie policies](https://www.lse.ac.uk/lse-information/privacy-policy).

Applications to JournalismAI programmes will be shared with our partner, the Google News Initiative. For more information about how Google uses your data, please refer to the Google Privacy Policy (<https://policies.google.com/privacy>).\*

* I agree