

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday 7 January 2021 14:11
To: info@futureofmediacommission.ie
Subject: future of media

Commission on Future of Media

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am replying, in haste, to your request for submissions on the future of media.

Certainly there is a problem attracting talent to journalism because of low pay. Making Google, Facebook, Twitter etc pay content-creators would solve the problem. Alternatively they could be taxed appropriately and the proceeds allocated to content-creators.

But for investigative journalism the main problem is the calibre, training and motivation of journalists.

Too few journalists rise in the morning understanding that their job is to produce something that someone somewhere does not want published.

Good investigative journalists are tough, forensic and do not mind rocking boats. These are intangibles that are difficult to define, find or fund. Extreme care is needed that an appropriate mechanism is found that rewards only these skills. It should not be a gravy train for more of the same. On the contrary the success of any fund should be measurable in tangible works of journalism that challenge the powerful.

The funding needs to be direct for investigative journalism. If any funding is allocated to training it should be dedicated to investigation including providing modules on ethics, power structures and the law. More important, an independent committee, composed almost exclusively by investigative journalists, needs to be constituted scrupulously to assess applications for substantial funding for staff and projects dedicated to investigation.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Smith

Michael Smith

Editor, Village Magazine
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