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Digital News Initiative

The Digital News Initiative (DNI) is is the result of conversations with European publishers about how we can help encourage a more sustainable news ecosystem – and promote innovation in digital journalism – through ongoing collaboration and dialogue between the tech and news sectors.

In our conversations, we found that particularly in countries with smaller language bases than English, it is challenging for news publishers to build new "digital" audiences at scale and grow the online revenues needed to offset the decline in print advertising.

We initiated the DNI as a partnership between Google and eleven founding European news organisations. The DNI is now a forum where we discuss and invest in three major areas of common interest: product development, training and research and supporting innovation. Today, more than 160 news organisations across Europe publicly participate in the DNI, including the Guardian, FT, Les Echos, FAZ and Zeit.

## 1. Product development in DNI

This area of collaboration is aimed at increasing revenue, traffic and audience engagement. We collaborate closely with news publishers to discuss product ideas and develop more sustainable business models together in the areas of ads, apps, video, data journalism tools and Google News. This dialogue will lead to Google product developments which will benefit the news ecosystem globally.

Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) is one example of this collaboration. AMP is an open-source standard for specially formatted web pages that enable extremely fast content on mobile devices, while ensuring that publishers control the way their content looks and feels. We developed AMP with publishers to better serve their needs:

- Better control for publishers, including branding;
- Improving the mobile experience, to reach new audience who are increasingly accessing use on mobile;
- Faster display of mobile pages - to minimise the loss of readers to loading times. Using AMP, publishers have increased the speed of their content by 4 times using 10 times less data. The Washington Post has said they're "thrilled" with the format, calling it a "huge gain over the traditional mobile web."
- Increased monetization on mobile, including through better and faster integration of ads: over 80% of publishers who use AMP report realizing higher viewability rates (the percentage of ads actually seen by a user) and over 90% of publishers say the format is driving greater engagement with higher "Click through rates".

You can see below an example of AMP results for news publishers' works in Google search, below, or try it in your mobile browser at g.co/ampdemo. As it is an open source standard, other services such as Twitter, Linkedin, Pinterest are among the first group of technology partners planning to integrate AMP pages.

Nearly 30 publishers from around the world took part in the initial launch. Today it is used by many 75 European publishers, including La Stampa, Zeit Online, Les Echos, The Independent, and El Pais (see here for a full list).
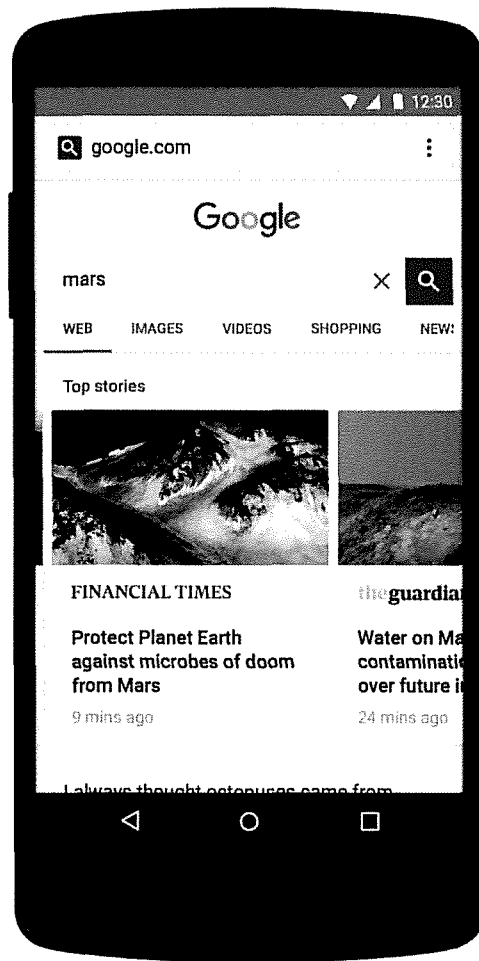
2. **DNI Training and research** for digital news.

Training and development initiatives are done in collaboration with our newly established News Lab team. These include investing in training for journalists and news organisations in digital skills:

- A dedicated team of people, such as Matt Cooke in London, who train and work with journalists from newsrooms across Europe on digital skills.
- Training partnerships with journalism organisations including the European Journalism Centre, WAN-IFRA (World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers), GEN (General Editors' Network), the Center for Investigative Reporting, and Hacks/Hackers, a meet-up organisation which brings together journalists and technologists.
- Enhanced online resources and tools for journalists.

Research initiatives are developed to ensure a better understanding etc [what for? Is missing] :

- A re-built Google Trends platform, based on feedback from journalists from newsrooms around the world, with increases in the depth, breadth and speed of available data.

- An expanded <u>Reuters Institute Digital News Report</u> into news consumption and user behaviour across Europe, covering 20 countries. This is the deepest and most comprehensive study yet of the evolution of news consumption in Europe.
- Funding for <u>academic research into computational journalism</u> including disciplines such as computer-assisted reporting, crowdsourcing and data-driven insights.
- Extending the <u>Google Journalism Fellowship</u> programme to Europe.

3. **DNI Stimulating and supporting innovation** in digital journalism within the news industry. Google has established an innovation fund to support and stimulate innovation in digital news journalism over the next three years.

Over this period, Google will make available up to €150m for projects which demonstrate new thinking in the practice of digital journalism. Applications will be assessed based on: level of innovation, viability and potential impact.

Anyone working on innovation in online news in Europe (EU or EFTA countries) is eligible to <u>apply</u>, including national and regional publishers, established publishers, online-only players and news startups. We want to help stimulate and nurture inventiveness from those who know best how journalism is changing, whether venerated institution or inventive newcomer.

So far that's <u>128 projects</u> from publishers, startups and individuals in 23 European countries.
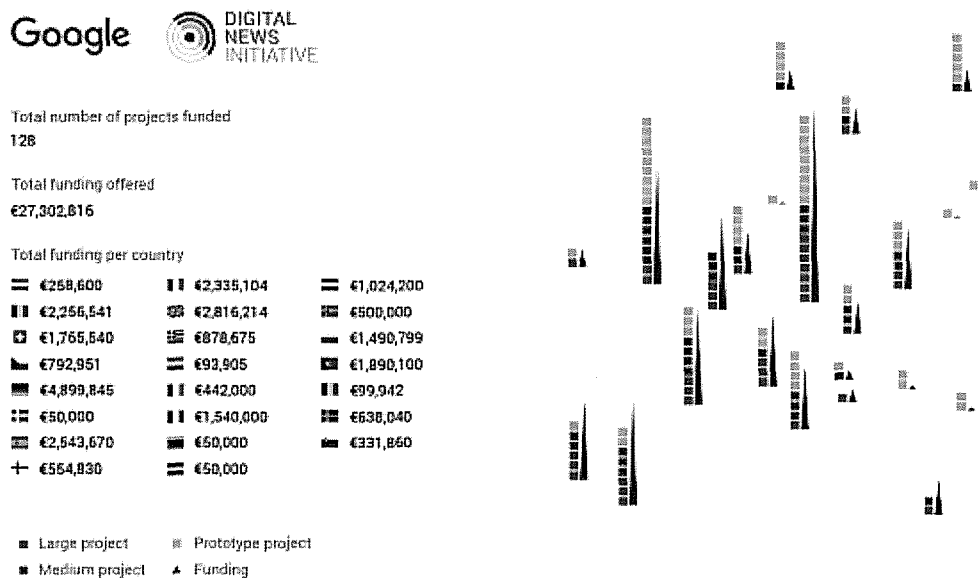
Here are some examples of projects which are supported by the DNI:

- A local Swiss pure player aims to prototype a tool for local newsrooms to crowdsource story ideas and bring readers into the journalistic process early on.
- In Sweden an established local media company aims to develop a framework to involve refugees into their news production process, in order to address the arrival of refugees. Concretely,

journalists and refugees will work together for an editorial project in the different languages in a co-creation process.

- One of the largest regional legacy publisher in Germany aims to develop a "Tinder for news" with an algorithm-based news system.
- The Telegraph Media Group aims to develop its "Real-time Sports Action Visualiser". This project will allow the creation and publication of rich graphics in real time – without the expense or increased burden on a publisher's art department. In particular it will create fast, live graphics in football live blogs. With a goal of under a second, the project aims to build an AI that ingests live sports data, statistics and trends and spits out graphics. These visualisations will highlight key moments such as goals as well as individual players' performance and provide a richer, more engaging experience for readers. Funding from Google will be used to scale up into all of the football reporting done by the publication.
- Bureau of Investigative Journalism (a non-profit news organisation based in London) "Local News Lab": Local News Lab at the Bureau of Investigative Journalism is a national resource for local journalism. The Lab works directly with journalists across the UK to support the investigation and publication of public interest stories from data, promoting transparency and accountability at all levels.
- UK Citizens Online Democracy, an NGO, aims to develop "Alaveteli Professional": a platform tailored to journalists' needs to allow them to manage "freedom of information" requests, especially for journalists in the UK and the Czech Republic.