STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR THE EBU TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, 2022–2025

INTRODUCTION

To support EBU Members over the next three years, the Technical Committee has identified **four priority areas** across which a series of transversal actions will deliver concrete outcomes that are **audience-centred, product-driven, and innovative.**

These priorities are based on a vision of public service media (PSM) undergoing and completing the digital transformation and securing their place in the daily lives of all European citizens. The aim, in summary, is to support Members to **offer quality content and services** that are **highly relevant to their audience,** to collect and **use data** in a responsible way, to have a direct relationship with the audience through their own **media platforms**, and to **build workforces** that guarantee a continuous and increasing flow of energy and innovation.

The recipe for success is now known: the first ingredient is controlling the core elements of the products we develop while at the same time managing the costs. By **building together and establishing common positions, we can strengthen our ability to influence** the global tech companies and guarantee the interchangeability of suppliers. And that is underpinned by the second ingredient, **collaboration within and across the EBU and its Members**. It's about having technology teams working in close collaboration with the content creators and editorial staff, driving for innovation; and it means jointly having access to the talent that can support new developments.

The sustainable development of EBU Members will be underpinned by constant innovation, which in turn requires investment. The financial resources to accomplish the actions set out in this document will come partly from Members, but we must also unlock new sources of funding, including through pan-European projects, for R&D&I activities.

FOUR PRIORITY AREAS

#1: Audience-centred media creation

Keywords: digital transformation, workflows, newsroom evolution, cybersecurity, software-based, cloud, virtualized, object-based, automation, shared services, games engines, content repurposing, immersive media, metaverse, synthetic media, nonfungible tokens, accessibility, pmse spectrum.

Several different trends are driving fundamental changes in content creation and consumption, while at the same time enabling innovative media experiences and new approaches to storytelling, all the while continuing to serve the core remit to inform, educate and entertain. On one side we see the availability and further convergence of technologies like the cloud, secure IP infrastructure and AI, along with the use of game engine capabilities in media creation. Shared services and the future of production studios are key aspects here. On the other side are new content formats targeting the full range of audience needs and user devices, from immersive experiences through extended realities to social media formats. Developing services for younger audiences is a high priority for all EBU Members. And all of this with constant pressure on costs.

Bringing editorial staff and creatives together with the technology experts at the earliest stage of emerging technologies is crucial for unlocking innovation in terms of content and digital products, and ultimately leading to new value propositions for the audience. Greater cooperation across the EBU membership can be fostered through the further development of tools that ease the exchange and repurposing of digital assets. The use of open technologies to build highly efficient local and remote workflows is another key aspect of the transformation. Equally important is the continued and guaranteed availability of sufficient radiofrequency spectrum for the wireless production tools that content creators rely on.

#2: PSM as data-driven organizations

Keywords: artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data, personalization, metadata, analytics, cloud, cybersecurity, gaia-x, single sign-on, web3, automation, efficiency, data spaces, ethical use, business intelligence.

Artificial intelligence, machine learning and big data analytics are becoming core technologies for PSM, being applied to a variety of challenges in content production and authentication, workflow automation, personalization, audience research and more. Through the responsible use of these technologies, PSM can bring many benefits to their audiences, their staff, and to society in general. There is an opportunity to extend the PSM value of trust, using data in a way that increases the audience's sense of ownership and ensures that content and services are highly relevant to each individual.

How data is gathered, stored and used is a critical factor, particularly where there may be a reliance on public cloud and other service providers based outside the European regulatory framework. The use of common metadata and conceptual data models will help to achieve interoperability.

#3: From broadcaster to media platform

Keywords: hybrid, social, platform, integration, data, linear, non-linear, spectrum, accessibility, gamification, audiences, partnerships, end-to-end metadata.

The constant evolution of media consumption habits, coupled with fast-emerging technologies driven by multinational corporations, drives PSM to undertake a transformation from classical broadcast models towards hybrid, digital media platforms where they can continue to fulfil their public service obligation. These platforms exploit the respective advantages of broadcast and online services to serve the audience. Linear and non-linear services coexist, and what may otherwise have been fragmented audiences are served with unified, personalized experiences and seamless navigation.

Operating under economic and regulatory constraints, PSM need to ensure that their complete content and services offer can be delivered to all users in the markets they serve and on all relevant devices. Issues such as prominence, audience data, branding and access to networks are crucial, but also retaining control and containing the costs of distribution. As the ecosystems for distribution evolve, with roles for broadcast, multicast and unicast delivery, PSM must monitor and influence developments by engaging in relevant external bodies and testing new approaches.

The principle of universality – being accessible to all citizens – remains fundamental to PSM and implies the continued unencumbered access to the necessary distribution infrastructure and radiofrequency spectrum. To ensure this is the case, PSM must actively influence regulators and other stakeholders.

#4: The PSM workforce transformed

Keywords: talent, skills, digital capabilities, multidisciplinary, innovation, future of work, sustainability, diversity, game developers, succession planning, knowledge transfer, silo-breaking, problem-solving.

As PSM organizations transform, there is a need for new skills for employees in production, engineering, distribution and IT, as well as the more widespread use of interdisciplinary units that are given autonomy to experiment and solve problems while being aligned towards common goals. The adoption of convergent technologies in IP, cloud, 5G, AI, machine learning, game engines, etc, means that PSM compete head-on with other sectors, especially the global tech giants, to attract and retain talented staff. R&D&I must be anchored within PSM organisations as a concrete, strategic activity.

PSM need to take proactive steps both to educate new generations of young media engineers, developers, technologists and creators and to position themselves as organizations these young people aspire to work for. This includes stepping up to be leaders when it comes to concerns around sustainability, diversity and inclusion as well as embracing new, flexible work practices. Beyond attracting people to work for and with PSM organizations, such an approach will also increase understanding within the audience of the role and importance of public service media.