WAN-IFRA Unveils Initiative to Help Journalists and Creators Reach New Audiences.

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The World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) today announced the launch of its Future Audiences Initiative, a three-pillared global programme designed not only for established news organisations but equally for independent news creators, digital-native publishers, and emerging media voices who today lack access to professional networks and representation.

The initiative recognises that the future of journalism will be shaped by both legacy newsrooms and a new generation of creators experimenting with storytelling, platforms, formats, and novel ways to engage audiences. Its goal is to bring these worlds closer together through shared learning, collaboration, and innovation.

“Across the spectrum - from established newsrooms to independent creators - we’re seeing shared challenges in monetisation, audience engagement, and trust,” said Thomas Jacob, Chief Operating Officer of WAN-IFRA. “The Future Audiences Initiative is designed to bring these communities together to experiment, learn, and grow - fostering practical collaboration and innovation across the global news ecosystem.”

At the heart of this initiative is the News Creator Exchange (NCX), a supportive professional community for independent news creators, digital-first media startups, and video-led journalists from traditional WAN-IFRA member newsrooms. United by a shared vision to strengthen journalism and storytelling on social platforms and reach wider audiences, NCX aims to build bridges between the creator ecosystem and established news media, enabling mutual learning and co-creation.

NCX will be led by Pierre Caulliez, 23, a Gen Z media consultant and founder of Yoof, an agency dedicated to bridging generational gaps in news delivery and consumption. The Exchange will offer tools, training, and meetups that bring together independent news creators and established newsrooms to collaborate, share knowledge, and grow professionally. An advisory board of top creators and industry experts will guide its programming and development.

To recognise the work of rising news organisations and news creators regionally and globally, WAN-IFRA has added a Best Emerging News Providers category to its annual Digital Media Awards.

Beyond NCX, the Future Audiences Initiative will also focus on two additional pillars:

The Future of Trust: programming that promotes media literacy, addresses news avoidance, and tackles disinformation to strengthen audience trust in journalism.

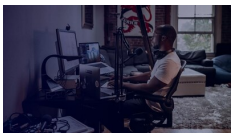
Future Audiences Training and Advisory: regional and global workshops helping publishers adopt audience-first strategies, building media brands, retention, mobile-first design, audio, and newsletters.

The initiative will roll out globally in 2026, with pilot activities beginning early in the year. Individuals and organisations interested in following the initiative or joining the first cohort, whether as creators, newsroom partners, or mentors, are invited to express their interest here.

About:

WAN-IFRA, the World Association of News Publishers, is the global organisation of the world’s press, comprising 3,000 news publishers and technology companies and 40 national publishers’ associations representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries. With a mission to protect the rights of journalists and publishers around the world to operate independent media, WAN-IFRA provides its members with expertise and services to innovate and prosper in a digital world and perform their crucial role in society. The World Editors Forum is its network for editors.

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