

MediaNet Funding

Options for continuation funding for MediaNet

Continuation of core funding of MediaNet from Screen West Midlands for year two of the project (from August 2006) will ensure the network can establish itself and continue to build and strengthen the links between West Midlands media education projects taking place in the region.

At the Screen West Midlands Education Focus Group in October 2005 the aims for media education in the region expressed by the group made a strong case for the need for a network to draw together the existing work taking place in the region and advocate the important role media plays in education.

The new Media Literacy Charter gives weight to the case for the need for coordination of media education activity at a regional level. MediaNet can provide this function for the West Midlands.

Other options need to be explored for further work to expand the MediaNet programme.

Small projects delivery

The first MediaNet project (2001-2004) ran a small projects fund delivering small-scale projects in formal and informal education. This model could once again be developed with MediaNet providing a project management role and delivery in partnership with media providers around the region. These projects can then be used as exemplars of Media Education practice shown through the case studies section on MediaNet online and promoted through the network.

The Arts Council West Midlands have expressed an interest in supporting a projects programme with a digital arts focus. Funding from both the regional Arts Council and Regional Screen Agency would strengthen the position of MediaNet.

Training and events

A menu of training and events could be developed to support media education work in the region. Funding via INSET could be forthcoming, together with self-financing through course fees.

Resource development

MediaNet could play a role in the development of resources in collaboration with project partners. It may be possible that this development could get funding and/or support from the Specialist Schools Trust, the DfES or the BFI. The specialist Media Arts Colleges and the Lead Practitioners trained by the BFI would play a key role in this development.

Using MediaNet as a test bed for new resources and training would position the West Midlands as a leading region in the use of media education.

Broadcaster supported activities

The MediaNet network would be in a strong position to approach Broadcasters to gain their support for Media Education work. All the major UK broadcasters are signatories to the Media Literacy Charter, which represents a commitment to educating the population about media literacy. This could be focussed around a particular programme or strand of programmes. An annual media literacy summer school for example for teachers, and another for pupils would be attractive to regional broadcasters and the wider media industry. The Rural Media Company has already been approached by one newspaper to run a summer school for young journalists.

Next steps

We will distribute a plan for Year 2 of MediaNet to our partners in the network for consultation ahead of reapplication for Screen West Midlands funding and further funding applications to broaden the project.

Screen West Midlands position regionally and nationally and support of the MediaNet project would place MediaNet in a strong position to approach other funders to support aspects of the programme. Screen West Midlands and The Rural Media Company could bid jointly for funding from DCMS, DfES and other central government sources as they become available.

Members of the network can play a key role in identifying suitable projects or areas of need for development of training, projects and resources.

We have begun to contact past funders and other potentially suitable funders to gauge interest in funding projects, training and resources as part of the 2006-2008 programme for MediaNet.