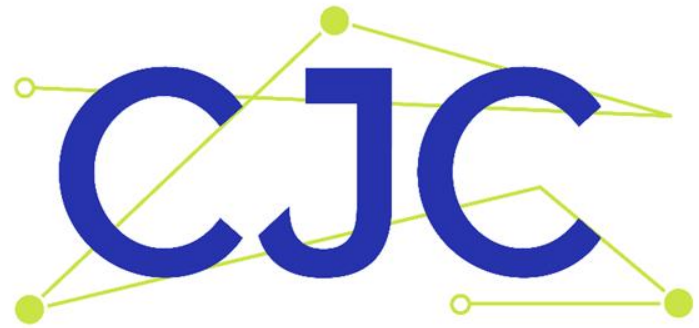


# Cross border collaborative journalism method and mindset

*A Crossborder  
Journalism Campus  
Lecture*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Crossborder Journalism Campus

# Cross-border collaborative journalism

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- Cross-border journalism as a method  
Step-by-step introduction
- Cross-border journalism as a mindset  
Unbias the news
- Thinking about cross-border journalism  
Practitioners and academics looking at  
cross-border journalism

Cross-border journalism  
as a method

– a step-by-step introduction

# Why cross-border collaboration?



- To get important information
- To share the work load
- To bring in special competences

**Research**

- To set the agenda / get impact
- To serve audiences

**Publication**

- Security of the journalists / sources / media

**Other**

# Cross-border collaborative journalism - definition

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- journalists from different countries
- decide on an idea of mutual interest
- gather and share material
- publish to their own audiences

*(Alfter, 2019)*

# Myth and reality



## Myth

- Crossborder journalism is based upon massive leaks that were given to journalists
- To do crossborder journalism you must have a job at a big medium

## Reality

- Several prominent cross-border investigations have been dubbed "leaks" or "papers" - but few are based upon anonymous, unsolicited leaks
- Publications via big media are most well-known, but there are scores of cross-border investigations elsewhere

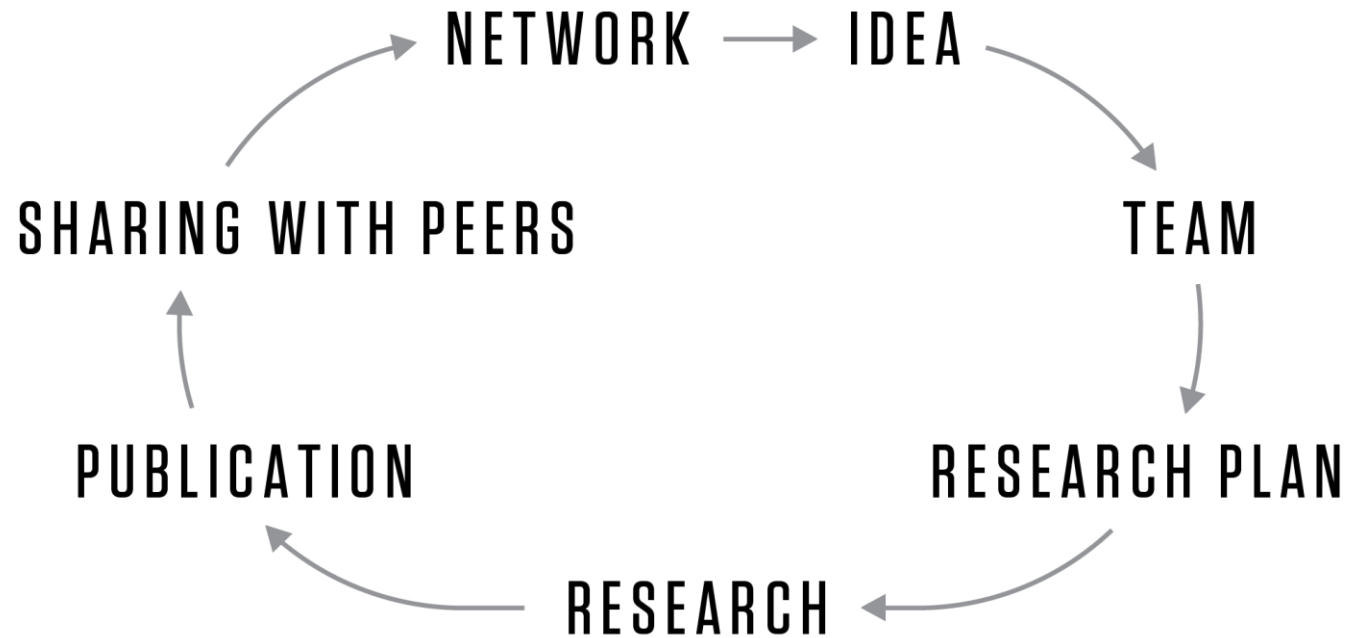
Inspiration: Find some crossborder investigation examples



## **Compilations via networks, conferences, work grant organisations...**

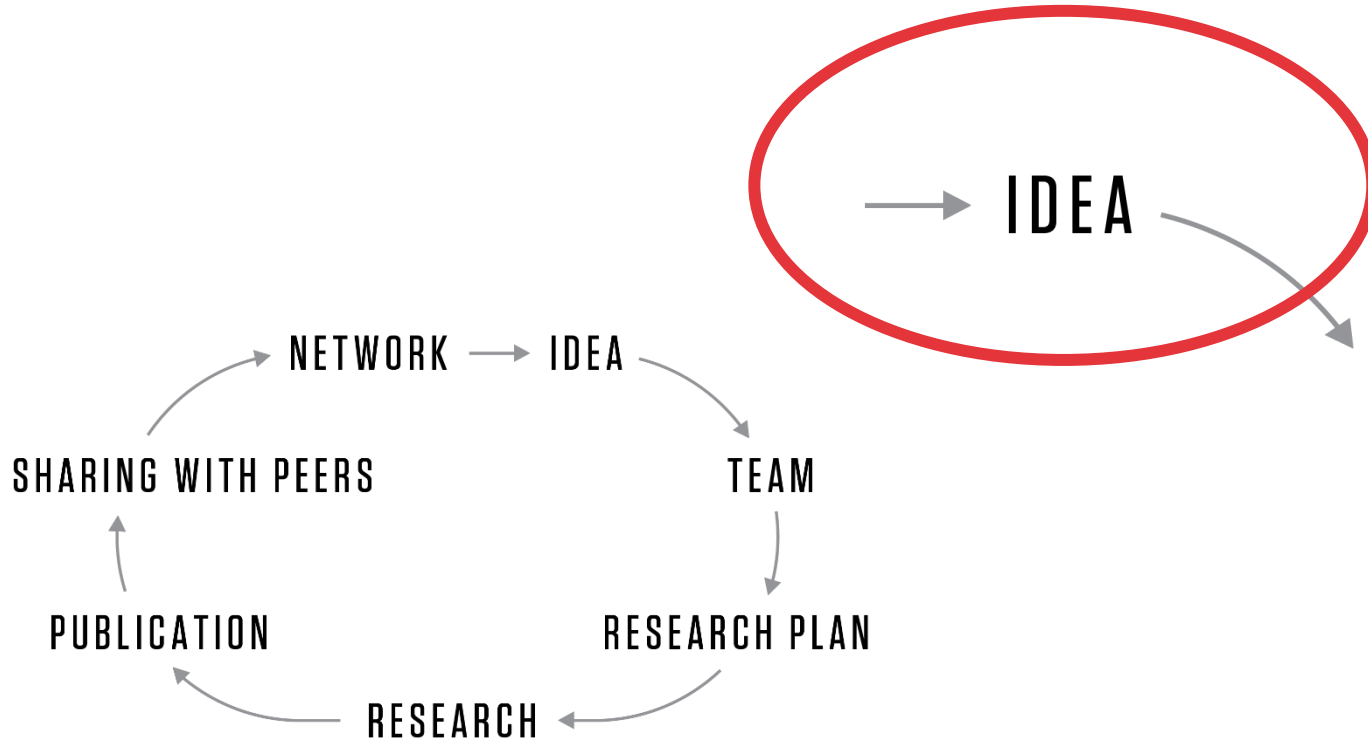
- [Dataharvest – European Investigative Journalism Conference](#)
- [Investigative Journalism for EU grants](#)
- [Journalismfund.eu](#)
- [Investigate Europe](#)
- [EIC network](#)
- [ICIJ](#)
- [OCCRP](#)

# Cross-border journalism process wheel



*(Alfter, 2015, 2019)*





# Looking for cross-border story ideas



## **Day-to-day:**

think across borders when relevant

## **Organisation stories:**

stories relate to bodies like the EU, WTO, NATO, UN and UN bodies, WHO, World Bank, EIB...

## **Chain stories:**

story covers something happening in a chain of countries – for example trade, trafficking...

## **Comparative stories:**

similar stories occurring in several countries such education, school reforms, cultural, sociological, economic trends etc

# What to consider for a good team



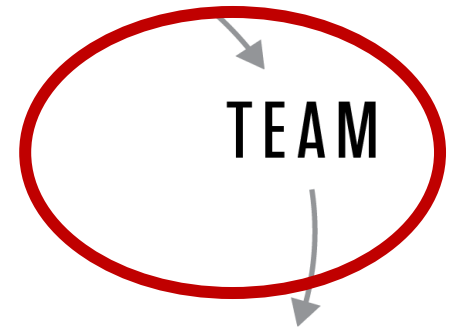
## **Hard competences**

Language, country, experience with subject, important medium, network of sources, experience with institution

## **Soft competences**

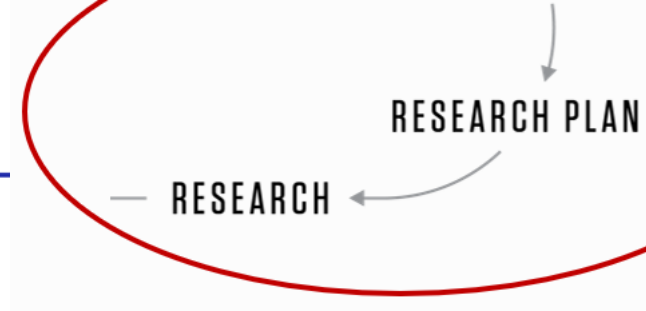
Trust, sympathy, wish and capability to cooperate, alignment on editorial vision, ethical tradition

**ALWAYS REMEMBER: Create a win-win for all team members!!!**



Hard work & enriching each other in the team

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## **Use the differences**

Different traditions for access to data, FOI /different traditions for access to sources / different political interests / overcoming bias

## **Journalism traditions**

Hidden camera / How to deal with quotes, cross checking with sources? / Views on funding

## **Working rhythm and timing**

## **Overview and focus**

## **Fact checking / legal checks / ethics**

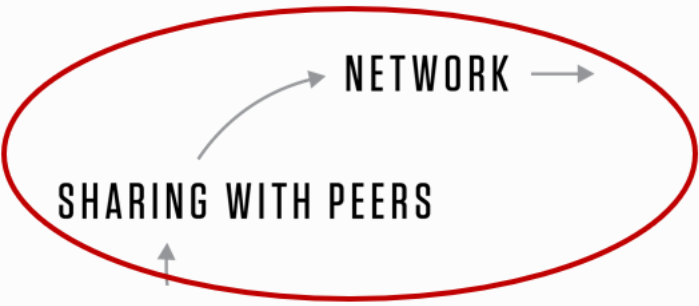
# The big moment... PUBLICATION!



- Often the most difficult moment of the cooperation, remember to coordinate early in the planning
- Story telling varies from country to country
- Reaching different target groups
- Findings need to be adapted to context
- Bringing the story to the agenda – each team member and all together
- Simultaneous or consecutive publishing – or both?
- Security before and after publication
- You are responsible to your audience!!!



# Sharing, networking



- Sharing with peers means professional development
- You share both your experience and your findings (pitching)
- Consider sharing already while working (work diary)
- When you share with peers, you position yourself in the community of journalists (networking)

Cross-border journalism  
as a mindset  
- unbiased the news

# A bit of history



- Cross-border collaborative journalism grown out of the investigative journalism community (and mindset)
- “Muckraking” dates back to 1890-1920 with critical journalism describing the terrible social conditions in the US and holding government to account
- Collaborations in the investigative community date back to the 1970ies with
- In the late 1990es/early 2000, the first journalist driven cross-border collaborative journalism investigations were carried out on global level (example [ICIJ Big Tobacco Smuggling](#)) and European level [Farmsubsidy network](#)



# The concept of muckraking and **our** journalism



**Meyer:** Ideals of journalism, logics of journalism

**Meyer:** Dualistic system (determining whether something is true or not) vs. discursive system (discussion as driving force to shared solutions) in “truthful exchanges among different points of view”

**Grzeszyk** (citing Chalaby): Anglo-style journalism revelations vs. European style argument

**Grzeszyk:** Cross-border collaboration as a way to call out bias.

# Grzeszyk's recommendations:

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- Know what you are excluding
- Be transparent about your mission
- Expect to find more than two sides of a story
- Be aware of narratives
- Embrace diversity

# Investigative journalism and potential reactions



## **Luyendijk: Self-healing capacity of a democracy**

What if journalists set the agenda with all these revelations of sad, worrying, outrageous things – and then nothing happens?

## **Hird: Impact reverse engineered**

Case study from the moment of publication to the moment when some improvement actually occurred – but what precisely happened in between?

## **Trusting News: Trust from the head and the heart**

If there is a weak social bond, unveiling something scandalous can further distrust in society and institutions and thus destabilise.

# Collaboration as a trend



## **Collaboration is a competence**

In the 2020ies, collaboration in journalism is a competence applied in investigative journalism and beyond – way beyond! For example:

- Unbias the News:  
Various reportings across borders – from global climate inequality to feminism
- Netherlands:  
Collaboration competences to work on shared topics across municipality and regional borders in the same country
- PFAS investigations:  
Collaborations between journalists and scientists and (to some extend) civil society)

Thinking about cross-border journalism: Practitioners and academics looking at cross-border journalism

# Reflection on cross-border collaborative journalism



- How to define it: what is cross-border collaborative journalism?
- How does cross-border collaborative journalism work?
- Does cross-border journalism make a difference in society?
- Who are the cross-border journalism actors and how do the power structures work?
- Collaboration as a competence – whom do journalists collaborate with?
- Comparative journalism studies, journalism cultures
- ....

## **List of academic and practitioners' work in the field**

<https://journalismarena.eu/cross-border-collaborative-journalism-reading-material/>

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For more material and teaching instructions  
on cross-border collaborative journalism, please visit:

[www.crossborderjournalismcampus.eu](http://www.crossborderjournalismcampus.eu)

**For further questions, reach out via the contact page.**





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