

PART C: RESOURCE

Organisational record and capacity

Albany, who will be the Prime contractor, has a strong track record in Central Asia and in conducting innovative soft power inventions. Albany Associates is a UK-based, internationally-focused company with significant global experience in developing communications strategies and public diplomacy plans. The company has been running master classes in broadcast and internet regulation for the Organisation for Security and Cooperation of Europe's Office for the Representative for Freedom of the Media (RFOM) since early 2012. Through these events, Albany has provided training for representatives of governments, media outlets and civil society from Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia and Turkmenistan. Albany also contributes to OSCE's regional conferences through qualitative, interview-based research with conference delegates to gauge perceptions of change in media freedom in their countries under the work of the RFOM. Most recently, Albany Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer Simon Haselock, has spoken at an OSCE Media Conference in Bishkek in September 2016.

For the past 12 years Albany has managed more than 100 communications projects, diverse both in nature and scale. Our experience in working for international institutions, such as the UN, AU, EU, development banks, multilateral aid organisations and governments, including development departments has given us a sound understanding of, and flexible approach to project delivery. Albany's core values stress the importance of a detailed understanding of local context, culture and tradition and focus on bottom-up approaches to communications problems where listening is almost more important than talking. For example, Albany associates is currently implementing a CSSF funded project in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia that engages with our target audiences at the grassroots to strengthening critical thinking, social cohesion 21st century skills of Russian speakers in each country.

The firm has extensive experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative research. Of note is the UNESCO-funded project "Enhancing Professional and Accurate Media Reporting on the Electoral Process" that Albany ran in Jordan. The aim was to contribute to freer and more professional, comprehensive and objective media reporting in support of the democratic process in Jordan.

Albany's key skills are in the following areas:

- planning and delivering strategic communications and public diplomacy strategies;
- developing and delivering on press and media plans and building capacity of press departments for beneficiaries;
- developing and delivering on culturally specific grassroots outreach campaigns and plans, including running cultural festivals, youth activities, listening and discussion groups and traditional sporting events;
- building digital, social and traditional networks and communications platforms for outreach in complex environments;
- consulting on broadcasting and telecommunications regulatory frameworks;
- advising on media and communications infrastructure development, including assisting the development of public service broadcasting, independent regulatory agencies and telecommunications and media companies;
- providing technical professional training and institutional capacity building. In addition to our experienced teams in the UK and abroad, Albany also has an extensive roster of multi-disciplinary international consultants with global expertise in communications, public information, regulation, broadcasting, media law, public relations and training.

IREX Europe is a non-profit, non-governmental organization providing innovative programs to improve the quality of education; strengthen independent media; foster pluralistic civil society development; and reduce conflict. The IREX Europe approach emphasizes partnerships with local development organizations to expand capacity, build sustainable institutions and affect change through training, partnerships, education, research and grant programs. IREX Europe has worked in more than 37 countries the projects below have been selected as examples of IREX Europe's successful implementation of media interventions in the region and in the Russian language media space:

Deliverable 5 of this proposal draws on the experience of IREX Europe in their ongoing implementation of the "Strengthening Independent Media and Media Literacy" project in Moldova funded by the US State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. To date, more than 57 librarians have been trained to be local Media Literacy trainers, going on to run their own media literacy activities in their communities involving over 700 participants. In addition, the project has involved the commissioning and production of 9 TV news magazine shows focusing on key international and EU events impacting Moldova. These programs have been broadcast more than 15 times each on 10 participating national and regional media (over 240 broadcasts in total), and reversioned for online dissemination.

Central Asia: Between 2007 and 2009, IREX Europe worked with BBC Media Action on a project entitled “Mobilising the Media in Support of Women and Children’s Rights in Central Asia”. Working in partnership with local organisations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the €1.2 million project aimed to exploit the potential of local media to raise awareness of key issues affecting women and children in Central Asia and empower civil society to take appropriate action. In order to achieve its goal, the project worked towards (i) improving the skills of journalists working in this field; (ii) increasing and enriching the coverage of vulnerable groups at target media outlets; (iii) encouraging the media to give these groups a platform through which their opinions and concerns can be expressed; and (iv) building the capacity of the CSO sector to promote key messages, especially in rural areas. More than 180 media professionals and 120 civil society workers were trained as part of the project. Around 50 illustrated print articles and features, 30 radio programmes and 15 TV documentaries were produced and disseminated.

Belarus media: IREX Europe has been working in Belarus since 2006 with print, online and radio outlets. IREX Europe has supported independent media to improve the quality of their coverage, as well as increase their understanding of the EU and EU member states. IREX Europe has also worked to enhance the capacity of media to become more sustainable. We have specific experience working with youth audiences via support provided to Euroradio, a youth Belarusian radio in exile based in Warsaw (<http://euroradio.fm/en>), and the youth magazine, 34mag.net. In addition IREX Europe has built a modern Multi-Media Media Hub at the European Humanities University, an exile university based in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Georgia - Independent Media Strengthening Program: This 18-month project run by the World Association of Newspapers and IREX Europe was aimed at advancing independent media’s role in consolidating democratization in Georgia through more effective media freedom advocacy, greater professionalism in media management and journalism, and the application of new media technologies. Among activities implemented, a series of successful media/civil society/state dialogues brought together 122 individuals from media outlets, advocacy groups, civil society, and the public sector to determine why the Georgian media has remained weak and to build joint action plans to facilitate media independence. These meetings were among the first attempts to orchestrate meetings between media organizations, local governments, opposition parties, public organizations, and the business sector in Georgia.

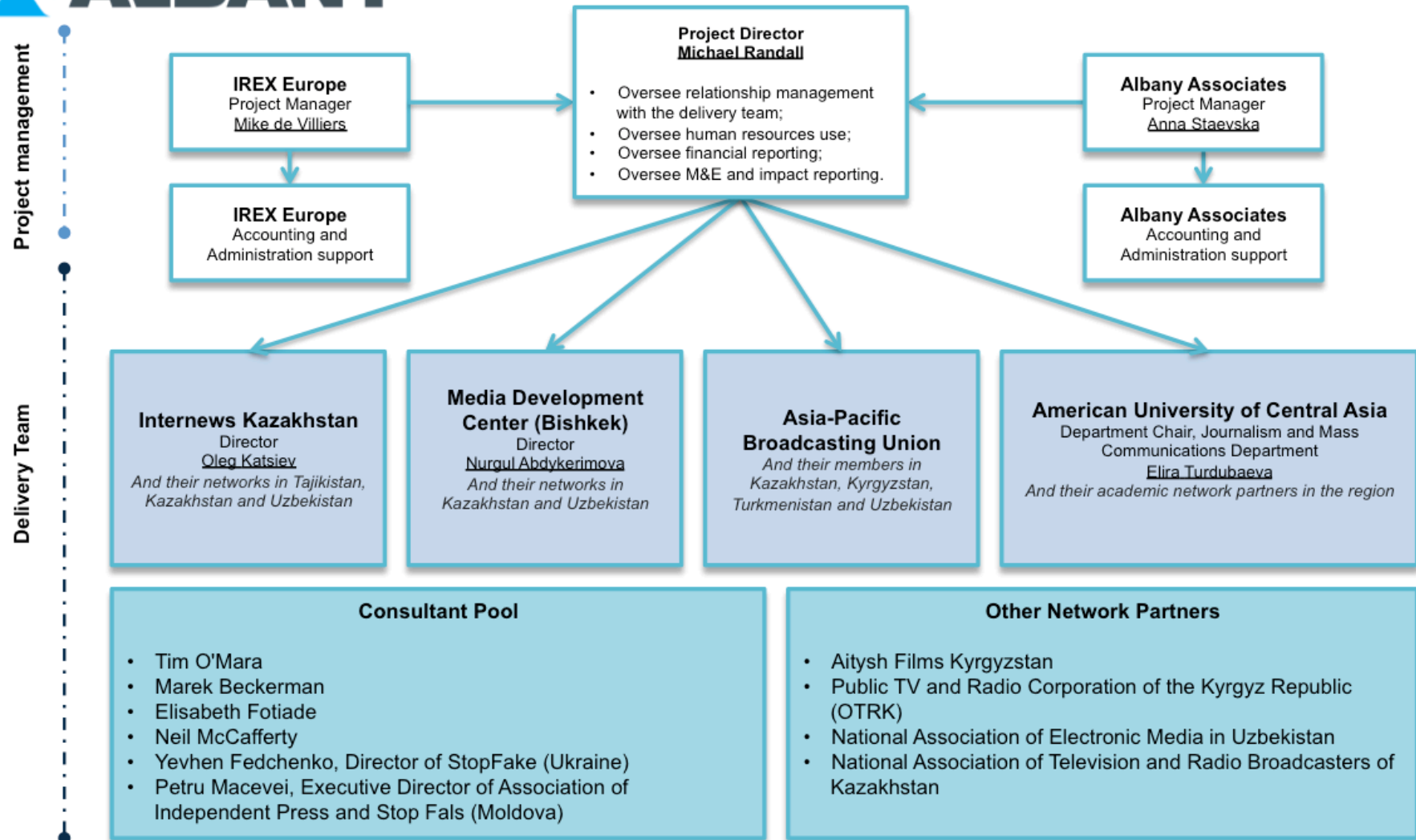
Additionally, IREX Europe worked with BBC Media Action to deliver the ENPI – Media Neighbourhood project. This three-year program trained over 1200 journalists across 17 countries and territories, including Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova. The countries were selected because they are covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the project was funded by the European Commission. It brought together media professionals to create a peer group of journalists to support each other and strengthen professional reporting standards and ethics amongst journalists working for local media across the ENP region. IREX Europe was part of a consortium led by BBC Media Action which delivered the journalism training and networking activities. The project had a budget of €4.5 million.

Local Partners

Our proposed activities will be supported and implemented in partnership with local organisations, strengthening the credibility and sustainability of our proposed activities. Our partners who operate in the region include Internews Kazakhstan, Media Development Center, Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union and the American University of Central Asia. Additionally, we will make use of their local networks and partnerships to enhance the reach and effectiveness of our interventions.

Letters of intent and partnership from our partners can be provided upon request.

Organizational Structure



Albany proposes Michael Randall for the position of Project Director. Michael has 17 years' experience of designing and implementing UK- and EU-funded media development projects in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Focus areas have included public service broadcasting, journalism training and drama production.

Profile & Background: Michael Randall is an Emmy Award-winning media development expert who has worked in all the former Soviet republics and has led projects with budgets in excess of £6 million. He is the only Western media professional to have been based in Turkmenistan where he worked to create new programming for Turkmen State TV. He has a strong track record in developing socially responsible drama, including the pilot for a TV series at the Kyrgyz public service broadcaster, OTRK. Recently, Michael has been working on an FCO-funded feasibility study for plans establish a Russian-language Content Factory aimed at countering Kremlin-sponsored propaganda.

Gender :Male
Nationality :British
Languages :English, Russian, French

Key Skills: journalist training, co-production, public service broadcasting, media legislation and regulation, business development

Relevant Experience/Employment:

2014 to date: BBC Media Action – Team Leader

Main responsibilities: managing MedMedia, a €5-million EU-funded media development project aimed at creating an enabling environment for media reforms in nine countries across the MENA region.

2013 to 2014: BBC Media Action – Senior Programme Manager (Middle East and Europe)

Main responsibilities: designing and developing new projects in the Middle East and Europe, including MedMedia (see above) and a €6.5 million DANIDA initiative working across Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Turkey.

2012 to 2013: BBC Media Action – Project Director (Central Asia)

Main responsibilities: devising and managing a FCO-funded project aimed at developing public service programmes for three TV stations in Central Asia; organising government-level conferences on PSB in the region.

2009 to 2012: BBC World Service Trust later renamed BBC Media Action – Project Director (Turkmenistan)

Main responsibilities: leading a €1.5 million project which worked to produce public service TV programmes for Turkmen TV and to develop a media law which was passed by the Turkmen Government in 2013.

2009 to 2011: BBC World Service Trust – Joint Head of Project (Middle East)

Main responsibilities: managing a £6.7 million FCO-funded project aimed at establishing socially responsible media platforms; producing an Emmy Award-winning web drama in Lebanon; running an e-learning programme in Syria.

2005 to 2009: BBC World Service Trust – Project Manager then Senior Project Manager (Europe and FSU)

Main responsibilities: raising more than €30 million-worth of business worldwide including media projects in all five Central Asian republics, Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Belarus.

2001 to 2005: BBC World Service Trust – Project Director (Russia)

Main responsibilities: managing “Voices from the Zone”, a two-year project aimed at developing radio networks for six prison colonies in the Urals; managing a DFID-funded broadcast training centre in Yekaterinburg.

1999 to 2001: Institute of War and Peace Reporting – Programme Manager

Main responsibilities: managing the Caucasus Service, a network of 40-50 correspondents across the region.

Education/ Awards:

1986 – 1990: BA Hons in Russian and French from University of Oxford
National Certificate from National Council for the Training of Journalists; Winner of the 2011 International Digital Emmy (Non-Fiction); winner of the 2010 Reflet d'Or, Geneva Film Festival

Albany proposes Marek Bekerman for the position of Journalism Ethics and Capacity-Building Expert. Marek has 21 years of experience in international news and current affairs broadcasting in a range of editorial and journalistic roles for the BBC. He has over 12 years of experience in media development and journalism training in over 20 countries with a focus on the FSU. Marek has an exceptional track record in the Central Asian countries.

Profile & Background: Marek Bekerman is a Polish-born media and capacity building expert with very strong linguistic skills who has used a long experience gained at the BBC to develop the capabilities of journalists in the former Soviet Union. He has managed several large-scale projects in Central Asia, including a regional initiative funded by the EU. Marek currently works as a lecturer at University of Salford, where he teaches International Journalism to undergraduates and postgraduates.

Gender :Male
Nationality :British and Polish
Languages :English, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian

Key Skills: journalist training, training of trainers, media skills training, media strategy consultancy, public service broadcasting expert, editorial policy consultant, radio production trainer, new media adviser

Relevant Experience/Employment:

2013 to date: University of Salford, Manchester - Lecturer in International Journalism and Radio
Main responsibilities: Programme Leader in MA International Journalism; Team Leader for an EU-funded project aimed at building networks of journalists and think-tanks in Russia and the EU.

2015: OSCE Bishkek Office – Lead Consultant & Trainer (Kyrgyzstan)
Main responsibilities: designing, delivering a series of workshops for government press officers and communications staff in media and journalism skills and in designing and formulating government communications strategy.

2012 to 2013: BBC Media Action – Lead Consultant (Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan)
Main responsibilities: designing, planning and delivering awareness-raising and professional seminars, roundtables and conferences involving government officials and local NGOs for an FCO-funded project entitled "Promoting a Culture of Public Service Television in Central Asia".

2011 to 2012: Various – Media Expert (Central Asia)
Main responsibilities: delivering a practical seminar in news journalism and human rights for media professionals in Turkmenistan (UNDP); delivering new media and journalism training to young Kyrgyz journalists (Soros Foundation); evaluating Russian-language output of the Central Asian youth online news outlet, Kloop (Eurasia Foundation)

2010 to 2012: BBC Media Action – Media Law Expert (Turkmenistan)
Main responsibilities: co-ordinating seminars and roundtables on media law reforms in Turkmenistan, co-ordinating and leading a team of media lawyers drafting new media legislation for Turkmenistan, coordinating a study tour to the UK for Turkmen deputies and officials on media regulation and self-regulation.

2009 to 2011: BBC Media Action – Senior Project and Training Manager (Eastern Europe and FSU)
Main responsibilities: designing training programmes for journalists, co-ordinating and delivering training workshops and seminars, conducting and delivering international events; Senior Expert on a two-year EU-funded project in Ukraine aimed at modernising the journalism teaching curriculum in Kiev, Uzhgorod and Simferopol.

2007 to 2009: BBC World Service Trust – Project Director (Central Asia)
Main responsibilities: managing an EU-funded project entitled "Mobilising the Media in Support of Women's and Children's Rights in Central Asia"; organising training for journalists and senior editors, designing and delivering seminars and co-production activities for print, radio and TV journalists; executive producing radio and TV documentaries focusing on the challenges faced by women and children in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

1990 to 2007: BBC World Service – Editor, Producer, Correspondent
Main responsibilities: newsgathering in Central and Eastern Europe for the BBC Polish Service and for BBC News, including attachments to Newshour, World Today and Europe Today as well as NPR and PRI in the United States.

Education/ Awards:

MA in English and Linguistics (Distinction); Certified Mediator, Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education

Albany proposes Elisabeth Fotiade for the role Media Literacy Expert. Elisabeth brings more than 12 years' experience in media literacy education and journalism studies. A native of Romania, Elisabeth has a Masters in Communication from the University of Westminster in London, UK and a Bachelors degree in Journalism from the Superior School of Journalism in Bucharest, Romania. Elizabeth has led research, trainings and programmes in Romania, Afghanistan, Georgia, and Moldova.

Profile & Background: Elisabeth Fotiade has run training of trainers (TOT) trainings for IREX Europe in Moldova, training groups of librarians using the IREX Europe Media Literacy guidebook such that they can then go on and run their own media literacy workshops in their communities. Elisabeth is also co-founder and President of MEDIAWiSE Society, a media literacy education enterprise in Romania. MEDIAWiSE runs media literacy workshops for children and adults as well as provides education resources and advocacy for media literacy in schools. Elisabeth was previously head of the Research and Media Education Unit within ActiveWatch for eleven years. ActiveWatch is a media watchdog in Romania where she coordinated media research and media literacy projects. She helped produce media monitoring methodology and developed media literacy educational resources for teachers.

Gender :Female
Nationality :Romanian
Languages :English, Romanian, French

Key Skills: Media literacy, Training of Trainers, Media Literacy Educational Material Development, Media Research and Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation

Relevant Experience/Employment:

2016 to date: IREX Europe – Media Literacy ToT for Librarians, Republic of Moldova

Main responsibilities: running ToT workshops for Moldovan librarians in Media literacy.

2014 to 2016: MediaWiSE Society – President and co-founder

Main responsibilities: building and managing the Society, designing and running media literacy workshops, developing media literacy educational materials.

2003 to 2014: Active Watch, Romania – Head of Media Education and Research Unit

Main responsibilities: developing media literacy materials for schools, running advocacy activities promoting media literacy in schools.

2004 to 2016: Predeal, Romania – Trainer

Main responsibilities: trainer in media and media literacy related issues, training of local media monitors. media literacy for diversity and inclusion, for numerous organisations including Freedom House, Bucharest; University of Artois, France; National Audiovisual Council, Romania.

2011 to 2011: OSCE/ODIHR Election Assessment Mission – Media Analyst

Main responsibilities: assessment of media coverage during the election period and of the overall media environment. Assessment of the legislative framework and regulations concerning media and elections.

2009 to 2009: EU Election Observation Mission – Kabul, Afghanistan – Observer/Media expert

Main responsibilities: assessment of media coverage during the election period and of the overall media environment. Set up of a media monitoring unit – training of monitors.

2003 to 2003: Media Monitoring Agency, Bucharest, Romania – Media Analyst

Main responsibilities: monitoring of print and audiovisual media, media analysis.

Education/ Awards:

2005 – 2006: University of Westminster, London, UK – Master of Arts in Communication (with Merit)

1999 – 2003: Superior School of Journalism, Bucharest, Romania – BA in Journalism

Albany proposes Tim O'Mara for the position of Drama Consultant. Tim has over 30 years' experience in script-writing and directing, principally for ITV and the BBC. He also has a strong background in consultancy and has worked in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan.

Profile & Background: Tim O'Mara is a multiple award-winning writer and director who has worked on some of the UK's most popular sequential dramas such as "Eastenders", "Emmerdale", "Coronation Street" and "Casualty". In 2002, Tim won a BAFTA for "Jeopardy", a sci-fi drama series set on the Gold Coast in Australia. He has also collected three BAFTA nominations including one for "Behind Closed Doors" a drama about child abuse that also won the Prix Europa. As a drama consultant for BBC Media Action, he has developed the concepts for TV series in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Jordan. He has also worked on peace-building dramas in Cyprus and Nigeria. Tim helped launch a new soap for ASTRA in Kuala Lumpur and developed a historical drama on Indira Gandhi for a production company in Mumbai.

Gender :Male
Nationality :British
Languages :English

Key Skills: Directing, Writing, Development, Consultancy

Relevant Experience/Employment:

1986 to date: ITV and ITV Studios – Drama Director

Main responsibilities: directing over 100 episodes of ITV's most popular drama series, including "Coronation Street" – the world's longest-running soap opera – and "Emmerdale" which attracts an average of 5-6 million people per episode (an episode directed by Tim in 2008 drew an audience of 13.8 million)

2015 to date: RTÉ – Drama Director

Main responsibilities: directing "Fair City", the most popular and the longest running Irish soap opera which has tackled a number of controversial and taboo topics for the first time on Irish television.

2014 to date: C4 Lime pictures – Drama Director

Main responsibilities: directing "Hollyoaks" which was created by Phil Redmond and is aimed at a youth audience. In 2014, it broke the "Eastenders"/"Coronation Street" monopoly on the Best British Soap award.

2009 to 2013: BBC Media Action – Drama Consultant

Main responsibilities: delivering training workshops in script-writing skills; helping to develop storylines and characters for drama series pilots in Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Jordan; mentoring the production of a pilot episode for KTRK in Kyrgyzstan.

1986 to 2014: BBC, ITV – Freelance Writer/Director

Main responsibilities: writing and directing sequential dramas such as "Eastenders" (one of the most popular programmes on UK television with an average audience of eight million), "Broker's Man" and "Casualty".

1992 to 1995: Bentley/Chrysalis – Head of Drama and Development.

Main responsibilities: devising, writing and directing new programmes including "Rumble", "Broker's Man" and "The Warrant" for the BBC and "Midsomer Murders" for ITV.

Education/ Awards:

1971 – 1974 – BA English Literature and Drama at Dudley/Birmingham University

One BAFTA award, three BAFTA nominations, a Prix Europa and two Royal Television Society awards

Albany proposes Neil McCafferty for the position of Technical Expert. Neil is a leading media and communications specialist with over 25 years of experience globally in setting up and installing radio, TV stations and web operations. Neil is particularly skilled in adapting and modernizing existing TV and production studios with the latest technology and has specific experience in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Russia, Georgia, and Belarus. Neil has worked on assignment with IREX Europe on numerous occasions notably in Somalia and Belarus. Under an IREX Europe EU funded project Neil designed and installed the European Humanities University Multi-media broadcasting studio complete with virtual television studio, radio studio and multi-media online studio.

Profile & Background: Award-winning journalist with more than 25 years in radio, television, Internet journalism and public relations. Neil developed his skills and experience over a decade at the BBC, working in many positions from journalist to technical director and Senior Journalism Instructor at the BBC Training and Development Department. Since moving into training and development Neil has worked around the world, notably in the Former Soviet Union, Middle East and Africa and has developed a particular specialty in adapting local production and broadcast facilities.

Gender :Male
Nationality :British
Languages :English, German

Key Skills: Technical direction, Production oversight, Journalism, Media Management. Media Training

Relevant Experience/Employment:

2011 to date: Talk Russian Limited/Digimedia – Director

Main responsibilities: managing an independent video/audio media production company and consultancy. Currently on assignment working with Syrian independent radio/TV outlets as part of a major US Government funded support project. Worked extensively on assignments across the former Soviet Union, including project delivery in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkmenistan.

2003 to 2011: BBC World Service Trust – Broadcast/Technology Manager

Main responsibilities: managing international broadcast/web portfolio across more than 30 countries; setting up radio drama and talk show formats in Nigeria. Responsible for the specification and procurement of media production hardware/software in multiple countries including in the former Soviet Union. Delivered training in journalism and broadcast systems operation. Developed on-line training systems for journalists. Provided 'start-up' editorial/technical consultancy for several new broadcast/media operators including Almirbad in Basra, Iraq.

2002 to 2003: BBC Training and Development – Senior Journalism Instructor

Main responsibilities: delivering editorial training to new and existing BBC Journalists; working with external clients including RTHK, Hong Kong and BFBS.

1999 to 2001: BBC World Service – Overseas Trainer/Consultant

Main responsibilities: helping with the set up of a commercial broadcaster following the NATO military action in Kosovo. Seconded as a Broadcast/Information Consultant to the Government of Sierra Leone following a civil war; setting up and delivering a post graduate course in TV Journalism at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, India. Worked on assignment in Russia, Bosnia, Indonesia, Malawi, Thailand, Occupied Palestinian Territories and Lebanon.

1991 to 1999: BBC – Broadcast Journalist/Senior Broadcast Journalist

Main responsibilities: working in various roles/locations across the BBC's networks; on-screen TV reporter and radio presenter; Video/Camera Journalist; Producer, national network news; Studio Producer, Radio 4 news sequence programmes; Assistant Producer 'Breakfast with Frost'; Assistant Producer/Location Director 'The Rough Guides'; One World Broadcasting Trust Premier Documentary Award Winner; News Editor, BBC Radio Lincolnshire.

Education/ Awards:

William Lovell CE Secondary School 1981-86, then direct entrant to the broadcast industry.
Winner of "One World" Broadcasting Trust Premier Award.

Relevant Interests:

Part-time Lecturer, Faculty of Journalism, University of Lincoln. External Examiner, International Journalism, Nottingham Trent University.