


Your response

Question	Your response
<p>Do you have any comments on our proposals?</p>	<p>Dear Ofcom,</p> <p>We wish to formally thank you for engaging with us as a new group to represent the interests and provide representation of Ofcom licensed Community Radio Stations. We have welcomed the correspondence and meetings we have had with Ofcom this past 12 months, and when Ofcom have approached us for our views on behalf of the sector or asked us to gather the views of those stations that are engaged with us. We look forward to developing this relationship and working to represent the views of the sector.</p> <p>In relation to the Community Radio Fund, we welcome the recent announcement of additional funding from the DCMS and the extra round of emergency funding, but we wish to raise the issue that the Community Radio Fund is still not adequate to provide significant support to the sector, and welcome working with Ofcom on how we can make the fund better and more fit for purpose. We would also formally request that the next rounds of funding return to the previous purposes of funding much needed organisational development and that, because of such a long time since the last non covid related rounds, that the next round takes place as soon as possible (April/May) to enable this funding to be put to best use as soon as possible.</p> <p>We also request that Ofcom undertakes a limited and specific round of analogue licensing for Community Radio in this work plan period.</p> <p>Whilst we acknowledge the opportunities that SSDAB rollout will offer the Community Radio sector and the local communities we serve, we also recognise that the SSDAB roll out will take many years to fully complete, that SSDAB is not suitable in all areas due to social economic circumstances, geography or viability. There is still demand for new analogue licenses to cater to underserved communities with need. We conducted a limited campaign to engage with possible stations and had a good response to our campaign that shows that there are stations already active and waiting to serve their communities. This matter has been compounded by the impact of covid and the need to bring communities together, but also in the loss of so many local radio stations in the last 18 months, which has seen many heritage and sustainable brands be closed down to be replaced with networked stations.</p> <p>This limited and specific round of analogue licensing should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It takes place between rounds 2 and 3 of SSDAB rollout where Ofcom has previously stated they will pause to review and consider rounds 3 and 4. - That Ofcom run an expression of interest with defined criteria of areas and circumstances where they will consider applications - The criteria could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Areas that no longer have any local radio service

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- Areas that have a significant audience that is not served by any existing local service
 - Areas that can identify need and support for a local radio service
 - Areas or audiences where SSDAB may not be suitable
 - Areas that have had have been providing support for their community under the special covid RLS
 - Areas where SSDAB rollout will be too long to enable the support of that community (especially round 4 areas).