BALTIC MEDIA AI FORUM

Iceland Liechtenstein Norway grants

Norway grants

Baltic Centre for Media Excellence

12–13 November 2026

Startup House Riga

Lastādijas iela 12 k-3, Riga

Two days bringing together media professionals and AI experts to share real-world experience, challenge assumptions and explore what AI means for the future of media.

Register | **Save to calendar**

Programme

Day 1 Thursday, 12 November Talks and discussion

12.00 – 12.30	**Registration & welcome coffee**
12.30 – 12.40	**Opening** **Gunta Sloga**, Executive Director of the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence (Latvia)
12.40 – 13.20	**Keynote: How AI is reconfiguring media?** **Ezra Eeman**, Director of AI in Media, WAN-IFRA & Founder, Wayfinder (The Netherlands)
13.20 – 13.50	**Empowering small newsrooms with AI: from hyperlocal needs to practical innovation** **Kaja Distad**, Head of Editorial Innovation at Polaris Media Vest and AI & Innovation Driver at Polaris Media (Norway)
13.50 – 14.20	**Ukraine's public broadcaster's AI strategy and transformation journey** **Dima Khilchenko**, Managing Board Member & CTO/CPO, Suspilne Ukraine (Public Media)
14.20 – 14.30	**Coffee break**
14.30 – 15.00	**Detecting AI misinformation during conflict** **Thomas Copeland**, journalist with BBC Verify (United Kingdom)

15.00 – 15.30

Sovereign artificial intelligence for independent media: why does Europe need its own large language models?

Kaspars Kauliņš, Business Development Director at Tilde, Chairman of the Board of the Latvian IT Cluster, Board Member of LIKTA (Latvia)

15.30 – 16.00

Factiverse case study

Lasha Kavtaradze, Senior Researcher at Factiverse (Norway)

16.00 – 17.00

How AI amplifies disinformation, manipulation and risks for media and society

Panel discussion

Andy Demeulenaere, General Coordinator of Mediawijs, the Flemish Knowledge Centre for Digital and Media Literacy (Belgium)

Daniel Vaarik, Founder at Levila (Estonia)

Dr. Jan Fillies, Senior Expert on AI, Technology and Scientific Development Branch, NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence

Guna Puce, Director of the Artificial Intelligence Center (Latvia)

Moderator: **Gunta Sloga**, Executive Director of the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence (Latvia)

19.00 – 22.00

Meet & Greet

Off-site location. Venue details to be announced.

Day 2 Friday, 13 November Hands-on workshops – bring your laptop

09.00 – 09.30 Registration & welcome coffee

09.30 – 11.30

Vibe coding: this is where you start

Kaja Distad, Head of Editorial Innovation at Polaris Media Vest and AI & Innovation Driver at Polaris Media (Norway)

This hands-on workshop will introduce participants to vibe coding as a practical way to visualise data, create interactive experiences, and prototype simple personal apps that can support everyday work. The workshop is designed to be beginner-friendly.

What you will take away

- A first hands-on experience of vibe coding
- A simple data visualisation, interactive experience or personal app prototype you have built yourself
- Ideas for using vibe coding to support your everyday work

What you will need

- No coding experience is required. A basic technical understanding and some experience with different types of data are helpful, but not essential.
- Your own laptop.
- An active account with an LLM-based AI tool (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini or a similar platform), set up and ready to use.
- Before the session, check your login and access.

11.30 – 12.00 Coffee break

12.00 – 14.00

Superintelligence in action: a safe sandbox for AI agents in media

Kristaps Lokmanis, timefor.ai expert and trainer (Latvia)

Tight deadlines, lengthy documents and a non-stop news cycle? In this practical two-hour session, we will move from chatting with ChatGPT to creating and testing your first AI agent. We will work in the browser using ChatGPT Work.

Through a newsroom task, we will ask an agent to research public sources, compare information and prepare a briefing that an editor can verify. We will practise defining the task, setting boundaries and checking the result: do the sources support the claims, what remains uncertain and what needs further investigation?

The sandbox will use public information and training examples. We will not enter confidential newsroom material or personal details about journalistic sources. A person will remain responsible for decisions about using or publishing the output.

What you will take away

- A research-agent task you have tested yourself, with a clear purpose and boundaries
- A briefing with key facts, source links and questions that need further checking
- One idea for applying a similar approach to your everyday work in media

What you will need

- Basic familiarity with ChatGPT. No programming knowledge is required.
- Your laptop, charger and an active ChatGPT Plus (paid) account.
- Before the session, check your access to ChatGPT Work and its browser capabilities. A stable internet connection is required.
- A willingness to take part: you will complete the exercise on your own laptop.

Speakers



Opening & panel moderator

Gunta Sloga

Executive Director, Baltic Centre for Media Excellence (Latvia)

Gunta Sloga is an award-winning Latvian journalist, editor, and media leader with extensive international experience advancing press freedom and strengthening independent media across the Baltic region and beyond. Widely recognized for excellence in investigative reporting and editorial leadership, she has held senior roles shaping public-interest content strategies and guiding media innovation.

A committed advocate for quality journalism, Gunta has led and contributed to initiatives that promote media integrity, transparency, and resilience, including journalism development programs and cross-border collaborations. As Executive Director of the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence, she leads regional efforts to strengthen professional standards, enhance media literacy, and address the impacts of digital transformation and artificial intelligence on journalism.

A frequent speaker and expert contributor at global media forums, Gunta brings deep insight into the challenges and opportunities facing independent media in complex information environments.



Keynote

Ezra Eeman

Director of AI in Media, WAN-IFRA & Founder, Wayfinder (The Netherlands)

Ezra Eeman is Director of AI in Media at WAN-IFRA, where he leads work on AI research, strategy and industry collaboration. He is also the founder of Wayfinder, providing bespoke consultancy and strategic advice on AI, innovation and the future of media, alongside a weekly newsletter on media innovation. Previously, he was Director of Strategy and Innovation at NPO, Change Director at Mediahuis and Head of Digital at the European Broadcasting Union, and held senior editorial and innovation roles at VRT and DPG Media.



Talk & Day 2 workshop

Kaja Distad

Head of Editorial Innovation, Polaris Media Vest & AI and Innovation Driver, Polaris Media (Norway)

Kaja Distad is Head of Editorial Innovation at Polaris Media Vest and AI & Innovation Driver at Polaris Media, working across newsrooms in Norway and Sweden. Her focus is on helping local newsrooms adopt AI in practical ways that strengthen journalism.

She develops newsroom tools, workflows and digital products using AI, public data and agentic technologies, with an emphasis on solutions that smaller newsrooms can quickly put into practice.

Kaja also leads workshops on AI, data journalism, vibe coding and agentic coding. She began her career as a local journalist at Askøyværingen and Vestnytt near Bergen, Norway.



Talk

Dima Khilchenko

Managing Board Member & CTO/CPO, Suspilne Ukraine (Ukraine)

Dima Khilchenko is a media executive with a 15-year track record in media management and countering disinformation. He oversaw the establishment of a multiplatform newsroom for Ukraine's public broadcaster and has led international media development projects. He is now CTO and CPO at Suspilne, where he is leading the company's move to sovereign, AI-driven infrastructure. He was elected to the EBU Technical Committee for the 2026–2028 term – the first seat Suspilne Ukraine has held on the committee.



Talk

Thomas Copeland

Journalist, BBC Verify (United Kingdom)

Thomas Copeland is a journalist with BBC Verify, where he covers artificial intelligence, open-source intelligence and disinformation. Before joining BBC News, Thomas studied as a Fulbright Scholar at Columbia Journalism School in New York City and then worked as a radio reporter in Alaska. His journalism career began in television, producing politics programmes for the BBC in Northern Ireland and as a broadcast journalist for Sky News.



Talk

Kaspars Kauliņš

Business Development Director, Tilde; Chairman of the Latvian IT Cluster Board (Latvia)

Kaspars has over 30 years of experience in international business, strategic management, and digital transformation. He actively promotes European technological sovereignty and the adoption of AI solutions in business and public administration.

He began his career in journalism at Diena and later worked in television before moving into senior leadership roles at Fontes Latvia, Lattelecom, Swedbank Group, SPI Group, and Pedersen & Partners.

Combining his expertise in media, business, and technology, Kaspars focuses on AI's impact on the media and content industries, including automated content creation, speech recognition, multilingual accessibility, and trustworthy AI. He regularly shares his insights at international conferences.



Talk

Lasha Kavtaradze

Senior Researcher, Factiverse (Norway)

Lasha Kavtaradze is a senior researcher at Factiverse. He is currently working on a project examining stakeholders' needs regarding foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) in the EU. He earned a PhD in media studies from the University of Bergen (Norway), where he studied the automation of fact-checking. He has a background in journalism, human rights communications, and media monitoring. His research interests include journalism practice, digital platforms, journalistic AI, emerging media technologies, and evolving knowledge-production practices in media.



Panel discussion

Andy Demeulenaere

General Coordinator, Mediawijs – the Flemish Knowledge Centre for Digital and Media Literacy (Belgium)

Andy Demeulenaere coordinates Mediawijs, the Flemish Knowledge Centre for Digital and Media Literacy. Mediawijs was assigned by the Flemish government to help people in the Flemish community in Belgium to use and understand digital technology and media actively, creatively, critically and consciously. Their main focuses are news and information literacy, online resilience and digital inclusion.

Andy supports the development of digital and media literacy policy and the European network and is a member of the EU Media Literacy Expert group, the Board of Directors of the Media and Learning Association, the Digital Citizenship working group at European Schoolnet, the EMIL task force at EPRA and the Flemish Advice Council for Culture. He has an extensive background in (digital) youth work, education and non-profit management and is committed to stimulating a constructive digital citizenship by de-escalating online polarisation, disinformation and hate speech and empowering active and conscious digital connection and creation.



Panel discussion

Guna Puce

Director of the Artificial Intelligence Center (Latvia)

Guna Puce is a lawyer by education and a change-maker by nature. Her career has evolved at the intersection of law, technology, and leadership.

She currently leads the National AI Centre of Latvia – an organisation jointly established by the government, universities, and the private sector to coordinate and promote the responsible use of artificial intelligence in Latvia.

The Centre serves as a bridge between policymakers, businesses, researchers, and society, creating the conditions for AI to develop in a safe, responsible, and meaningful way.



Day 2 workshop

Kristaps Lokmanis

AI Expert and Trainer, timefor.ai (Latvia)

Kristaps Lokmanis is an AI practitioner and trainer specialising in business process automation. He teaches in the AI training programmes of timefor.ai and the University of Latvia. His hands-on experience includes generative AI assistant solutions for customer service, e-commerce and internal business processes. In his training, Kristaps helps participants connect the capabilities of AI tools with specific everyday work tasks.

Practical info

Language

The working language is English, with Latvian machine translation available.

Registration

When registering, indicate which parts of the programme you plan to attend, including the Meet & Greet and Day 2 workshops. Register here.

Workshops

Workshop places are limited and will be confirmed separately. On Day 2, bring your laptop.

Baltic Centre for Media Excellence

Internews

Flanders State of the Art

Programme subject to change.