


SUBSCRIPTIONS ACADEMY NORDICS 2023

Programme explainer





The Subscriptions Academy Nordics helps news publishers build sustainable digital revenue streams in a mature and competitive environment by ensuring that they are at the cutting edge of innovation, defining an ambitious vision for their digital subscription business, and building the engine that will take them to their goal.

Subscriptions Academy programmes help publishers build and achieve ambitious goals

Objective

The Subscriptions Academy Nordics programme is designed to engage a select group publishers from some of the most mature publishing markets in the world (Nordics and BeNeLux) and address the specific challenges to future sustainability in their competitive environment. The programme will help define an ambitious vision for their digital subscription business and build the engine that will take them to their goal.

Expert delivery

The Academy is an ambitious, intensive five-month experience that addresses each step of digital subscriptions, from traffic acquisition to subscriber retention, and the organisational skills publishers need to succeed. Google News Initiative and FT Strategies work in partnership during the programme to help participating publishers reach their goal, each providing expert advice to publishers.

Participants will receive dedicated 1:1 support and learn from the shared experiences of other cohort members. Delivery will be mostly digital, with 2-3 in-person visits from FT Strategies consultants at various stages of the programme.

Strong historic results

We have now worked with 24 publishers across three previous EMEA editions. The programme has received consistently excellent quantitative and qualitative feedback from previous participants, and publishers have seen strong improvement in key subscriptions business metrics.

GNI and FT Strategies are excited about welcoming the next cohort of publishers to the inaugural edition of the Subscriptions Academy Nordics, and look forward to receiving your application to be one of them.

2020



2021

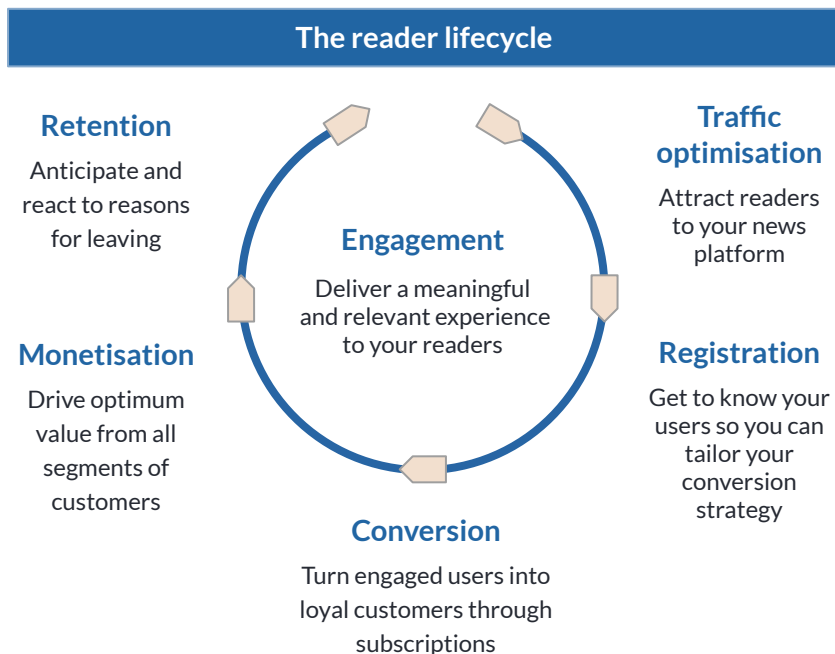


2022



The programme assesses performance and guides future strategy across a range of core and adjacent topics

At the heart of the programme are the key stages of the reader lifecycle - workshops will focus on having an immediate impact



In addition to core inspiration series delivered by experts from the wider FT and Google, this programme also includes exclusive deep-dive seminars that promote long-term development through innovation in key areas

The Inspiration Series	
Audience diversity	Data journalism at the FT
First-party data strategies	Plus many more...
Long-term development deep-dives	
Building and using engagement metrics	New content formats (podcasts, AV, gaming...)
Identifying and accessing growth audiences	Dashboards and advanced data analytics
Propensity modelling & dynamic conversion	Building a B2B business
New product development	Dynamic pricing
Cross / up sell	Building and nurturing mini brands

The programme comprises three phases over 5 months



Discovery

Understanding your business in depth through data analysis and in-person interviews. **Performance benchmarking** against the cohort and the wider industry across the subscriptions funnel, leading to identification of quick-win and longer term **strategic recommendations** for improvement.

~9 weeks, April - June

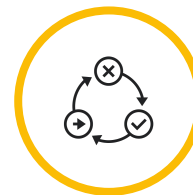
Summer break



North Star

Workshops to develop your **strategic approach using the North Star framework**: setting an ambitious target, identifying the key, highly specific outcomes necessary to achieve your goal, and hypotheses on how to do so. You will also **design quick-win experiments** and develop a robust **12-month action plan**.

~4 weeks, August - September



Test & Learn

Implementing and analysing a set of selected **long-term growth initiatives** using the North Star experiment methodology. Using the **Sustainability Index**, you will build a detailed **capabilities roadmap** and **organisational structure** that will support the implementation of your ideas.

~12 weeks, September - December

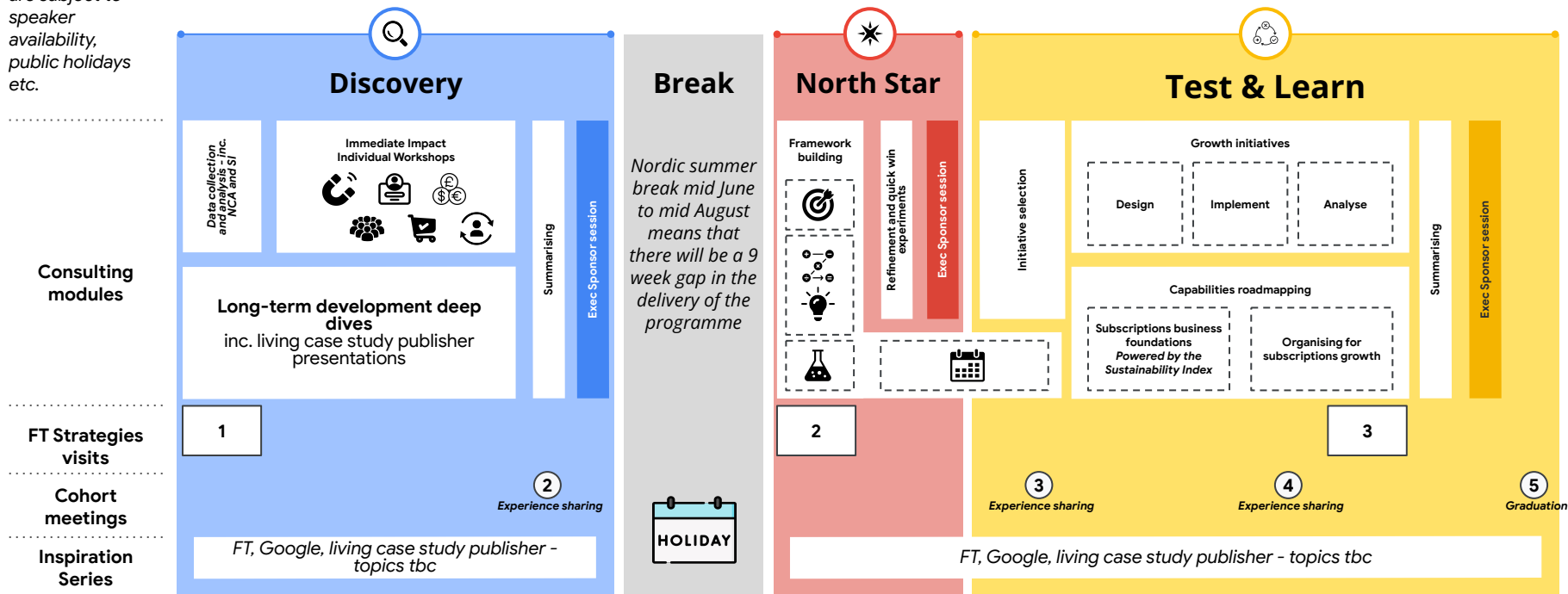
Throughout the programme, a series of inspirational seminars open to all participant colleagues will be delivered by Google and FT Strategies experts on core reader lifecycle areas and adjacent topics of interest

Each phase has distinct modules supported by on-sites and cohort meetings

Please note
that all timings
are subject to
speaker
availability,
public holidays
etc.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
April 17	24			May 15	22	29	June 5	12

10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
August 21	28	4	September 11	18	25	2	9	October 16	23	30	6	November 13	20	27	Dec. 4



*The timeline is indicative and subject to change

During the discovery phase, quick wins will be identified through understanding the current state of your business

Discovery Phase core elements

**Immediate impact
individual workshops**

Identify quick win opportunities and ensure that fundamentals across the reader lifecycle are grasped.

**Long-term
development deep
dives**

Understand topics at the forefront of innovation which represent growth opportunities through deep dives with FT and FTS experts, supported with a living case study partner.

Cohort meetings

Build a collaborative community with publishers at similar stages of development through sharing insights and past learnings.

Output

Diagnostic workshops

Covering cohort & publisher analyses, FT & industry best practices across the lifecycle



Executive summary

Covers key strengths, opportunities and proposed solutions, bespoke to you



A 3-5 year strategy for your subscriptions revenue growth will be co-created in the North Star phase

North Star Phase core elements

North Star framework

Create a detailed North Star framework that achieves growth in a mature market, along with specific outcomes and hypotheses.

Quick win experiments

Run experiments which deliver quick wins by leveraging existing capabilities.

12 month action plan

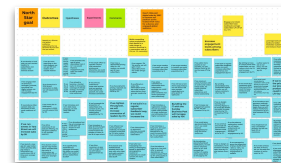
Create a robust 12 month roadmap that details the precise steps and responsibilities needed to deliver successful outcomes.



Output

A more detailed North Star framework

Defining your North Star goal, outcomes, sub-outcomes and hypotheses



Action plan

For prioritising, planning, and mapping the roll-out of all your ideas



Test & Learn Phase core elements

Build experiments that drive growth to solve critical business problems.

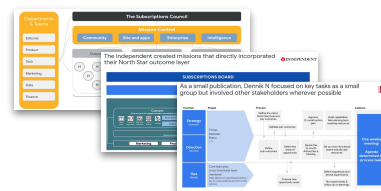
Audit of technology, digital skills and organisational capabilities to create a development roadmap, using Sustainability Index to inform this.

Develop existing governance structure to support the implementation of specific ideas.

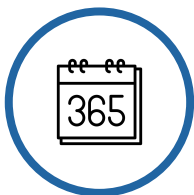
Bespoke growth initiatives
Identifying business problems and designing experiments to solve for this



A tailored, plan for development over the next 3-5 years to support implementation



In order to be eligible for the programme, certain criteria needs to be fulfilled



>3 years of subscriptions

You must have operated a subscriptions model for at least three years.

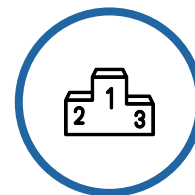
There is no minimum or maximum number of subscribers you have currently, although you are likely to have achieved significant market share and be focusing on optimisation rather than initial growth.



Historic investment

You must have invested in growing your subscriptions revenue stream and have a solid subscriber base.

You should also be able to demonstrate that you need help to get to the next level - the programme is designed to make a difference to your business that would not be achieved otherwise.

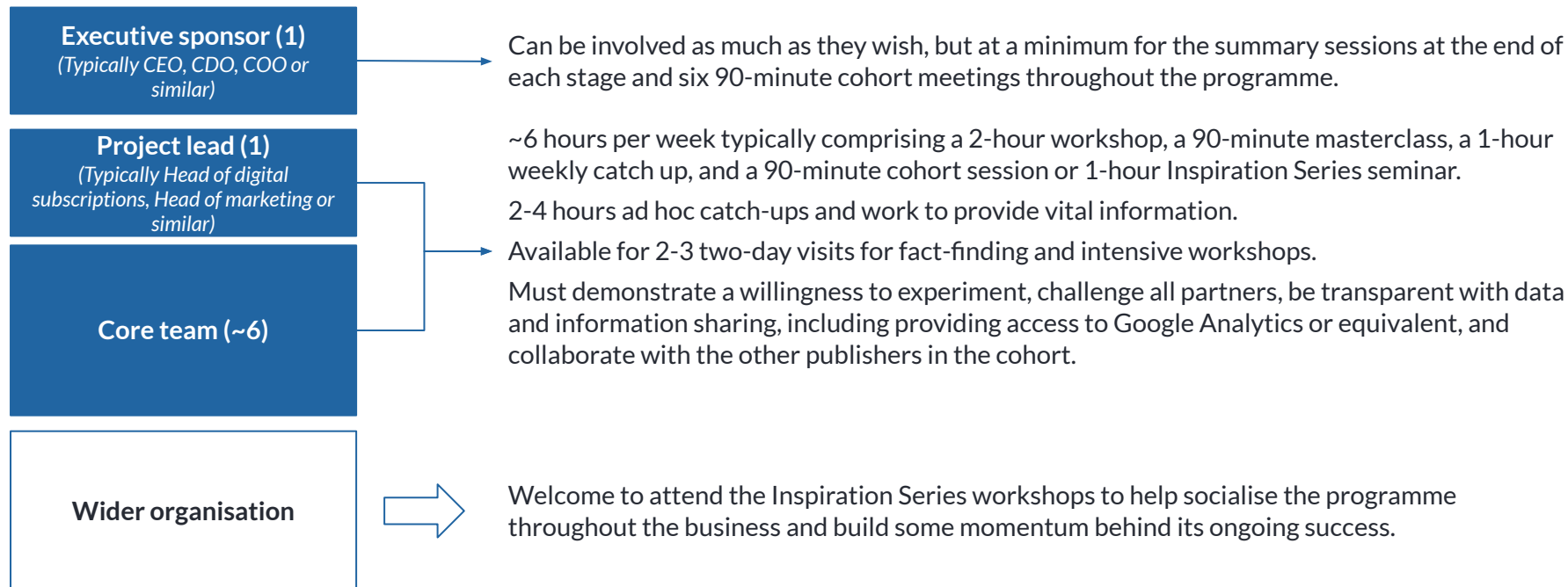


A top strategic priority

Building a sustainable and profitable subscriptions revenue stream must be a top strategic priority.

It does not have to be your only revenue stream, but you should consider subscriptions as an indispensable strategy that can work hand in hand with existing models.

Your time and energy are the only investments required - from 8 to 10 hours per week for the most involved team members



The programme is fully funded by **Google News Initiative** - the only cost to participants is the time and effort necessary to realise its full impact

Previous editions of the programme have received consistently high ratings and strong feedback



"The joint expertise and background of the partner teams are outstanding. The FT's unique North Star methodology enables organizations to thrive in the reader revenue business.

The programme is a unique crash-course in setting ambitious goals, empowering people, and bringing innovations that ensure the sustainable development of quality media."

Danuta Bregula
Head of Subscriptions
Gazeta Wyborcza



"This is a new form of consulting! You're coming with the brains and FT experience.

First time in my entire career I've worked with consultants that already know the business before they come into the situation and work in this impactful way.

You're changing consulting for the better!"

Philippe Colombet
Chief Technology Officer
Groupe Bayard



"In an awful long time of working, I have never been involved in anything quite as rigorous as this.

It is like a 10,000 piece jigsaw made of Heinz baked beans that is now all coming together.

I think what you are doing with us is really quite brilliant."

Mark Ody
Chief Marketing Officer
Irish Independent



"The project had from the beginning very clear goals and processes. All the steps which we have taken led to the final goal.

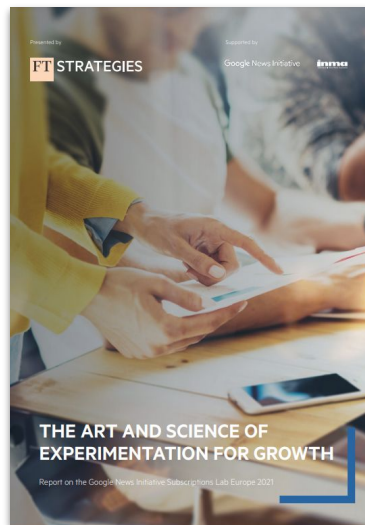
This programme changed the mindset in the company as well. Our paywall project got a much higher importance in our company because of the knowledge we developed during this programme."

Lenka Gallo
Head of Subscription Marketing
Vltava Labe Media

The reports from previous editions summarise many of the topics covered



Subscriptions Lab Europe
2020



Subscriptions Lab Europe
2021



Subscriptions Academy Europe
2022



About the Subscriptions Academy partners

Google News Initiative Digital Growth Programme

The [Digital Growth Programme](#) is an initiative within GNI (Google News Initiative), to help publishers grow their digital business online. Subscriptions Academy is just one of the many programmes it offers, along with other workshops and tools.

Google teams will:

- ★ Manage the success of the overall programme, providing advice and expertise as needed.
- ★ Provide access to the News Consumer Insights tool.
- ★ Make senior staff available to speak at the Inspiration Series seminars to develop a wider understanding of the market.

FT STRATEGIES

FT Strategies is the the subscriptions consultancy from the Financial Times. FTS' deep expertise enables its clients to build valuable recurring revenue relationships with their audiences and future-proof their businesses.

FT Strategies teams will:

- ★ Lead execution of programme including managing all modules and project phases / deliverables.
- ★ Lead participants in the development of a North Star framework, experiments and other capabilities.
- ★ Introduce FT subject matter experts to the programme.

To apply for for the programme, please
fill in the [application form](#).

Thank you