


NORTH STAR FOUNDATION MENA

May 2023

Programme explainer





The North Star Foundation empowers publishers to identify and realise a key strategic ambition for their digital news business, guided by the FT's North Star methodology.

The North Star Foundation programme gives publishers clarity on their ambitions for the future

Objective

The North Star Foundation programme is a practical 3-4 day, hands-on programme that enables a cohort of up to 12 publishers to focus on a key strategic ambition for their digital news business, be that in terms of strengthening digital journalism, developing audiences, or growing a reader revenue model. Over 3 days, publishers will develop an action plan and detailed roadmap to take their digital journey to the next level and realise their goal, based on FT's proprietary North Star tool. Each publisher will leave with:

- An action plan to realise a key business ambition
- Key next steps with milestones, outcomes & owners
- Practical experience on how to apply the North Star tool
- Exclusive in-depth insights and feedback from FT experts across data, editorial and marketing

Expert delivery

Participants are guided through each step of the North Star framework, with hands-on workshops complimented by inspiring talks and feedback sessions, and will receive dedicated 1:1 support and learn from both shared experiences of other participants and Google and FT Strategies expertise.

Strong historic results

We have now worked with 80+ publishers across nine previous editions. The programme has received consistently excellent quantitative and qualitative feedback from previous participants, achieving 4.6 CSAT score on average in 2022, and publishers have seen strong improvement in key subscriptions business metrics.

GNI and FT Strategies are excited about welcoming the next cohorts of publishers to the 2023 editions of the North Star Foundation, and look forward to receiving your application to be one of them.

Previous participants



"The training was a great success and I would like to thank the FT team for providing us with excellent training and knowledge. I learnt a lot during the five days."

Isaiah Langat
Head of Digital, Radio Africa Group

The North Star framework helps drive your ambitious growth...

Our proven methodology has delivered outstanding results for the FT and clients

North Star is the model used by the Financial Times that helped to achieve the goal of 1M paying subscribers in 2019.

It brings clear, unambiguous focus to the destination you are aiming for. It combines strategic design with innovation to provide a framework that every individual in the organisation can work within, connecting operational activities (and metrics) to the wider strategic context.

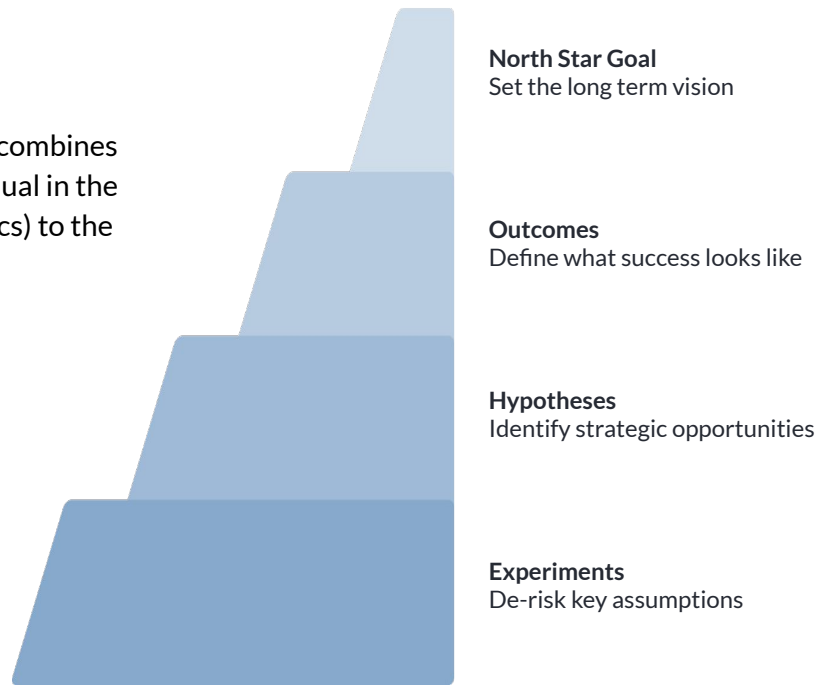
"This week has been filled with intensive bursts that has pushed me and nudged me towards believing in myself and capabilities more as well as understanding the importance of an interconnected team that works towards the same goal"

Charles Lee Mathews
Publisher & CEO, Inc Africa

"The week has been really thought provoking. It helped us brainstorm ideas and create a clear plan to achieve our aims."

Looking forward to getting stuck in and testing our experiments and getting our plan in action"

Max Hase
Head of Subscriptions, RND



...by uniting and inspiring your entire organisation

The main benefits of North Star are:

Organisational alignment

Defining a single and shared goal is a powerful tool to align resources in a **single direction** - desired outcomes cut across teams / departments.



Focused prioritisation

An outcome-driven approach focuses efforts and resources on **what truly matters**, eliminating non-critical projects / ideas.

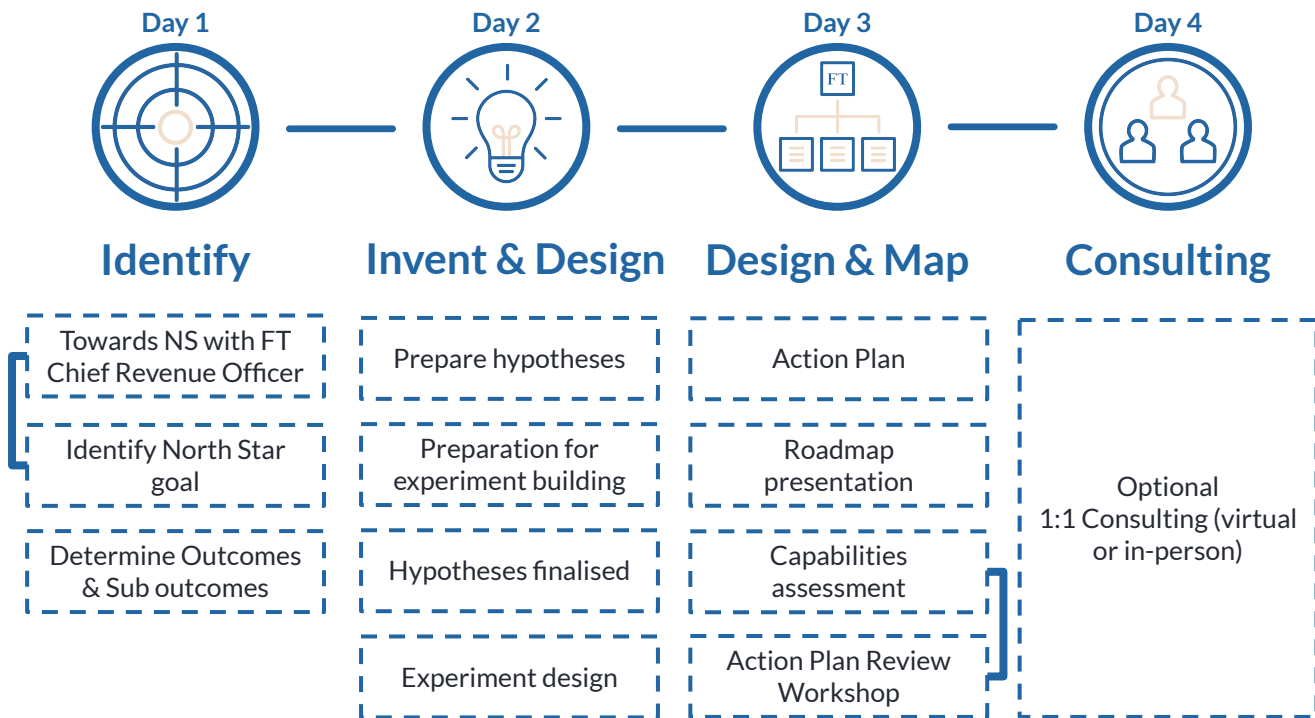


Ambitious goals

The approach shows where you stand on the learning curve, guides you logically step by step, and allows you to explore **bigger and bolder ideas**.

The North Star framework is designed as an **accelerator** to achieve an organisation's objective

The programme covers all stages of the North Star framework over 3 in-person days and 1 optional



* Connecting lines indicates part of the days which is the most value for senior stakeholders



1:1 Consultations

Our optional **1:1 consulting sessions** offer added value in addition to the 3 day programme for publishers by providing tailored guidance and support.

Programme participation to drive value

This is a recommended participation structure to maximise effectiveness of the NSF programme

C - Level

Senior Attendees

For senior exec sponsors, **we highly recommend attending a session on both Day 1 and Day 3** of the programme to ensure that the full impact of the North Star methodology can be realised after the programme. These sessions **offer invaluable insights** from regional senior media experts and distinguished FT staff.

Time

Team Time Commitment

North Star Foundation is a **3-day hands-on programme**. Each day will be **full of teamwork and brainstorming sessions** with valuable insights **from FT expert speakers sharing their knowledge/answering questions**.

Optional
Day

1:1 Consulting

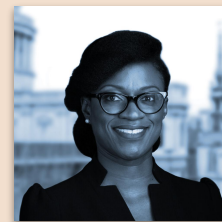
Day 4 of the programme will be dedicated to an optional **1:1 consulting session**. Each publisher will be offered to pick a slot and attend their session to **consult on publishing related issues they are facing, or interested in**.

* Guest speakers are subject to availability

Potential Guest Speakers*



Jon Slade
Chief Revenue Officer
Financial Times



Tara Lajumoke
Managing Director
FT Strategies



Aled John
Deputy Managing
Director
FT Strategies



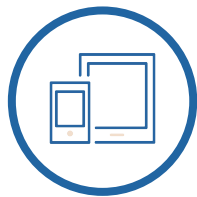
McKinley Hyden
Director of Analytics
Business Impact
Financial Times



STRATEGIES

| Google News Initiative

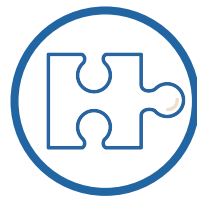
Application criteria



Established digital base

The programme is designed for publishers with an existing base of digital readers, typically >250,000 monthly unique viewers.

Publishers must also have sufficient data on their performance to date in the area they wish to focus on whilst learning about the North Star methodology.



Growth potential

CEO / senior management Senior leadership must be aligned with the particular digital news publishing goal that their business brings to the programme and be willing to engage with the North Star methodology.

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.




Team commitment

North Star Foundation is a 3-day hands-on programme. Each day will require at least 7 hours of dedicated time.

You should assign 3-5 individuals to the team, drawn from a wide range of departments, but with editorial and advertising / commercial departments as a minimum. You will also need a board level sponsor to attend at least the core elements of the programme.*

* C level participants will have options to attend, see previous slide for more information



The North Star Foundation will provide tailored support and consultation for MENA publishers, enabling them to accelerate their growth and develop innovative insights while fostering collaboration and a culture of excellence.

About the North Star Foundation 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. North Star Foundation is just one of the many programmes it offers, along with other workshops and tools.

Google teams will:

- ★ Manage success of overall programme, providing advice and expertise as needed
- ★ Connect participants to the GNI network
- ★ Leverage the News Consumer Insights tool for ongoing analysis of impact on your business

FT STRATEGIES

FT Strategies is the growth subscriptions consultancy from the Financial Times. FTS' deep expertise enables its clients to future-proof their business, empower their teams, and fulfil their goals with our proven data, digital and change consulting expertise

FT Strategies teams will:

- ★ Lead execution of programme including introducing FT experts and their insights to cohort members
- ★ Lead the development of participants' North Star framework, using its experience of working with 300+ other publishers
- ★ Offer 1-to-1 consulting sessions to each participant during the programme

Thank you

To apply for the programme,
please fill in the application
form

