AI Foundation Vienna

Programme Explainer

June 2024

Delivered in partnership with the Google News Initiative, the AI Foundation programme helps publishers who wish to explore and start acting on the opportunity that AI brings, built upon the FT's deep understanding of publishing and Google's expertise in AI

AI Foundation helps publishers understand the AI opportunity and start to implement a strategy

Objective

The AI Foundation programme is a practical four-day, hands-on programme that enables a cohort of up to 12 publishers to understand how to seize the opportunity that AI offers, from exploring the potential of AI, to designing proof-of-concepts that can be implemented immediately, and to nurturing the environment for AI innovation to thrive in their organisation. Over the course of the programme, publishers will develop an action plan and detailed roadmap to take their AI journey forward in support of their existing commercial goals, whilst keeping reader benefits firmly in mind. Each publisher will leave with:

★ An action plan to implement an AI strategy, including an overarching goal, prioritised use cases, and experiment design
★ An understanding of the technical requirements for implementing an AI strategy
★ Clarity on ethical, internal policy, governance and socialisation considerations

Expert delivery

Participants are guided through each step of formulating a strategic approach to AI implementation, with hands-on workshops complemented by inspiring talks, feedback sessions and exclusive in-depth insights from Financial Times experts, and the shared experiences of the cohort. In partnership with APA, the four-day event will be hosted in person in Vienna at the APA offices.

A proven track record of impact

The Google News Initiative and FT Strategies partnership has already worked with more than 700 publishers across many other programmes in EMEA and worldwide to develop real-world strategies designed to help ensure success in the digital age.

We are excited about welcoming a cohort of publishers to the AI Foundation, and look forward to receiving your application for the programme.

FT STRATEGIES Google News Initiative | **APA**
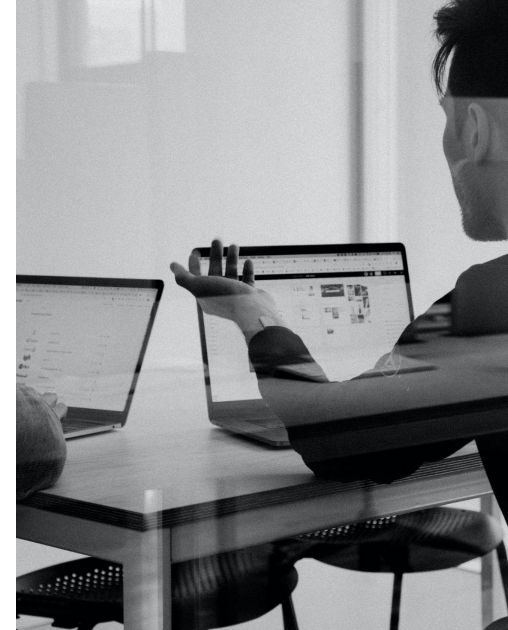
"Bold, responsible, together. We want to set the standard for responsible AI."

**Matt Brittin
President of Google EMEA**

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The programme covers the AI journey, from first principles to an implementation action plan

|	**Day 1**	**Day 2**	**Day 3**	**Day 4**
	The AI opportunity	**Identifying use cases**	**Designing a concept**	**Taking AI forward**
Key questions addressed:	→ How and why has AI become so important? → How has the FT embraced the AI opportunity? → What ethical considerations are there when implementing AI?	→ What specific opportunities does AI offer for different departments? → How do you turn ideas into real-world initiatives? → Where should publishers focus their efforts first?	→ How do publishers test the viability and commercial impact of AI opportunities? → How has the FT made a success of an idea? → What are possible risks and how can they be mitigated?	→ What basic technical capabilities does an AI strategy require? → How do publishers govern and scale their AI operations? → How can publishers stay up to date on AI regulations and policy?
Publishers will:	✔ Align the AI opportunity with their existing commercial goals ✔ Develop outcomes to support their ambitious AI goal	✔ Receive a framework for thinking about AI applications ✔ Develop a prioritised bank of AI use cases to consider for testing	✔ Design a proof of concept to take forward to experimentation ✔ Practice using a repeatable method for the future	✔ Build a capabilities roadmap to support the strategy ✔ Write an AI charter to communicate with their wider organisation

"We're defining a playbook for AI built around trust, integrity, innovation and quality journalism."

John Ridding
CEO, Financial Times

FT STRATEGIES | Google News Initiative | APA

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Application criteria
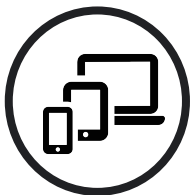
HQ in DACH and an established digital base

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

You must have a robust approach to audience research in order to generate reader-centric AI ideas and have a good level of data capability and literacy in order to assess these ideas' impact.

At an early stage on the AI strategic journey

Publishers may have already begun to experiment lightly with AI, but at a minimum must have the capacity and ability to take the first steps on their journey.

During the programme, you will design a proof of concept for an AI use case - this is not a tech build exercise, but you should have the staff in place to take this next step after the end of the programme.

AI recognised as offering growth potential

Senior leadership must be ready and willing to embrace the opportunity that AI offers and be willing and inclined to action over the next 6-12 months.

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 to drive value

AI Foundation will be an intense but rewarding experience, and requires resource investment to realise the full impact of the programme

C - Level

Senior attendees

Nominating a board-level sponsor to attend at least the key sessions is recommended. It is important that your participation in the programme is led by at least one person able to drive strategic change on completion of the week.

XFN team

Representatives from across the business

You should assign 3-5 individuals to the team, drawn from a wide range of departments, but with editorial, commercial, and tech departments as a minimum. All sessions are designed to be relevant for all, and collaboration is a core tenet of the programme.

Time

Full dedication

AI Foundation is a four-day hands-on programme, each day requiring at least 6 hours of dedicated time. It includes many teamwork and brainstorming sessions, as well as valuable insights from experts sharing their knowledge and answering questions.

About the AI Foundation programme 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. The AI Design Sprint is just one of the many programmes it offers, along with other workshops and tools.

FT STRATEGIES

FT Strategies is the specialist media and publishing consultancy from the Financial Times. FT Strategies' 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.

APA

The **Austrian Press Agency (APA)** is Austria's national public news agency and a leading information provider in the region. Established in 1946, APA offers a wide range of services including news gathering, distribution, and various multimedia content, catering to media companies, public institutions, and private organisations.

Google teams will:

★ Manage success of overall programme
★ Provide advice and expertise
★ Connect participants to the GNI network

FT Strategies teams will:

★ Lead execution of programme including the workshops and inspiration sessions led by industry experts
★ Advise on AI developments within the industry, drawing on our experience of working with 700+ publishers and our own in-house experience

APA will:

★ Host the AI Foundation in its offices in Vienna, Austria
★ Provide local market expertise and guidance to the cohort of DACH publishers

Further AI insights to inspire you

Google News Initiative
Digital Growth Programme

FT STRATEGIES

Case Study

Audience insights powered by AI

"Operating a news site, but not being able to own the user data is the biggest problem that the Korean news industry is facing" - Seung-Il Kim, Digital Editor of Strategy, The Busan Ibo

▶ Click to play

Case Study

Keeping drivers safe with AI-powered journalism

The Boston Globe's investigation into automotive records, analysing thousands of documents using Pinpoint, an AI-powered research tool in GNI's Journalist Studio suite, yields a Pulitzer Prize

▶ Click to play

Webinar

Artificial Intelligence in Media and Publishing

FT Strategies experts explore how to start applying AI to the customer lifecycle, and how to scale an AI capability by taking into account the elements which set AI apart from other fields of data analysis

Play on ftstrategies.com

Insight

Artificial Intelligence 101

Core functionalities and foundational use cases for digital publishers. Other than LLMs, there is already a range of use cases which do not require techniques from the forefront of AI research to be impactful for digital subscriptions businesses

Read on ftstrategies.com

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

Thank you