



EQUINet Founding Cohort: Journalist Membership

The Equity and Natural Resource Media Network is selecting 20–25 journalists from Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria to report on inequality and natural resource governance.

COUNTRIES

Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria

PLACES

20–25 journalists

TERM

12 months (Year 1, founding term)

DEADLINE

15 November 2026

01 Background

West Africa holds vast reserves of gold, oil, gas and minerals, yet millions of its people still live in poverty. Economic, gender, spatial and social inequalities remain entrenched, and they are often deepest in the communities where extraction takes place.

The media has a critical role in holding governments and companies to account for how this wealth is managed and shared, but it remains under-used. Journalists in the region often lack specialist knowledge of extractive governance and inequality, are under-resourced for in-depth investigation, and have few links with peers across borders. As a result, stories of mismanagement, exclusion and inequity too often go untold.

02 About EQUINet

To close this gap, the **Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC)** has established **EQUINet, the Equity and Natural Resource Media Network**. This regional initiative gives journalists in Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria the knowledge, tools and platforms to report on inequality and natural resource management with depth and impact. ISODEC serves as lead convener and secretariat.

Goal: to build and sustain a group of informed, committed journalists who drive public debate on inequality and natural resource management, strengthening accountability, transparency and equity across West Africa.

EQUINet's objectives

1. Strengthen journalists' capacity to analyse and report on natural resource governance and inequality.
2. Enable collaboration and shared learning across Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.
3. Raise public awareness and policy attention to the links between resource governance and inequality.
4. Establish a sustainable network that supports consistent coverage and advocacy.

How the network works

- **Capacity building:** training, a Resource Reporting Toolkit and mentorship
- **Story development:** media briefings, story grants and editorial support
- **Public awareness:** multimedia campaigns and media partnerships
- **Regional collaboration:** forums, partnerships and an Annual West Africa Journalism Forum

03 Purpose of this call

ISODEC invites applications from practising journalists to become **founding members of EQUINet**. Selected journalists will form the network's first cohort. They will help shape its first-year plan, elect its leadership and produce the reporting that defines its work.

04 Roles and responsibilities of members

During the 12-month founding term, members will be expected to:

- Produce regular, well-researched stories on inequality, natural resource governance, fiscal justice and the experiences of communities affected by extraction.
- Take part in EQUINet's inception webinar, cohort planning sessions and Founding General Assembly, where members ratify the network's charter and elect its officers.
- Attend regional and national training workshops, media briefings and peer-learning sessions.
- Collaborate with fellow members on cross-border and joint investigations where possible.
- Contribute stories and materials to EQUINet's digital knowledge hub.
- Uphold EQUINet's code of ethics, including accuracy, fairness, independence and protection of sources.
- Act as ambassadors for EQUINet within their newsrooms and professional networks.

05 What members will gain

Skills and knowledge

- Training in investigative and data journalism focused on extractives, fiscal justice and inequality
- The EQUINet Resource Reporting Toolkit and online learning materials
- Mentorship from experienced journalists and advisory partners

Support for reporting

- Opportunities to apply for story and travel grants for in-depth and cross-border reports
- Editorial support and regular briefings on new data and issues in the sector

Visibility and recognition

- The chance to have work selected for EQUINet's flagship annual publication, *The State of Extractives in West Africa*
- Amplification of stories through EQUINet's multimedia campaigns and media partners
- Eligibility for EQUINet's planned fellowship and annual awards

Network and exposure

- A regional community of peers across three countries
- Opportunities to take part in regional and international conferences and the Annual West Africa Journalism Forum

Details of financial support for members, including any stipend and grant terms, will be shared with selected applicants during onboarding.

06 Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be a practising journalist (staff or freelance) in print, radio, television, online or multimedia.
- Be based in and working mainly in **Ghana, Sierra Leone or Nigeria**.
- Have at least **two years** of professional journalism experience.
- Show experience of, or a strong interest in, reporting on governance, natural resources, public finance, inequality or related issues.
- Be able to commit time to EQUINet activities throughout the 12-month founding term.
- Be able to work in English.

ISODEC is committed to a diverse and balanced network. **Women journalists, and journalists reporting from mining and resource-affected communities, are strongly encouraged to apply.**

07 Application requirements

Applicants should submit the following three items:

1

Resume / CV

- Maximum three pages
- Show your journalism experience, current outlet or freelance status, beats covered and any relevant training or awards

2

Sample reports and publications

- Two to three published or broadcast pieces, preferably from the last three years
- At least one on governance, natural resources, public finance or inequality
- Submit as links, PDFs, or audio or video files

3

Two references

- At least one should be a current or former editor or supervisor
- For each, give name, position, organisation, email and phone number
- Referees may be contacted for shortlisted applicants

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

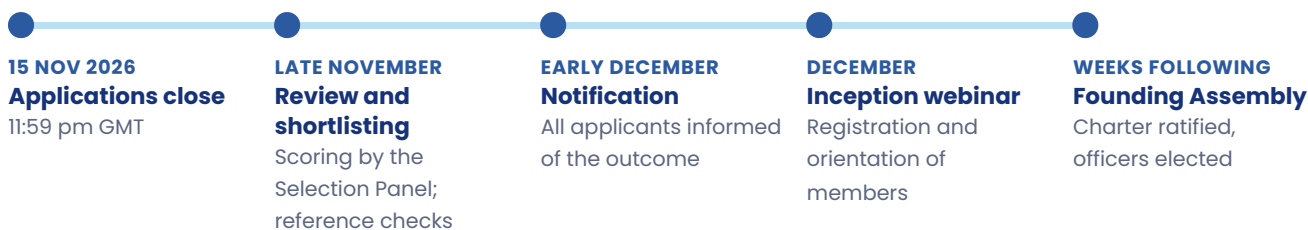
08 Selection criteria

Applications will be reviewed by a Selection Panel made up of ISODEC and at least one independent advisory partner, and scored against the following criteria:

Criterion	What the panel will look for	Weight
Quality of sample work	Depth of research, use of evidence and data, clarity of writing or production, and ethical standards	35%
Thematic relevance	Track record of, or clear interest in, reporting on governance, extractives, public finance or inequality	25%
Professional experience	Years and range of experience, reach of outlets, and growth shown in the CV	25%
References	Strength of professional endorsement from editors and senior colleagues	15%

In making final selections, the panel will also aim for balance across the three countries, gender and types of media.

09 Selection process and timeline



Dates after the deadline are indicative and may change. Applicants will be informed of any changes.

10 How to apply

1. Prepare your **resume/CV**, **two to three sample reports or publications**, and details of **two references**.
2. Combine your documents into a single email. Large audio or video files can be shared as links (for example, Google Drive or Dropbox).
3. Use this subject line: **EQUINet Application – [Full Name] – [Country]**.
4. Send your application to **isodec.isodec@gmail.com** by **15 November 2026, 11:59 pm GMT**.

You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt. Only complete applications received by the deadline will be considered.

Apply now

Email your resume, sample reports and publications, and two references to **isodec.isodec@gmail.com**.

DEADLINE

15 November 2026

11:59 pm GMT

11 Membership terms

- **Term:** founding membership runs for 12 months from the Founding General Assembly. Continued membership will depend on active participation and adherence to the EQUINet Charter.
- **Independence:** members keep full editorial independence. EQUINet supports journalists' reporting but does not direct or approve their stories.
- **Governance:** members will ratify the EQUINet Charter and elect a President, Secretary and Organiser to lead the network alongside ISODEC as secretariat.
- **Future intake:** after the founding cohort, new members will be recruited through an annual open call, with expansion to more ECOWAS countries planned.

12 Data protection

Information submitted will be used only to assess applications and manage EQUINet membership. It will be handled confidentially by ISODEC and the Selection Panel, and will not be shared with third parties without the applicant's consent.

13 Enquiries

Questions about this call can be sent to **isodec.isodec@gmail.com** with the subject line "EQUINet Enquiry". Please send enquiries by **8 November 2026** so we can respond before the deadline.

About ISODEC. The Integrated Social Development Centre is a policy research and advocacy organisation committed to social justice, equitable development and accountable governance. ISODEC works with communities, civil society organisations, policymakers and international partners to address the structural inequalities that affect vulnerable populations. Learn more at **www.isodec.org**.