

COMMISSIONING BRIEF :- SPECIALIST FACTUAL

October, 2019

Head of Specialist Factual :- Colm O'Callaghan

Duration: 50 minutes – one offs and short series. Pre-watershed half hour series up to six parts.

Budget Range: €70,000 – €110,000 per hour [in exceptional circumstances, budgets can be negotiated]

Broadcast: Tuesdays and Thursdays 22:15pm RTÉ One. Mondays 9:30pm RTÉ One. Sundays 6:30pm RTÉ One. And also playing in pre-watershed, weekdays.

SPECIALIST FACTUAL COMMISSIONING BRIEF

The Specialist Factual brief covers any content for linear or on-line that deals with History, Natural History, Wildlife, Agriculture, Science, Education, Diversity and, on occasion, one-off docs about sport and music.

Natural History and Wildlife

RTÉ has a distinguished track record with its output in this area :- recent examples include 'Ireland's Deep Atlantic', 'A Wild Irish Year' and 'Ireland's Oceans', big, long-term projects shot over time and with international ambition. We will continue to prioritise proposals that deal with Ireland's unique physical make-up, over ground and under.

We are, for example, currently in production on two landmark natural history series for RTÉ One :- both of them are multi-funded, high-end projects that will translate well in other markets also.

Our Natural History output can play on Sundays in pre or post-watershed and also in pre-watershed on weekdays, either in half-hour or, when appropriate, one-off, hour-long slots. A recent Peter Wilson-led series on animal physiology and veterinary science, 'Animals Inside Out', is a useful example of a shorter-form series with science and education at its core but with broad audience appeal also.

We're keen to develop our approach to this type of content and are especially interested in new perspectives and form :- ambitious, tiered live events that appeal to wide, family-centred audiences or projects that can enable and engage mass viewer participation.

'Big Week On The Farm' – which is co-funded as part of RTÉ's joint initiative with Science Foundation Ireland - and 'Weather Live' – which is BAI-backed – are useful comparisons.

We ask, in the first instance, that producers submit ideas into the eCommissioning system <https://e-commissioning.rte.ie/SWIFT.Web/skins/rte/login.aspx> system under the programme category **Factual Specialist "Natural History & Wildlife"**.

History

RTÉ is committed to expanding its history slate over the next five years, not simply in respect of volume but in terms of form, style and aspiration. As outlined to producers and production companies, we would like to broaden the manner in which we interpret history, explore the ways we tell the stories of Ireland and how we distribute them.

Last summer's series, 'The Game' - RTÉ One's three-part history-strand that told the story of an emerging Ireland through the prism of the sport of hurling, is a useful comparison. As is 'Election 18', a long-form, contemporary re-telling of the story of the general election of 1918 that fused aspects of drama, studio-based analysis and compelling on-line accompaniment and that played on RTÉ One in pre-watershed.

Other recent examples include Niamh Sammon's documentary, authored and presented by Michael McDowell, on the relationship between the Irish state and the Catholic church, 'Rome V Republic' and Olivia O'Leary's recent two-parter on Daniel O'Connell, 'Forgotten King Of Ireland'.

The slate is interested in a broad range of themes – upcoming one-offs include a Joe Duffy documentary about children during 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland, a left-field film about a long-forgotten League Of Ireland team's trip to Libya and a documentary looking at David Gray's best-selling album, 'White Ladder'.

More generally, proposals that can attract third-party and/or ancillary funding are of special interest. Particularly projects that have academic partnerships in place : editorial, financial or both.

Special consideration will currently be given to ambitious, provocative strands rooted in the many stories of the emergence of the Irish state from 1920 until 1927 and beyond. To this end, we are actively seeking bigger, event-based approaches to content and are also interested in new voices and fresh perspectives, both on camera and off.

Upcoming history projects will cover Michael Collins, Terence McSwiney, sex crimes against women during The War of Independence and Civil War and a two-part, authored series on British attitudes to Ireland during this period.

All proposals should be strong enough to play on Mondays at 9.35 on RTÉ One but can also come into the schedule as self-standing event pieces, like '50 Years : To The Moon And Back', which played over 90 minutes on RTÉ One last August. History content will also play on Tuesdays and Thursdays on RTÉ One at 10.15.

We ask, in the first instance, that producers submit ideas into the eCommissioning system <https://e-commissioning.rte.ie/SWIFT.Web/skins/rte/login.aspx> system under the programme category **Factual Specialist "History"**.

Science And Education

RTÉ will continue to support strong statement pieces in these areas.

Up-coming projects include a one-off film about growing up in Direct Provision, a three-part series on Ireland's involvement in global affairs and a feature-length documentary that spends two years in the life of a young, non-verbal boy with autism.

Also in production are two distinct projects on extreme weather patterns and domestic waste, as well as a new, third series of the heritage and engineering series, 'Building Ireland'.

All proposals should, where appropriate, state clear plans for digital additionality. The slate is especially keen on dual-platform story-telling and in exploring new opportunities in this regard. All proposals with formed cross-media potential outlined are very welcome.

The slate takes a broad view of on-screen talent. Among those currently leading our output are Áine Lawlor, Ella McSweeney, Dr. Marie Cassidy, Brian Kerr, Gerald Fleming, Maia Dunphy, Orla Murphy, David Gray and Eoin Warner.

We are also open to discussing all strategic and funding partnerships, advertiser-funded programming and completion funding where appropriate. We have funded several recent projects in partnership with the **BAI's Sound and Vision** scheme and will continue to support particular proposals that comply with the spirit of that fund.

Budget range for submissions with no third party or co-production funding should be submitted in line with the advertised information above. Submissions which do include third party or co-production funding should clearly detail finance plans, identifying all funding parties and the amounts committed.

We ask, in the first instance, that producers submit ideas into the eCommissioning system <https://e-commissioning.rte.ie/SWIFT.Web/skins/rte/login.aspx> system under the programme category **Factual Specialist "Science & Education"**.