

To the members of the Future of Media Commission,

I am one of the signatories of a group submission to the Commission's current public consultation, which reflected the collective work undertaken by a group of individuals who contributed to a recent Dublin Digital Radio initiative and subsequent Dublin Fringe Festival event exploring the present and future of public service broadcasting.

As an academic researcher in the field of media and communications in Ireland, I would like to contribute a further brief individual submission to the consultation that alerts the members of the Commission to some of my work on Irish public service media that I believe is relevant to the Commission's remit and consultation themes.

In particular, I would like to refer members to my doctoral dissertation which explored Raidió Teilifís Éireann's role in political mediation in the wake of the global financial crisis. The doctoral project deployed a multi-methodological approach to the topic, involving an extended period of on-site ethnographic observation of journalistic work in the RTE Newsroom, interviews with broadcasting professionals and station management, textual analyses of samples of broadcast news and current affairs output, and participant observation as a member of RTÉ's main mechanism of public participation in institutional governance, the RTÉ Audience Council.

This empirical work, whose findings have since been published in a series of peer-reviewed articles in Irish and international academic journals and which are enclosed with this submission, casts serious doubt on the adequacy of the current model of provision of public media from a range of angles. A separately enclosed opinion-editorial piece published in the Dublin Inquirer and Irish Examiner summarises some of these doubts, in particular drawing attention to what is argued to be a limited editorial adaptation to the post-2008 political, economic, cultural and technological contexts in which RTÉ operates, to the many profound impacts of the broadcaster's institutional dependencies on state and market power, and to its organisational aversion to strong forms of public inclusion and participation both in programming and institutional governance.

As we argue in our collective submission to the Commission, the limitations of the traditional model of public media provision- institutional, legal, regulatory, ethical, professional and technological- are manifold, increasingly apparent, and threaten its future viability, collectively meriting nothing less than a fundamental rethink of the roles and model of delivery of the public media enterprise. Further, today's interlinked crises of legitimacy of democratic politics and of public service media means that this task must centrally involve the wider public in processes and structures that are expansive in scope, radically inclusive, and permanent.

Yours,

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Enclosed:

- *'Shock to the system? Journalism in Irish public service media after the crash'* (Journal article published in the Irish Journal of Sociology, 28 (2) (2020))
- *'Public Service Austerity Broadcasts: Framing the Euro Debt Crisis'* (Journal article published in the International Journal of Communication (12) (2018))
- *'Participatory cultures and democratic legitimation in public service media: Ireland and the RTÉ Audience Council'* (Journal article published in Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies, 14 (2) (2017))
- *'Weathering the Crisis? Managing Democracy at a National Broadcaster'* (Doctoral dissertation, University College Cork, 2016)
- *'RTÉ Needs to Make a Case for Public-Service Media in the 21st Century'* (Opinion piece published in the Dublin Inquirer and Irish Examiner, 2019)