PARTICIPANT WORKING GUIDE

MEDITERRANEAN OBSERVER

ONE REGION. ONE WINDOW ON ITS TOURISM STORY.

Know what is happening. Across the Mediterranean.

BRAIN Think Tank | Thursday, 26 November 2026 | Hilton Malta

The purpose

The Mediterranean's tourism story remains fragmented across countries, languages and information channels. Mediterranean Observer is envisaged as a dedicated tourism news and information portal, connecting developments in investment, policy, air and sea routes, openings, research, innovation, people and ideas across the region. Podcasts and audio interviews will be part of this cross-border storytelling approach.

The purpose of this BRAIN Think Tank is to define a practical project brief and development pathway for the portal: its editorial proposition, intended audiences, contributor and correspondent network, partnerships, technology and digital strategy, governance, and first steps toward launch. This is a working session to shape the project, not a formal media launch.

Participation is open and evolving

The named participants are an initial, provisional group, not an exclusive or final list. Participation is open to anyone with a genuine interest in Mediterranean tourism information, journalism, broadcasting, digital publishing, research, culture or cross-border cooperation. Names, roles and attendance may change or increase. The professional titles supplied for this working draft should be checked before external publication.

At a glance

WHEN	WHERE	OBJECTIVE
13:00 – Networking lunch	Spinola Foyer, Hilton Malta	Meet and connect
14:30–17:00 – BRAIN Think Tank	Hilton Malta	Define the Observer project brief and pathway

How BRAIN works

BRAIN brings together different minds, cultures, experiences and networks. Participants need not be media specialists: producers, journalists, tourism leaders, policymakers, artists, researchers and industry representatives can each contribute ideas, examples and connections. Share what you have seen work, challenge assumptions constructively and help identify partners who can turn the concept into a sustainable service.

Programme and working method

TIME	ACTIVITY	OUTPUT
14:30–14:45	Welcome, purpose and facilitation	Shared ambition and principles
14:45–15:25	Part 1: examples and gaps	Audience needs, lessons from other platforms
15:25–16:10	Part 2: editorial and operating design	Draft model and partner map
16:10–16:40	Group proposals and discussion	Priority decisions and alternatives
16:40–16:55	Agree project brief and pathway	First-phase scope, leads and milestones
16:55–17:00	Close	Next steps

Times and breakout arrangements are indicative and may be adjusted to attendance.

Five proposed workstreams

01 EDITORIAL IDENTITY & AUDIENCES

What makes Mediterranean Observer distinctive? News versus analysis; regional relevance; audiences including industry professionals, investors, policymakers, researchers and interested travellers; editorial tone and value proposition.

02 COUNTRY CORRESPONDENTS & CONTRIBUTOR NETWORK

Country coverage, multilingual reporting, correspondent selection, editorial commissioning, training, verification, contributor agreements and ways to include emerging voices.

03 CONTENT PARTNERSHIPS, PODCASTS & DISTRIBUTION

Collaboration with broadcasters, tourism organisations, publishers, universities and newsrooms; podcast production partners, interview hosts, country-based audio contributors, syndication, rights, newsletters and social distribution. media, video and podcasts.

04 DIGITAL PLATFORM, AUDIO & DISCOVERABILITY

Website structure and accessibility, search and archives, topic/country tagging, multilingual workflows, audio and video publishing, podcast hosting and distribution, analytics and responsible AI assistance.bile-first user experience.

05 GOVERNANCE, SUSTAINABILITY & LAUNCH

Editorial independence, accuracy and corrections, conflicts of interest, copyright, data protection, governance, financial sustainability, launch team, phased rollout and measures of impact.

PODCASTS & AUDIO STORYTELLING

Develop a recognisable Mediterranean Observer podcast strand: interviews with tourism leaders and innovators, country dispatches, policy explainers, research conversations and cross-border debates. Explore audio-first and filmed podcast formats, multilingual transcripts and subtitles, and distribution through the Observer portal and major podcast services.

The Think Tank should identify potential hosts, correspondents, recording and editing partners, editorial safeguards, production cadence, audience measures and a feasible pilot series for the first 90 days.

Editorial and operating principles

- Regional and cross-border by design: connect stories across Mediterranean countries rather than simply aggregate national headlines.
- Credible and independent: distinguish reporting, opinion, partner content and sponsorship clearly.
- Multilingual and accessible: reduce language barriers without compromising accuracy or context.
- Useful and timely: prioritise verified information with practical relevance for the tourism ecosystem.
- Respect copyright, attribution, privacy, editorial ethics and source protection.
- Start with a viable pilot; build an enduring contributor network and publishing discipline before scaling.

Discussion prompts — shaping the project

Part 1 — What should the Observer provide?

- What information do tourism stakeholders struggle to find across the Mediterranean?
- Which news categories should launch first: policy, investment, transport routes, openings, research, innovation, people or culture?
- Which regional news services, newsletters or broadcaster collaborations offer useful lessons?
- How should content be curated, verified, translated and made relevant across countries?

Part 2 — How should we build it?

- Who could serve as country correspondents, editorial advisers and founding content partners?
- What should the minimum viable portal include at launch, including a pilot podcast series, and what can wait?
- How should the editorial board, commissioning process, corrections and conflict-of-interest safeguards work?
- What distribution channels, podcast platforms, presenters and media partnerships could establish a credible audience?
- What are the first 90-day actions, owners, resources and measurable milestones?

What success looks like

By 17:00, participants should aim to outline a draft Mediterranean Observer project brief: editorial mission and audiences; priority beats and countries; a provisional editorial and correspondent model; potential founding partners; a minimum viable digital platform; governance and sustainability requirements; and a phased roadmap with named follow-up actions. Decisions remain proposals until formally agreed by the project sponsors. Include an initial podcast concept, potential hosts and production partners in the project brief.

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to be a journalist or broadcaster?

No. Tourism, business, research, culture, policy, digital technology and international networks are all relevant.

Should I prepare a formal presentation?

No. Bring examples of useful media platforms, potential partners, editorial ideas and contacts.

Are we launching the portal at this meeting?

No. The session is intended to define the project brief, pathway and prospective partnerships.

Will this be a promotional platform?

The group should define editorial independence and clear separation of journalism, sponsored material and institutional communications.

Is the participant list final?

No. It is provisional and participation is open to other interested contributors.

APPENDIX A — INITIAL PARTICIPANTS & PROFILES

Proposed names and supplied roles are listed below for working purposes. Countries are included only where provided or clear from the supplied description. Individual roles and attendance should be verified before circulation outside the group.

PARTICIPANT	ROLE	SHORT PROFESSIONAL PROFILE
Keith Chetcuti	Joint facilitator	Chief Executive Officer, Public Broadcasting Services (PBS), Malta
Delal Tahsin Atamdede	Joint facilitator	Vice President, World Federation of Travel Journalists and Writers (FIJET), Türkiye
Pietro Lesca	Participant	Producer, Farfadais
Vicky Karantzavelou	Participant	Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief, TravelDailyNews Media Network
Konstantinos Psaroulis	Participant	Winery representative
Fabrizio Santori	Participant	Councillor, Rome City Council; Member, European Committee of the Regions
Gianfranco Zinzilli	Participant	RAI
Gianni Paris	Participant	RAI
Angelo Santori	Participant	Music expert
Fabrizio Pacifici	Participant	Journalist, cultural events producer; Founder, EventiRoma.com
Rajan Datar	Participant	Television presenter
Vladislav Yakovlev	Participant	Television producer
Vladislav Scalvini	Participant	Television producer
Vladislav Baginskiy	Participant	Television producer
Rosaria De Capitani	Participant	Musician, PFM
Franz Renzo Di Ciocco	Participant	Musician, PFM

APPENDIX B — WORKING WORKSHEETS

Use these sheets to record actionable ideas rather than polished speeches. Facilitators may consolidate responses into the draft project brief.

Worksheet 1 — Audience needs and editorial opportunity

Who needs this portal? _____

_____

Top three gaps in regional tourism information _____

_____

Relevant examples seen elsewhere _____

_____

Priority stories, editorial beats and podcast series

_____

_____

Worksheet 2 — Contributor and partnership network

Potential country correspondents / locations _____

_____

Broadcasters, podcast producers, presenters, publishers, universities and tourism bodies to approach

_____

_____

Content-sharing opportunities and rights considerations

_____

_____

Names / organisations for follow-up _____

_____

Worksheet 3 — Portal and operating model

Minimum viable features, podcast formats and distribution channels

_____

_____

Editorial review, accuracy and translation approach

_____

_____

Governance and commercial sustainability questions

_____

_____

Measures of success _____

_____

Worksheet 4 — 90-day development pathway

First actions and deliverables _____

_____

Proposed project leads and partners _____

_____

Dependencies and risks _____

_____

Milestones for 30 / 60 / 90 days _____

_____

Facilitator consolidation sheet

Agreed project mission and audience _____

_____

Priority editorial areas, podcast formats and country coverage

_____

_____

Potential founding partners and correspondents

_____

_____

Outstanding decisions _____

_____

Next meeting, owner and target date _____

_____

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