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INTEGRATING ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION INTO JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION CURRICULA

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Abstract. Digital transformation has expanded the competencies expected of journalists beyond reporting and content production. Contemporary professionals must also understand audiences, digital platforms, project development and the organisational conditions that sustain media work. This conceptual-analytical article examines the rationale for integrating entrepreneurial education into journalism and communication curricula. It draws on a narrative review of relevant academic literature and a comparative analysis of selected international university programmes. The analysis indicates that entrepreneurial education should not be limited to business creation: it can develop initiative, adaptability, opportunity recognition and responsible value creation within both independent projects and established organisations. International practice shows that these competencies are commonly taught through discipline-specific, project-based formats. The article therefore proposes a dedicated Entrepreneurial Education module for final-year journalism and communication students in Uzbekistan. The module integrates innovation and entrepreneurship, marketing and management, strategy and leadership, organisational psychology and financial foundations, with professional ethics and public value embedded throughout. Its purpose is to strengthen graduates' employability and career adaptability while preserving journalism's public-service principles.

Keywords: entrepreneurial education, journalism education, entrepreneurial journalism, employability, career adaptability, media innovation, Uzbekistan

Introduction. Digital technologies, social media, artificial intelligence and platform-based distribution have transformed journalism. Journalists must now produce content across multiple platforms, understand audience behavior and use multimedia tools while maintaining accuracy, verification and professional ethics. The Digital News Report 2026 reflects this shift: across 48 markets, social media and video networks became the most widely used means of accessing online news, while weekly use of artificial intelligence chatbots for news rose from 7 to 10 per cent (Reuters Institute, 2026). These changes have important implications for journalism education. UNESCO's model curricula emphasize the need to adapt journalism programs to technological and economic developments while strengthening both specialized and transferable competencies (Banda, 2013). This is consistent with wider labor-market trends: the Future of Jobs Report 2025 identifies analytical thinking as the competency most frequently sought by employers and highlights the growing

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importance of resilience, creativity, leadership and technological literacy (World Economic Forum, 2025). Entrepreneurial education may help journalism and communication students develop these competencies. It should not be understood solely as preparation for business creation. The EntreComp framework defines entrepreneurship competence as the capacity to transform ideas and opportunities into social, cultural or economic value (Bacigalupo et al., 2016). In journalism, however, entrepreneurial approaches must complement rather than weaken editorial independence, professional ethics and public-service principles (Vos & Singer, 2016). This article examines the rationale for introducing a dedicated Entrepreneurial Education module for final-year journalism and communication students in Uzbekistan. It draws on a narrative review of relevant literature and a purposive comparison of selected international university programmes. The article clarifies the meaning of entrepreneurial education, assesses its relevance to contemporary journalism, reviews selected curricular practices and proposes a context-sensitive structure for the module.

Analysis and Discussion

Entrepreneurial education beyond business creation. Entrepreneurial education is frequently understood as preparation for establishing and managing a business. This narrow interpretation, however, does not fully reflect its contemporary educational meaning. The EntreComp framework defines entrepreneurship as the capacity to act upon ideas and opportunities and transform them into social, cultural or economic value. Its three competence areas – Ideas and Opportunities, Resources and Into Action – include creativity, initiative, collaboration, planning, financial literacy and learning through experience (Bacigalupo et al., 2016). Entrepreneurial competence is therefore relevant not only to business founders but also to professionals working in established organisations and public institutions.

In journalism education, the objective is not to turn every student into a business owner. Rather, it is to prepare graduates to identify emerging needs, develop practical responses, mobilise resources and adapt to professional change. A journalist may demonstrate entrepreneurial competence by introducing a new storytelling format, developing an audience-engagement strategy or creating a specialised digital platform. Such competencies are best developed through practice. Neck and Greene (2011) argue that entrepreneurship should be taught as a method centred on experimentation, reflection and action rather than through theoretical instruction alone.

Nevertheless, the potential effects of entrepreneurial education should not be overstated. A systematic review of 159 articles on entrepreneurship education in higher education found considerable variation in teaching approaches and outcomes, while many studies relied on short-term or self-reported measures (Nabi et al., 2017). Entrepreneurial education cannot guarantee employment or successful innovation. Its effectiveness depends on clearly defined competencies, practice-based learning and appropriate assessment. In this article, it is therefore understood as an approach to developing initiative, adaptability and responsible value creation – not merely business ownership.

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The relevance of entrepreneurial competence to contemporary journalism. Digitalisation has extended journalism beyond traditional employment in newspapers, television and radio. Journalistic work increasingly takes freelance, project-based, hybrid and independent forms. Deuze and Witschge (2018) describe this transformation as part of the emergence of more post-industrial, entrepreneurial and atypical forms of professional practice.

Traditional competencies – including information gathering, verification, interviewing, storytelling and professional ethics – remain fundamental. However, journalists now work in an environment shaped by social platforms, audience analytics, multimedia production, digital distribution and changing revenue models. They must therefore understand their audiences, select appropriate platforms, manage limited resources and consider how journalistic projects can be sustained.

Research on entrepreneurial journalism education reflects these changes. An international survey of journalism educators found that entrepreneurial courses had been introduced in different forms, although their objectives, institutional positions and available resources varied (Vázquez Schaich & Klein, 2013). Ferrier (2013) similarly found that media educators were reconsidering the knowledge and skills required by students entering a changing industry. Together, these studies demonstrate growing interest in entrepreneurial journalism while revealing considerable variation in how it is defined and taught. A start-up-centred approach, however, cannot address the full range of professional needs. Sparre and Færgemann (2016) examined a module in which journalism students used industry placements to identify opportunities for innovation and propose practical solutions. Their findings support a broader conception of entrepreneurial journalism focused on improving professional practice, including within established organisations.

Entrepreneurial learning may also strengthen employability when employability is understood as a continuing capacity rather than simply the ability to obtain a first job. Bridgstock (2009) argues that graduates need career-management capabilities alongside disciplinary knowledge, including an understanding of the labour market and the ability to communicate their professional value. Tomlinson (2017) similarly conceptualises graduate employability through human, social, cultural, identity and psychological resources. For journalism graduates, these capabilities may support portfolio development, project pitching, professional networking and movement between freelance and institutional careers.

Entrepreneurial journalism nevertheless raises important ethical concerns. Vos and Singer (2016) found that it was often presented as essential to journalism's survival, despite tensions arising from the traditional separation of editorial and commercial activities. Entrepreneurial education must therefore address editorial independence, transparency, conflicts of interest, privacy and public value. Students should understand that responsiveness to audiences does not justify audience manipulation and that financial sustainability must not override professional standards.

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International Curricular Practices. International university guidance indicates that employers increasingly value transferable capabilities alongside subject-specific knowledge. King's College London, for example, notes that History graduates develop analytical, research and evidence-based reasoning skills applicable to careers in business, finance, communications and other sectors. It also observes that many employers recruit graduates from different disciplines and place considerable value on how candidates think rather than solely on what they studied (King's College London, n.d.). This broader labour-market orientation supports the inclusion of entrepreneurial competencies in discipline-specific university programs. Entrepreneurial education has been incorporated into journalism and media curricula through compulsory modules, electives and project-based courses. At Manchester Metropolitan University, Entrepreneurship for Journalists is a core final-year module within the BA Multimedia Journalism program (Manchester Metropolitan University, n.d.). City St George's, University of London, offers the 15-credit Journalism Entrepreneurship module as a core elective within its MA Magazine Journalism program (City St George's, University of London, n.d.). These examples demonstrate that entrepreneurship can be taught as a distinct component of journalism education rather than dispersed across unrelated subjects. Other universities emphasize practical and project-based learning. New York University's Entrepreneurial Science Journalism is a project-based course that introduces students to business skills and the development of viable concepts for digital science journalism (New York University, n.d.). At the University of Groningen, the five-credit Innovation and Entrepreneurial Culture course examines innovation, entrepreneurship and markets within the media sector (University of Groningen, n.d.). The University of Strathclyde also lists Entrepreneurial Journalism and Innovation, an elective covering personal branding, portfolio careers, technological innovation and new media ventures, although its Digital Journalism program will not run for the 2026/27 intake (University of Strathclyde, n.d.).

Table 1. Selected international curricular models

Institution	Curricular format	Main emphasis
Manchester Metropolitan University	Core final-year module	Entrepreneurship for journalists
City St George's	15-credit core elective	Journalism entrepreneurship
New York University	Project-based course	Digital journalism concepts
University of Groningen	Five-credit course	Media innovation and entrepreneurship
University of Strathclyde	Elective class	Ventures and portfolio careers

Source: Compiled by the author from official university course descriptions.

Although their formats differ, these programmes share three characteristics: entrepreneurship is connected directly to journalism or media practice; learning is predominantly practical; and attention

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is given to both creative and organisational competencies. The examples therefore support the feasibility of a dedicated module. Nevertheless, they do not establish that one model is universally effective. Their relevance to Uzbekistan lies in demonstrating how entrepreneurial education can be adapted to disciplinary and institutional needs rather than transferred unchanged from a general business curriculum.

Implications for journalism and communication education in Uzbekistan. Journalism and communication graduates in Uzbekistan may work in television, radio, online media, press services, corporate communication departments, content-production centers or independent digital projects. Entrepreneurial education should therefore prepare students for different professional settings rather than focus exclusively on establishing media businesses.

A dedicated module delivered over one semester to final-year students would provide greater coherence than distributing its components across different subjects. It could guide students from identifying a professional or audience need to designing, testing, presenting and evaluating a practical solution. Its content, however, should be adapted to the professional and ethical requirements of journalism and communication rather than reproduced from a general business curriculum.

Table 2 presents an indicative structure for the proposed module. Its components may be adapted to the needs and institutional conditions of individual journalism and communication programmes.

Table 2. Indicative structure of the proposed Entrepreneurial Education module

Component	Application to journalism and communication
Innovation and entrepreneurship	Identifying needs and developing media project ideas
Marketing and management	Understanding audiences and organising projects
Strategy and leadership	Setting objectives, making decisions and leading teams
Organisational psychology	Strengthening motivation, communication and teamwork
Financial foundations	Planning budgets, costs and resources

Source: Developed by the author.

The proposed module should be delivered through a practical media or communication project, such as a digital publication, podcast, public-information service or innovation project within an existing organization. Students could develop a project idea, identify its target audience and plan its team structure, promotion, strategy and financial requirements. Professional ethics and public value should operate as cross-cutting principles throughout the module rather than as a separate topic.

Assessment could combine a project proposal, prototype, presentation and reflective portfolio. Students should be evaluated on the quality of their research, the feasibility of the proposed solution, their response to feedback and their ethical reasoning rather than on commercial outcomes alone.

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Implementation would require cooperation among journalism educators, business specialists and media practitioners. Team teaching could combine knowledge of editorial practice with expertise in management, finance, organizational psychology and innovation. The module should initially be piloted and evaluated through student performance, feedback and follow-up evidence from internships or early employment. Longer-term research would then be required to assess its contribution to career adaptability, organizational innovation and sustainable media development.

Conclusion. Entrepreneurial education can complement journalism and communication training by developing the initiative, adaptability and organisational awareness required in a changing media environment. Rather than preparing students solely to establish businesses, it can enable them to recognise opportunities, develop practical solutions, manage projects and create professional, social or cultural value. The international cases reviewed indicate that these competencies can be developed through discipline-specific and project-based learning. For Uzbekistan, this article proposes a dedicated one-semester Entrepreneurial Education module for final-year journalism and communication students. The module should integrate innovation and entrepreneurship, marketing and management, strategy and leadership, organisational psychology and financial foundations. These components should be applied through practical media and communication projects, with professional ethics and public value maintained as cross-cutting principles. Such a module could strengthen graduates' employability, career adaptability and capacity to contribute to innovation within established organisations and independent projects. It should initially be piloted at selected universities and subsequently evaluated through student performance, graduate experiences and employer feedback. The resulting evidence could inform further refinement of the module and decisions concerning its broader implementation.

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