

---

## Small-scale radio multiplex licence

### Application form – Part A (public)

---

Name of applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Belfast DAB Plus Ltd

Multiplex licence area being applied for (note this must be a small-scale multiplex area *currently being advertised* by Ofcom):

Belfast & Lisburn

**APPLICATION FORM:**

Publication date: 28 January 2022

## 2. Extent of proposed coverage area

- 2.1 Please provide a summary, fully consistent with the more detailed information about transmission sites supplied separately in Part B, of the coverage area proposed to be achieved by your technical plan. This should include a description of the target area you are seeking to serve within the advertised licence area, and also any areas you are aiming to serve outside the advertised licence area for this small-scale radio multiplex service. (You may refer to your coverage prediction in the response you provide):

The advertised area contains the two cities located within the valley of the River Lagan; Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, and Lisburn, which this year marks 20 years of city status.

The population of Belfast is 270,460 (16+, Source: NISRA, Belfast LGD 2014) and that of Lisburn is 107,840 (16+, Source: NISRA, Lisburn & Castlereagh LGD 2014), giving a total of 378,300 people.

Our proposition is founded on three principles:

1. Delivery of a reliable, consistent and high-quality DAB service to as much of the indoor population of the Belfast polygon as possible;
2. Working to the original DCMS/Ofcom objective to make DAB affordable for community radio, small independent commercial stations and start-up services;
3. Achieving the above within a sustainable, long-term business plan.

To achieve the objective of our transmission plans in providing a robust signal to the populations of both cities and their hinterlands, several options were explored, and after a technical investigation, we confirmed that two sites are required.

Situated on high ground in the north of the city, Squires Hill is our preferred location to serve the greater Belfast area, and similarly situated on high ground north of Lisburn, White Mountain was chosen to serve the Lisburn area, these together giving indoor coverage of 323,155 (at 63dB $\mu$ V/m) and outdoor coverage of 355,413 people (at 54dB $\mu$ V/m).

The mountain range formed by Black Mountain and Divis restricts the signal in a northerly direction in the case of each transmission site, and care has been taken to limit the overspill into adjacent polygons due to be advertised in future Rounds of small-scale DAB licensing.

We believe that our plans offer a coherent approach to providing the signals required to properly serve Belfast and Lisburn, along with the commuter towns and villages located in close proximity to both cities.

Small-scale radio multiplex licence: Application form (Part A)

2.2 Please provide summary details of the sites required to achieve this coverage by completing the table below (add additional rows as required):

Site name	NGR	Antenna height (m agl)	Antenna type & bearing	Antenna	ERP (W)
White Mountain	NW 35895 24284	15m	Folded Dipole - 90 deg	New	20W
Squires Hill	NW 43285 34588	15m	2-ele Yagi 180 deg ETN	New	15W

2.3 Please provide a coverage prediction map for the whole transmitter network you are proposing to build within 18 months if you are awarded a licence. The map should show the 63 dB $\mu$ V/m field strength and the advertised small-scale DAB licence area contour. [Small-scale DAB licence areas in GIS format](#) are available on the Ofcom website.

A full coverage prediction map for the whole of the Belfast DAB transmitter network is included in Appendix G. It shows the 63 dB $\mu$ V/m field strength (as well as the 54 dB $\mu$ V/m and 38dB $\mu$ V/m contours).

The ward-level population tables (2011 Census) indicate that at 63 dB $\mu$ V/m field strength;

- the number of people falling outside the Belfast & Lisburn polygon does not exceed 30% of the total population within the advertised licence area; and
- the proposed coverage does not overlap more than 40% of the population within the relevant local radio multiplex service's licensed area.

The transmitter network has been designed to minimise any significant interference above 38 dB $\mu$ V/m to other proposed small-scale DAB licence areas.

2.4 Please provide the following details of the prediction software used for your coverage assessments:

Provide the name and version of the prediction tool used.	ATDI HTZ Communications v22 6.9 x64
Detail the terrain model used by the software and its resolution.	DTM: Ordnance Survey terrain data – 50 metre resolution (DSM+DTM)
Detail the ground cover (clutter) data used by the software and its resolution.	Infoterra clutter data to 50m resolution
What propagation algorithm has been used?	Model pre-set – Fresnel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diffraction geometry – Deygout 94-2</li> <li>• Subpath attenuation – coarse integration</li> <li>• FZ fraction 0.8</li> <li>• Earth radius (sea and land) - 8,500km</li> </ul>
Where multiple sites are proposed, describe what methodology has been used to assess the network (SFN) gain	Power sum
If these predictions have not used Ofcom-provided population data, state what population data has been used and its source.	Ofcom-provided population data has been used along with that from the 2011 Census which is included within ATDI’s modelling software
Have your predictions been generated by a commercial organisation? If so, by whom?	Coverage predictions have been generated by Viamux using HTZ Communications software from ADTI.

## 3. Ability to establish the proposed service

### Applicant's details

3.1 Name of applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Belfast DAB Plus Ltd

3.2 Company registration number stated on Companies House (if applicable):

NI655391

3.3 For UK registered companies, the address of the applicant's registered office stated on Companies House. For non-UK registered companies, the principal office address:

5 Burghley Mews, Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT5 7GX

3.4 If a UK registered company, is the **current** Memorandum and Articles of Association document available on the Companies House website?

**Yes**

## Ownership and control of company which will hold the licence

### Details of officers

3.5 Please complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to provide the following details for each director or designated member of the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Full name of individual	Correspondence address	Country of residence	Other officerships held (and nature of the business)	Other employment
Stephen Alexander Craig	8 Andrew Avenue, Larne, Co. Antrim, BT40 1EB.	UK	Trustee and Board member of the Ulster Architectural Society	Occasional freelance technical work
Nicola Liane Radcliffe	38 Seacliff Road, Bangor, Co. Down, BT20 5EY.	UK	None	Deputy Head of School of Performing and Creative Arts, South Eastern Regional College
Robert John Rosborough	5 Burghley Mews, Belfast, Co. Antrim, BT5 7GX.	UK	Director, Burghley Mews Management Co. Ltd	None
David Gerard Sims	3 Cultra Terrace, Cultra Ave., Holywood, Co. Down, BT18 0BA	UK	Director (unpaid): Argyle Business Centre, Belfast. Social Enterprise with the vision seeking to rebuild and re-establish the economic soul of the Shankill Road area the employment base for c.150 people, contributing £3M in wages and salaries to the local economy.	Radio presenter (voluntary) producing programmes for community Ofcom licenced and internet stations.  Occasional lecturer in podcast and radio production.

			Enterprise Media Ireland (Volunteer Director). Recently set up social enterprise (not yet operational) providing language training to young refugees through audio and podcast production.	
--	--	--	--	--

### Details of participants

3.6 Please complete the table overleaf, expanding it if necessary, to list all bodies or individuals which hold or are beneficially entitled to shares, or who possess voting powers, in the applicant (i.e. the “participants”). If you are unable to provide a complete answer to this question in relation to beneficial owners, please state whether you have any reason to suspect the existence of any beneficial owners.

(If parts of this question are not applicable to the applicant – for example, because the applicant does not have shareholders – please respond “N/A” in the relevant parts of the table.)

Full name of participant (existing and proposed)	Number of shares	Total investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
Stephen Alexander Craig	N/A	£1	25	25
Nicola Liane Radcliffe	N/A	£1	25	25
Robert John Rosborough	N/A	£1	25	25
David Gerard Sims	N/A	£1	25	25
Comments				

## Details of relationships of control

- 3.7 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list any bodies corporate which are controlled *by* the applicant, any director of the applicant, any person/body corporate with control over the applicant, or any body corporate controlled by a person/body corporate controlling the applicant. Please include bodies corporate under joint control – i.e. which are controlled acting together in concert with third parties (e.g. because of a shareholder’s agreement):

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of body corporate	Address	Person/body controlling the entity (i.e. the applicant itself or its associate)
N/A	N/A	N/A

## Details of persons who control the applicant

- 3.8 Complete the table overleaf, expanding it if necessary, *to list all persons/bodies corporate who control the applicant*, or control any person/body corporate with control over the applicant. Please include persons or bodies that control the applicant (or body corporate with control over the applicant) jointly i.e. acting together in concert with third parties (e.g. because of a shareholder’s agreement). Please note that some of this information may repeat information provided above on shareholders and other participants in the applicant:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of person/body corporate	Address	Person/body controlled by the entity (i.e. the applicant itself or its associate)
N/A	N/A	N/A

- 3.9 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list other bodies in which any individual listed in response to question 3.8 is a director or designated member:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of individual	Name of body in which individual is a director or designated member
N/A	N/A



3.10 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list all bodies corporate which are controlled (including jointly controlled) by any body corporate listed in response to question 3.8:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of body corporate listed in 3.8	Body corporate controlled
N/A	N/A

3.11 In relation to each body corporate identified in response to question 3.8, complete the table overleaf, expanding it if necessary, to list all bodies which hold or are beneficially entitled to shares, or who possess voting powers, in the body corporate concerned (i.e. “participants”). You may, but are not required to, exclude from this table any bodies listed in response to question 3.8. If you are unable to provide a complete answer to this question in relation to beneficial owners, please state whether you have any reason to suspect the existence of any beneficial owners.

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

<b>Name of body corporate identified in response to question 3.8</b>	N/A			
<b>Full name of participant</b>	<b>Number of shares</b>	<b>Total investment (£s)</b>	<b>Total investment (%)</b>	<b>% of voting rights</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Comments</b>				

### Involvement of the applicant in specified activities

3.12 Please state below whether the applicant, or any individual or body corporate identified in questions 3.5 to 3.11 is, or is involved in, any of the below, and the extent of that interest.

Activity/involvement	Yes or No	Please state who is involved; the name of the body/individual/agency they are involved with; and the extent of their involvement
A local authority	No	N/A
A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a political nature, or which is affiliated to such a body	No	N/A

A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a religious nature; <sup>1</sup>	No	N/A
An individual who is an officer of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	N/A
A body corporate which is an associate (as defined in paragraphs 1(1) and 1(1A) of Part I of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990) of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	N/A
An advertising agency or an associate of an advertising agency	No	N/A

## Details of applications, licences and sanctions

3.13 Please answer 'yes' or 'no' to the following questions about the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

a) Is the applicant a current licensee of Ofcom?

**No**

b) Has the applicant ever held an Ofcom broadcasting licence before?

**No**

c) Has anyone involved in the proposed service held an Ofcom broadcasting licence or been involved in an Ofcom-licensed broadcast service before?

**Yes**

d) Does the applicant control an existing Ofcom licensee?

**No**

e) Is the applicant controlled by an existing licensee or by any person who is connected (within the meaning of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990) with an existing licensee (i.e. as a "participant")?

**No**

f) Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant - made any other application to Ofcom (or its predecessor broadcast regulators – the Independent Television Commission and the Radio Authority) for any licence which has since been

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to sections 3 to 5 of Ofcom's [religious guidance note](#) for details on how we determine the eligibility of religious bodies to hold certain broadcasting licences.

surrendered by the licensee or revoked by Ofcom (or one of its predecessor regulators)?

**No**

- g) Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant - made any other application to Ofcom (or its predecessor broadcast regulators – the Independent Television Commission and the Radio Authority) for any licence which has since been surrendered by the licensee or revoked by Ofcom (or one of its predecessor regulators)?

**No**

- h) Is the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – subject to any current or pending investigation by any statutory regulatory or government body in the United Kingdom or abroad in respect of any broadcast-related matter?

**No**

- i) Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – ever been subject to a statutory sanction for contravening a condition of a broadcasting licence in the UK or any other jurisdiction?

**No**

- 3.14 If the response to any of the questions (a) to (i) in 3.13 above is ‘yes’, please provide the details, expanding the table where necessary:

	Licence number(s) (if known)	Details	Area
(a)			
(b)			
(c)	AL000120BA/3	Downtown Radio	Greater Belfast
(c)	AL000121BA/3	Cool FM/Downtown Radio	Northern Ireland
(c)	AL000042BA/3	Belfast City Beat (now Q Radio)	Belfast
(c)	AL103863BA/1	Mid FM (now Q Radio)	Mid Ulster
(c)	CR000047BA/3	Down FM	Downpatrick
(c)	CR000139BA/3	Lisburn’s 98	Lisburn
(c)	CR000127BA/3	Bangor FM	Bangor
(c)	AL000295BA/2	U105	Belfast and surrounding area
(c)	CR100062BA/2	Belfast FM	Belfast
(c)	Returned CR licence	Chaine FM	Larne

(d)			
(e)			
(f)			
(g)			
(h)			
(i)			

3.15 Please provide any further information you hold, relating to the past conduct of the applicant or those individuals listed, in regulatory matters or in matters going to honesty and/or compliance, which may be relevant to Ofcom’s consideration of whether or not the applicant is fit and proper to hold a broadcast licence. If the applicant or the form signatory fails without reasonable excuse at this point to declare any matter of which Ofcom subsequently becomes aware, and which we consider to be relevant to the applicant’s eligibility to hold a licence, we will take it into account in determining the question of whether the applicant/licensee remains fit and proper to hold a licence.

If you have no information to provide, please respond “N/A”.

N/A

3.16 Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – ever been convicted of an unlicensed broadcasting offence?

**No**

If yes, please provide the following details:

Full name	Date of conviction/action (dd/mm/yy)	Penalty
N/A	N/A	N/A

## Financial and business plan

- 3.17 Please provide a high-level estimate of the costs you believe will be required to establish the multiplex service.

Belfast DAB Plus Ltd will establish a successful multiplex operation by providing existing community and commercial broadcasters as well as new entrants with a reliable digital broadcast platform on both affordable and flexible terms. A detailed financial forecast that sets out annual income and outgoings with a 36-month cash flow forecast is included in Appendix A.

### **Capital Investment – £40,000**

Belfast DAB's aim is to offer service providers a low cost, easy to access, high quality digital broadcast platform and to ensure its long-term sustainability. To achieve this, the capital investment we are making has been carefully weighed to provide sufficient funds to meet the needs of establishing the platform and to ensure carriage fees are attractive and sustainable for service providers over the longer term. This principle has guided the number and choice of transmission sites – to keep both the capital and operational cost of transmission to a minimum.

The main capital investment is in the choice of multiplexing & transmission supplier. Belfast DAB has selected Viamux to provide the multiplexing/transmission solution as well as professional services (project management, site surveys, network design, configuration, installation and training).

### **Operating Costs – £47,000 (per annum)**

#### **Transmission**

The ongoing costs associated with transmission (rental, rates, electrical power consumption, internet provision) are the single most important recurring operating expenditure for a multiplex company. Belfast DAB's selection of transmission sites is a cost-effective choice that balances delivering the largest audience whilst ensuring carriage fees remain attractive to service providers.

#### **Technical Support & Maintenance**

Ongoing technical support for maintaining the multiplex and transmission equipment will be provided by Viamux (by way of an annual support & maintenance contract).

#### **Small-Scale DAB Management Software**

Belfast DAB will subscribe to Optimux - the low-cost cloud-based control panel that simplifies the management and monitoring of a small-scale DAB network. For a low-cost monthly fee, Optimux allows us to implement cloud encoding - making it quick, easy and cheap to add new services to a multiplex. It also provides us with full invoicing and direct debit collection to streamline the payment of carriage fees. Optimux also monitors the multiplex and will alert us to any issues and notify service providers regarding their audio.

**Administration**

The usual administration costs associated with operating a business of this size are included (insurance, legal and accountancy services) as is the annual Ofcom licence fee.

**VAT**

We anticipate that Belfast DAB's turnover to be below the VAT registration threshold which will mean all carriage fees will remain exempt from VAT. We expect many service providers will not be VAT registered and that an uplift of 20% would be a very real additional cost to them and a possible impediment to them participating in small-scale DAB.

**Funding**

Belfast DAB Plus Ltd will be funded through a combination of equity and a membership working capital loan of £40,000. The multiplex operation will be established and sustained by providing existing community and commercial broadcasters, as well as new entrants, with a reliable digital broadcast platform which is both affordable and flexible.

3.18 Please indicate how the costs outlined in 3.17 (above) will be met, under the following headings:

a) Share capital

**Belfast DAB Plus Ltd is a Company Limited by Guarantee with no share capital (CLG) and has no shareholders.**

b) Loan stock

**A working capital investment loan of £40,000 will be provided by the members. We anticipate this loan being repaid within the term of the licence. Further funding is available, if required.**

c) Leasing/HP facilities (capital value)

**There is no requirement for Leasing/HP facilities.**

d) Bank overdraft

**There is no requirement for a Bank overdraft.**

e) Grants and donations

**There is no requirement for grants or donations.**

f) Other (please specify)

**None**

3.19 Expanding the table if necessary, please list the providers of the funding which will be used to establish the service, and the amount of funding that each will provide. For incorporated investing shareholders, please provide a copy of the most recent statutory accounts if they are not currently available on Companies House.

Name of shareholder or investor	Percentage of shares held (if applicable)	Amount of funding provided (£)
Robert John Rosborough	N/A	£40,000

3.20 All of the funding identified above should be confirmed. If any funding has not been confirmed, or if there are any pre-conditions before the funding is released which have not yet been met, provide an explanation of what needs to be done, the dates by which it needs to be carried out, and any steps the applicant needs to take to ensure the funding is confirmed and/or released.

All required funding is confirmed and available. Evidence that sufficient funds are available to each investing member is available on request.

## Relevant expertise and experience

3.21 Please provide details of who will be responsible for the day-to-day general management of the multiplex service (for example, dealing with programme service providers and contractual matters). Please also briefly state their previous relevant experience. (Note that any individuals or contractors who cannot be identified at this stage can instead be included in the confidential section (Part B) of the application form.)

**Collaboration**

Belfast DAB Plus Ltd is a strongly local applicant group with collaboration at its heart. Belfast DAB brings together experienced individuals and partner organisations to share the investment and operating costs in a truly collaborative local enterprise.

Belfast DAB’s founders are experienced broadcasters who have a thorough understanding of running a small-scale DAB multiplex and are genuinely excited by the opportunities this presents to bring more choice to the listening audience in their home area.

Our vision is to attract and support a varied ensemble of Programme Service Providers through shared initiatives in the promotion of the multiplex and its services. We also see a role in encouraging the participation of new broadcasting talent either on fulltime C-DSP stations or by access through RSL-style ‘pop-up’ programming.

### **General Management**

The team of directors will have a 'hands on' role in the running of the multiplex, having collectively acquired years of experience in the technical, programming and administrative functions across local BBC, Commercial and Community stations.

Launching, establishing and maintaining a DAB multiplex requires technical competence, operational expertise, financial stability, and an aptitude to manage third party relationships successfully. Together with our technical partner Viamux, our team brings together expertise in each of these areas.

### **Technical & Operational Experience**

Belfast DAB has commissioned Viamux to be responsible for the launch of the multiplex. Belfast DAB will be responsible for its subsequent day to day operation; in particular:

- Overseeing bit rate variations, enhancements or projects required by service providers, such as EPG provision, temporary services and data developments.
- Working with service providers and the transmission subcontractor to maximise multiplex functionality and efficiency.
- Monitoring and fault reporting, ensuring that the output of all service providers is correctly logged and compliant with legislation and codes.
- Developing new revenue streams.
- Belfast DAB will oversee any multiplex re-configurations and these will be undertaken in line with our policies and contractual agreements with service providers. We will also be responsible for ongoing financial management of the multiplex; accounts, IT, admin, legal, customer service and technical support.

### **Team**

As mentioned before, the participants in Belfast DAB share a track record of successfully establishing and operating radio stations as well as local and small-scale DAB multiplexes. The combined experience of the stakeholders as multiplex operators and service providers demonstrates these capabilities and give us an excellent understanding of what is required in the Belfast and Lisburn areas – good coverage, service reliability and easy access for programme providers at an affordable and realistic price.



### **Key Personnel**

**John Rosborough** is the only person to have worked at senior level in all of Northern Ireland's main commercial stations and in Community Radio; he has been a guiding force in the establishment of popular and successful services as the local sector has grown.

John joined Downtown Radio in December 1975 as a Sound Engineer prior to the station going on air, and following stints in Commercial and Programme Production, became Head of Programming in 1979, an era when the station had the highest reach in the ILR network. In the mid-80s Downtown expanded to cover the whole province, and by 1990 his responsibilities increased with the launch of Cool FM.

In October 2000 John moved to Belfast City Beat, which during his tenure as Station Director doubled its income, increased audience substantially, won 5 Sony Gold Awards and was named ntl Station of the Year in 2003.

In January 2004 John was made a Fellow of the Radio Academy, and that year he joined UTV to lead the Company's winning application to Ofcom for a new Belfast FM licence serving the over-40 audience, with U105 being launched in November 2005. The station exceeded its listening hours targets and was well established by May 2008 when John stepped down from the role of Managing Director.

He then set up his own consultancy, and undertook a research report project for BBC Northern Ireland entitled 'Community Radio Initiatives: an Enabling Role for BBC NI?'

In 2012 he led an application to Ofcom for a Community Radio licence to serve the over-55 audience in Belfast, resulting in the launch of Belfast 89 in 2015. He resigned as Managing Director in 2018, and has since devoted time to freelance projects in broadcasting.

**David Sims** is a multi-award winning media producer specialising in radio and web production.

Starting his career in 1979 at Downtown Radio, he developed music and speech programming for people in the 15 – 25 age range. He joined BBC Radio Ulster in 1986 as a Radio Producer working in Youth Programmes and then on to Religion, Current Affairs and general magazine and music programmes. He also spent time in London as a Senior and then Chief Producer in Radio 1 and Radio 4.

In 1999 David was the first producer in BBC NI's Online service going on to be Editor New Media from 2001 leading the production team making content for web, mobile, interactive TV, digital communities, and digital storytelling.

Since leaving the BBC in 2008, David has been a lecturer in radio production, and online analytics in Dublin Business School, and has worked with the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland as a panel member on their Sound and Vision scheme reviewing applications for funding. He spent over a year in Slovenia occasionally lecturing on social media and working on digital tourism.

He makes a weekly radio show playing music from around the world. It is carried by 7 radio stations in Northern Ireland (3 community stations and 4 internet stations).

He has retired from training and consulting with community and voluntary organisations developing media skills and podcast production, but continues as a director in two social enterprises: Enterprise Media Ireland, and Argyle Business Centre.

**Liane Radcliffe** is the Deputy Head of School for Creative Media and Technology in the school of Performing and Creative Arts at South Eastern Regional College, responsible for the co-ordination, design and operation of the Level 2 and Level 3 courses across Lisburn, Bangor and Downpatrick campuses.

Liane began her media career in 1991 in the BBC NI Graphics department before moving to the Newsletter/Mirror Group as a Photojournalist and Pictures Editor the following year.

Liane's employment as a part-time lecturer began in September 1995 and she was involved from the outset in setting up the college's new Media Studies (GNVQ Advanced) course, allowing her to make full use of her specialist areas, including video production, animation, photography and T.V. and radio scriptwriting. Part of this position's remit was also to be instrumental in the design and organisation of the College Community Radio stations for Lisburn, Bangor and Downpatrick campuses.

From 1997, Liane was employed as an Associate Lecturer in the Creative Studies Department, and responsibilities involved the setting up and co-ordinating of a GNVQ Intermediate Media Studies Course. Programmes included for delivery were HND Design, Advanced Media Studies and GCSE Photography.

In 1998 Liane became course co-ordinator for the Advanced and Intermediate Media level and in September 1999 a permanent full-time lecturer and also the Internal Verifier for the HND Multimedia course.

In September 2001, Liane was appointed as Deputy Head of School in the School of Performing and Creative Arts.

In addition to lecturing duties Liane became responsible for PR and marketing for the Faculty of Creative and Business Technologies.

From June 2020, after acquiring a certificate in Leadership and Management Liane embarked on researching the potential and opportunities with changing the Media curriculum throughout all campuses.

The main roles and responsibilities during this time were the design, co-ordination, quality control, standardisation, staff training, student pastoral care and management of all new Level 2 and Level 3 programs throughout all 3 campuses in SERC.

This has enabled Liane to lead the course team to embed Audio pre-production, production and post-production training and presentation within the platforms of SERC's 3 community radio stations, optimising the student skills-based experience whilst maximising grading opportunities within the new courses.

**Stephen Craig** is a qualified electronics engineer and has spent all of his working life in the media sector, initially providing the technical support for his family Radio and Television business.

With a desire to experience the media industry from 'the other side', Stephen joined the BBC in Belfast in the Electronic Maintenance section, where he rose through the ranks as supervisor and ultimately as Postproduction specialist, managing a team of 4 engineers supporting the full range of studio and control room equipment.

Stephen's next move was into management in BBC NI where he was the technical project manager for the Nations TV playout project. He was the technical lead in the refurbishment of the Belfast site to an all digital system in 1999. Stephen also identified the opportunities of dynamically adding services on the DAB platform and this resulted in a project titled 'Dynamuxing'. This trial confirmed that the service of Radio Ulster could be split to provide capacity to allow BBC Radio Foyle to be delivered on DAB at certain times of day.

Stephen left the BBC in 2010 to pursue a freelance role and he has worked on projects such as the closure of Television Centre in London where he was responsible for the core routing and satellite systems. Other projects include the conversion of BBC NI to HD and UTV's migration to HD.


For many years Stephen has been involved in the Radio sector with technical roles in Hospital and Community Radio. He was the engineer for Radio Moyle, the Larne hospital station and this evolved into Chaine FM which over a number of years provided a Christmas RSL in the town. A fulltime licence was obtained, but unfortunately funding constraints meant that the service could not be launched and the licence had to be returned to Ofcom.

Subsequent to this, Stephen was the technical director for Community station Belfast 89, where the technical team assembled the facility from the microphone to the antenna.

Stephen currently provides ongoing technical support for 3 Community stations based around the South Eastern Regional College campuses.

**We believe that this highly experienced team has all the relevant expertise and local knowledge to deliver all aspects of launching and running a successful small-scale DAB operation.**

3.22 Please provide details of who will be carrying out the installation and on-going maintenance of your multiplexing / transmitter equipment (or the name of your proposed transmission and multiplex provider if you intend to use a third-party organisation for these services). Please also briefly state their previous relevant experience. (Note that any individuals or contractors who cannot be identified at this stage can instead be included in the confidential section [Part B] of the application form.)

Function	Responsible party	Previous experience
Installation of transmission equipment	Viamux	Viamux is a leading supplier of small-scale DAB solutions. It was established in 2017 by the Niocast Digital team - who have been operating the successful Trial Manchester small-scale multiplex for the past six years. Viamux have installed systems in the UK & Republic of Ireland. More info:  <a href="http://www.viamux.com">www.viamux.com</a>  
Ongoing maintenance of the transmission equipment	Viamux	
Installation of the Multiplexing equipment	Viamux	
Day-to-day technical management and maintenance of the multiplexing equipment (if different from response to question 3.28 above)	Viamux	

## Timetable for coverage roll-out

- 3.23 Please tell us how soon after licence award you expect your multiplex service to become operational and achieve the coverage you are proposing:

Belfast DAB Plus Ltd intends to launch the multiplex in less than 9 months from award of licence.

Upon award Belfast DAB will immediately advance negotiations regarding the proposed transmission sites. Following the procedure set out in Ofcom's Technical Policy Guidance, we will also liaise with other radio multiplex licensees on any impact our proposed transmitters might have. Once completed, Belfast DAB will seek agreement from Ofcom for the proposed technical plan – mindful that the coverage proposed in our application is an award criterion and that any change will need to deliver broadly equivalent coverage.

Belfast DAB will send final site details to Ofcom for clearance and evidence of liaison and agreement with those other radio multiplex licensees. Given the time taken to co-ordinate services we recognise the importance of getting the final transmitter plans to Ofcom as quickly as possible.

Our timeline then focuses on the following key stages:

- Building and installing the DAB multiplex and transmission chain;
- Finalising carriage agreements with the service providers;
- Commissioning and testing the transmitter equipment for compliance with Ofcom's Digital Radio Technical Code; and
- Providing Ofcom with evidence of compliance with the licence and the Digital Radio Technical Code

Our supplier, Viamux has confirmed the availability of all equipment and services to meet our timescales.

- 3.24 In addition, please provide, as an annex to be submitted with this application, an outline project plan with timeline (e.g. a Gantt chart or similar) showing the high-level activities and tasks leading up to the launch of your multiplex service.

**The project GANTT chart (Appendix E) sets out the precise, key stages in the implementation of the multiplex together with the timeline.**

## 4. Involvement of C-DSP providers; demand or support from programme providers

### Involvement of C-DSP providers

4.1 Is the applicant body proposing to provide its own C-DSP service on the multiplex?

**No**

4.2 If the answer to the above question is 'yes', please provide a name and brief details of this proposed service. If the service is already licensed by Ofcom, the licence number should be provided:

N/A

4.3 If the answer to the above question is 'no', please provide details of any participant in the applicant body that is proposing to provide a C-DSP service on the multiplex. In this context, a "participant" refers to a person who holds or is beneficially entitled to shares in the applicant or possesses voting power in the applicant. If the service is already licensed by Ofcom, the licence number should be provided. Please refer to the nature of the participation (e.g. shareholding or agreement in relation to voting power):

All of the Belfast DAB Plus directors have extensive experience at Board level in Community Radio in the Belfast and Lisburn area, and are thus well acquainted with the specific requirements of the sector.

Director Liane Radcliffe was involved in the founding stages of the 3 FM Community stations operated by South Eastern Regional College, and currently liaises with them on providing content through student engagement and participation. At the time of application the College was reviewing its future strategy with a view to migrating to DAB through holding a C-DSP licence.

Belfast DAB Plus intends, if successful, to apply to operate its own DSP Service, to provide access for what would previously have been RSL 'pop up' stations, and act as a 'barker' channel to promote the multiplex and the Programme Service Providers being carried on it.

## Demand or support from programme providers

4.4 Please provide in the table below (expanding the table if necessary) the names of providers (or prospective providers) of community or local digital sound programme services who have expressed their demand or support for the provision of the proposed multiplex service in the area to be served by the multiplex service. For reasons of transparency, the response to this question *must be answered below and should not be provided as a separate annex*. The evidence of the demand or support, such as signed heads of terms or emails, should be provided as a confidential annex, and relate only to the specific multiplex being applied for.

Name of service provider and station name (if known)	Proposed C-DSP or DSP	Nature of evidence of support provided
Belfast 247	C-DSP	Heads of Terms
BFBS Lisburn	C-DSP	Heads of Terms
Radió Fáilte	C-DSP	email
Radio Lisburn Live	C-DSP	Heads of Terms
Belfast DAB Plus	DSP	Heads of Terms
Care Radio	DSP	email
Cheesy FM	DSP	email
Dance Radio Network	DSP	Heads of Terms
Eirewave	DSP	Heads of Terms
Energy 106	DSP	Heads of Terms
Gaydio	DSP	Heads of Terms
Gold 45	DSP	Heads of Terms
Podcast Radio	DSP	Heads of Terms

## 5. Fair and effective competition

- 5.1 Please detail the measures that have already been taken, and will be taken before and during the licence period, to demonstrate that, in contracting or offering to contract with programme services providers, the applicant has acted in a manner calculated to ensure fair and effective competition in the provision of such services:

### **Ethos**

Belfast DAB is conscious of its responsibility to ensure fair and effective competition, at all times. We believe that when competition works well, service providers are motivated to maximise audience share and are better able to secure funding on the basis of their service offering - its uniqueness, its audience and the value it delivers. Alongside established brands, competition delivers greater choice for listeners and a better outcome for the public. It also ensures the long-term sustainability of service providers. Constrained only by capacity, the Belfast DAB small-scale DAB platform will remain accessible to new entrants – a place where innovative formats will be encouraged and nurtured.

Dialogue with potential Programme Service Providers began as early as 2018, and in addition to contacting and updating all existing Community Radio licensees in the Belfast and Lisburn area, our outreach has included a website ([www.belfastandlisburndab.com](http://www.belfastandlisburndab.com)) launched on 13. January, 2022 and Twitter account (@BelfastDAB) on 25. January.

A news release, with contact details, was published in Industry social media on 20. March.

### **Proven**

The members in Belfast DAB bring together a track record of successfully establishing radio stations and local & small-scale DAB multiplexes.

The Belfast DAB approach will be to foster a healthy and vibrant radio 'ecosystem' – not only embracing existing commercial and community stations but also new entrants, pop ups and experimental audio concepts. Our goal is to ensure, as far as possible, that our multiplex enriches the listener experience by complementing, rather than competing with, local and national ensembles.



**Leadership**

An award of this licence to Belfast DAB ensures that the multiplex is operated by a locally led community radio company supported by experienced individuals who have successfully implemented and operated DAB multiplexes. All stakeholders are committed to small-scale DAB and have the financial stability to support that ambition. Our team is hugely experienced and well resourced, with significant practical digital radio expertise.

**Delivery**

Launching a small-scale DAB platform is a significant undertaking and we have been encouraged by the number of positive responses to our plans. Belfast DAB has openly discussed our transmission plans, carriage terms and indicative fees. Belfast DAB has engaged with potential service providers in an open, non-exclusive manner and will continue to do so throughout the duration of this licence. Each service provider will enter into a Carriage Agreement - the key terms of which are identical for all service providers. All fees charged will be pro-rata to capacity contracted by each service provider.

**Development**

We are also, if successful, keen to work with the operators of other polygons licensed in Northern Ireland to develop ways in which the DAB offer to listeners can be enhanced.

## 6. Declaration

- a) I hereby apply to Ofcom for the grant of a licence for the small-scale radio multiplex licence described above and declare that the information given in this application form is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct.
- b) I further declare and warrant:
- i) that the applicant is not a disqualified person within the meaning of that expression as defined in Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990, as amended, or as a result of a disqualification order under section 145 of the Broadcasting Act 1996;
  - ii) that having made all reasonable enquiries neither the applicant nor any person controlling the applicant, as result of the grant to me of the licence, breach any requirement of Schedule 14 to the Communications Act 2003 with regard to the accumulation of interests in broadcasting services or to the restrictions on cross-media interests;
  - iii) that the applicant is not disqualified by virtue of the provisions of section 143 (5) of the Broadcasting Act 1996 in relation to political objects and the provisions of section 144 (3) of the Broadcasting Act 1996 in relation to the provision of false information or through the withholding of information with the intention of misleading Ofcom; and
  - iv) that no director or person concerned directly or indirectly in the management of the Licensee is the subject to a disqualification order as defined by section 145 (1) of the Broadcasting Act 1996.
- c) I understand that Ofcom reserves the right to revoke the licence (if granted) if at any time any material statement made to Ofcom is found to be false and to have been by the applicant or any member or officer thereof knowing it to be false. I also understand that under sections 144 and 145 of the Broadcasting Act 1996, the provision of false information could incur a criminal conviction and a disqualification from the holding of a Broadcasting Act licence. I further certify that, to the best of my knowledge, any matters which might influence Ofcom's judgement as to whether the directors and substantial shareholders involved in this application are fit and proper persons to participate in a radio licence, have been made known to Ofcom.

**Full name (BLOCK CAPITALS) of the person authorised to make the application of behalf of the applicant:**

JOHN ROSBOROUGH

**Date of application:**

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022

**I am authorised to make this application on behalf of the applicant in my capacity as Company director.**