

Small-scale radio multiplex licence

Application form – Part A (public)

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

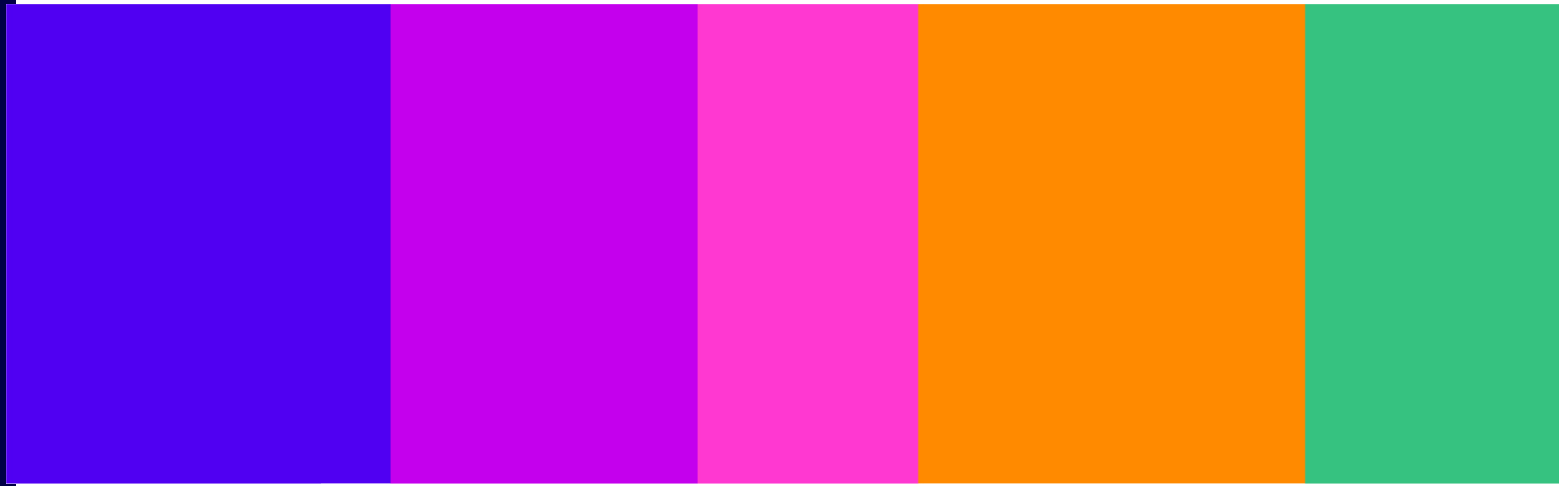
East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited T/A Ards Community SSDAB

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

Ards Peninsula

Application form

Publication date: 28 January 2025



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1. Overview

The purpose of this form

- 1.1 You should complete this form if you are applying for a licence to provide a small-scale radio multiplex service (a 'small-scale radio multiplex licence'). A small-scale radio multiplex service is the means by which DAB digital radio stations ('digital sound programme services') are broadcast, and can transmit around ten stereo digital sound programme services (or a significantly higher number if the DAB+ standard is utilised). The application form is divided into two parts – **Part A** (which we will publish on our website) and **Part B** (which will be kept confidential). This document constitutes Part A; [Part B of the application form](#) is available separately.
- 1.2 Small-scale radio multiplex licences are awarded by Ofcom in a competitive process. Applications are judged against specified criteria, and Ofcom awards the licence to the applicant which it considers best meets the criteria.

How to complete the form

- 1.3 There are detailed instructions on how to complete this form, and information on the next steps in the application process, in our [guidance notes](#) for licence applicants and licensees. Please read this guidance and the frequently asked questions carefully before completing this form.
- 1.4 If you still have a query having read the guidance and FAQ, you can contact Ofcom's Broadcast Licensing team by email (smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk). The team cannot provide advice or pre-approve applications but can answer general questions.
- 1.5 Please download this form and fill it in on a computer. If completing by hand, please use block capitals and black ink.
- 1.6 Please answer all the questions as fully as possible, use extra sheets if required and provide the supporting documentation listed at Section 7 of Part B of the application form. Sufficient information must be supplied about the applicant and the proposed service to enable Ofcom to consider the application in accordance with the statutory criteria for the granting of small-scale radio multiplex licences. Ofcom may need to request further details from you before a licence can be granted.
- 1.7 Ofcom reserves the right to reject applications made using an old version of the form.
- 1.8 Ofcom will accept handwritten application forms, but they must be filled in using block capitals and black ink.
- 1.9 Ofcom reserves the right to reject application forms that are illegible.
- 1.10 You must answer all questions in the application form and respond "N/A" to any questions that do not apply to the applicant.
- 1.11 Ofcom reserves the right to reject applications which do not meet the following criteria:
 - 2) The declarations in Section 6 of this form and in Section 8 of Part B of the application form must both be signed and dated.

- 2) The person who signs and makes the declaration on behalf of the applicant must be:
 - 2) A director of the company or the company secretary where the applicant is a company.
 - 2) A designated member where the applicant is a Limited Liability Partnership.
 - 2) All supporting documents as requested in the checklist at Section 7 of Part B of the application form must be supplied in legible form and translated into English where applicable.
- 1.12 If you are completing the form as an agent, i.e. you are acting on the applicant's behalf, please note that you cannot sign it on your client's behalf, and that the person signing the form needs to have personally checked the truth and completeness of the responses given. If your client wishes you to be Ofcom's main contact in relation to the application, please make this clear in an accompanying letter, and provide evidence of your authority to act on behalf of the applicant. The form should be filled in so as to include information about the applicant, not the agent. If Ofcom has further questions once the application has been submitted, we will direct these to the applicant, not to the agent, but we will accept responses from the agent.

How to submit the form

- 1.13 We prefer application forms and required supporting documents to be submitted by email to smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk. Handwritten applications and required supporting documents should be scanned and attached to the email.
- 1.14 You should receive a response from smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk confirming that your application has been received by Ofcom. If you do not receive a response, it is likely your application has not been received and you should contact Ofcom's Contact Centre on 0300 123 3333 and ask to leave a message for the Broadcast Licensing team, who will respond to your message as soon as possible.
- 1.15 If the applicant cannot submit the application form and/or the supporting documentation by email, the applicant may submit the application and/or the supporting documentation by post to:
- Ofcom
Broadcast Licensing
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA
- 1.16 Those applicants who submit their application by post will be sent an acknowledgement.

Application fee

- 1.17 A non-refundable application fee of £500 is payable by bank transfer.
- 1.18 Applications will not be assessed until the application fee has been received in Ofcom's bank account.

- 1.19 Ofcom requests that applicants pay the application fee by bank transfer and that immediately after the applicant has instructed their bank to make the payment, confirmation of payment is emailed to ofcom.remittances@ofcom.org.uk.
- 1.20 To ensure that Ofcom can identify the payment, it must include a payment reference which is the applicant's postcode followed by the applicant's name (or as much of the name as is possible to provide within the character limit set by the bank) as provided in response to question 3.1 of this application.
- 1.21 The bank details to be used to pay the application fee are:
- Account Name: Office of Communications
- Bank details: Lloyds Bank, 69-73 Borough High Street, London SE1 1NQ
- Account number: 00782415
- Sort code: 30-97-90
- BIC: LOYDGB21351
- IBAN: GB05 LOYD 3097 9000 7824 15
- SWIFT: LOYD GB 2L

Supporting documentation

- 1.22 You must provide a range of supporting documentation when submitting this application form. Please refer to the checklist at Section 7 of Part B of the application form for full details. Please note that failure to supply the necessary documents will delay your application.
- 1.23 Ofcom reserves the right to reject applications with which the necessary documents are not supplied in legible form.
- 1.24 Please note that Ofcom cannot receive emails larger than 35MB. If your application email exceeds this limit, please send your supporting documents in a separate email(s), clearly indicating the applicant's name in the subject line of the email.

Provision of information

- 1.25 Ofcom requires complete and accurate information to assess applications. In particular, we must be satisfied that those applying for a licence are 'fit and proper' to hold a licence and are not disqualified from participation in a licence.
- 1.26 It is an offence under the Broadcasting Act 1996 (as amended) to provide false information or withhold relevant information during the application process, and may be grounds for revocation of a licence subsequently granted.

Publication of applications

- 1.27 Part A of the application form (i.e. this document) will be published by Ofcom on our website as soon as practicable following the closing-date for applications. Because this is the 'public' part of the application form, and Ofcom is legally required to publish applications for public comments, no questions should be answered by means of the submission of a confidential annex. Part B of the application form will remain confidential.

- 1.28 Ofcom may take into account any comments received from the public, which can be made to it with respect to Part A of the application submitted.
- 1.29 In submitting Part A of the application, you agree that Ofcom may publish contact details for the licensee, which may include personal data, on the Ofcom website and/or in other relevant publications.
- 1.30 When a licence is granted, the name of the service and public contact details for the licensee will be published on the Ofcom website. These are the details supplied by the applicant in the application form. If you have any questions about the information that we publish, or there are any changes to this information, you should contact the team by email (smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk).
- 1.31 Ofcom considers issued small-scale radio multiplex licences to be public documents and copies of licences will be made available to third parties on request, noting that personal data apart from the name of the licensee may be redacted.

Data protection

- 1.32 We require the information requested in this form in order to carry out our licensing duties under the Broadcasting Act 1990, Broadcasting Act 1996 and Communications Act 2003. Please see Ofcom's [General Privacy Statement](#) for more information about how we handle your personal information and your corresponding rights.

Keeping up to date with broadcasting matters

- 1.33 We strongly recommend that you subscribe to receive Ofcom's regular email updates on broadcasting matters. These include a [monthly radio licensing update](#) that lists new services licensed, licences revoked, licence transfers, and changes to licensed services during the past month. To subscribe to these updates, please visit www.ofcom.org.uk/email-updates and select 'Broadcasting'.

2. Extent of proposed coverage area

About this section

Under section 51(2)(a) of the 1996 Act, we are required to consider the extent of the coverage area an applicant proposes to achieve within the area which has been advertised. This section therefore asks you to describe the coverage you are proposing to achieve. Further questions on the detailed technical arrangements for the proposed service, including questions on the transmission site(s) that you intend to use and your plans for how the multiplexing and distribution of your service will be arranged are contained in Part B of the application form.

Before completing this section of the form, you should read carefully the notes on 'Extent of proposed coverage area' in Section 4 of Ofcom's [guidance notes for licence applicants and licensees](#).

Applicants should note there are confidential questions relating to extent of coverage area in Part B of the application form.

- 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):

East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited T/A Ards Community SSDAB is a partnership between 3 FM Community Radio Stations, Belfast 89 (Belfast FM Limited), Blast106 (Blast106 Limited) and Sunshine 1049 (Sunshine 1049 Limited) and a DSP Licence Holder Blast 106 Digital Limited which are based in the neighbouring polygon but which all have broadcast areas within or overlapping the polygon.

We have been working on the Ards Peninsula polygon since it was first advertised on the first occasion. Unfortunately, the loss of our main transmitter site on that occasion shortly before the close of applications made it impossible to submit at that time. This preparatory work has been informed by the experience of those involved having brought the successful Lagan SSDAB multiplex to air and with the invaluable knowledge that that has brought, both technically and operationally.

Our brief is to provide good quality indoor and outdoor coverage around the advertised polygon in a way that is logistically viable; respects the parameters laid down by Ofcom in terms of overspill and protecting specific polygons; recognises the population densities; and is economically sustainable.

This is a difficult polygon to cover while respecting the parameters and having a multiplex that can be financially viable given the population densities.

Accordingly, we are applying with a single transmission site which best meets these requirements. However, we are happy to consider the addition of another site to the south of the polygon should our application be successful if Ofcom desires that. The southern part of the polygon is not part of the Ards Peninsula and does not connect to the rest of the polygon and is part of Newry, Mourne & Down District Council and might actually be better included in the Newry Multiplex.

We are not seeking to significantly serve area outside the polygon and have been careful in our technical planning not to do so. To achieve this we have chosen to use directional antennae to minimise overspill and yet maximise coverage within the polygon.

In our planning we noted that areas around Carryduff, Saintfield Ballynahinch and Holywood could be subject interference from small-scale DAB multiplexes that may already be on-air or may come on air.

We have tried to ensure that our outgoing interference is minimised especially with regards to the Ballymena small-scale polygon and toward Scotland and the Isle of Man by choosing directional antenna and we believe we have achieved this in so far as it is possible and the possible detriment to our own coverage.

We have also been cognisant of interference into the Republic of Ireland which now has its own DAB+ trial running (Failte DAB) and we have taken great care to protect and prevent interference/coverage towards the Republic of Ireland

Subject to availability of frequencies, impact on neighbouring polygons and financial viability we are happy to work with Ofcom to provide additional in-fill transmitter installations or increase/decrease power as required or desired by Ofcom to improve and increase coverage of the polygon should Ofcom be minded to award the Mux to us.

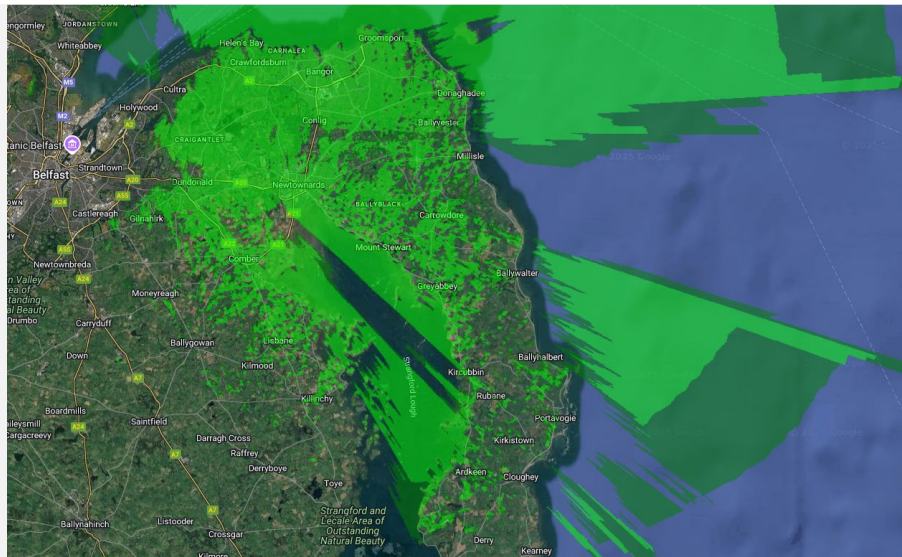
We feel we have successfully planned to help mitigate any negative effects from ACI to other DAB multiplexes in the area and to other co-channel multiplex polygons further afield.

In terms of population coverage and service provision, Total Population is approximately 177,278. To estimate the "over 15 population" from the total population figure of 177,278 in Northern Ireland, we need to apply a reasonable proportion. From the 2021 Northern Ireland census, the age breakdown was roughly 20% of the population is aged 0–14 years, the remaining 80% are 15 years and over. Using that as a guide, we will serve a population over 15 of 141,822 persons.

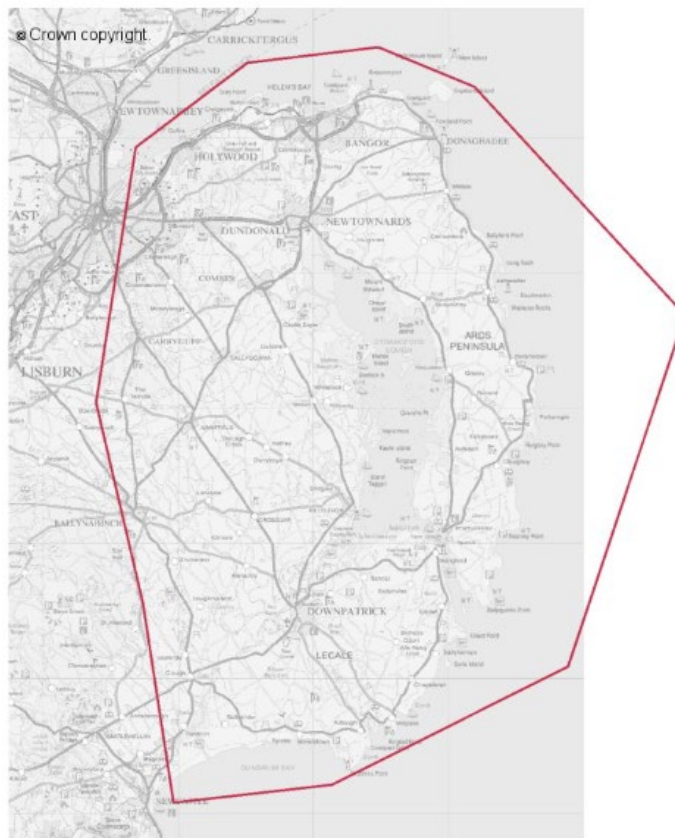
- 2.2 Please provide summary details of the sites required to achieve this coverage by completing the table below (add additional rows as required):

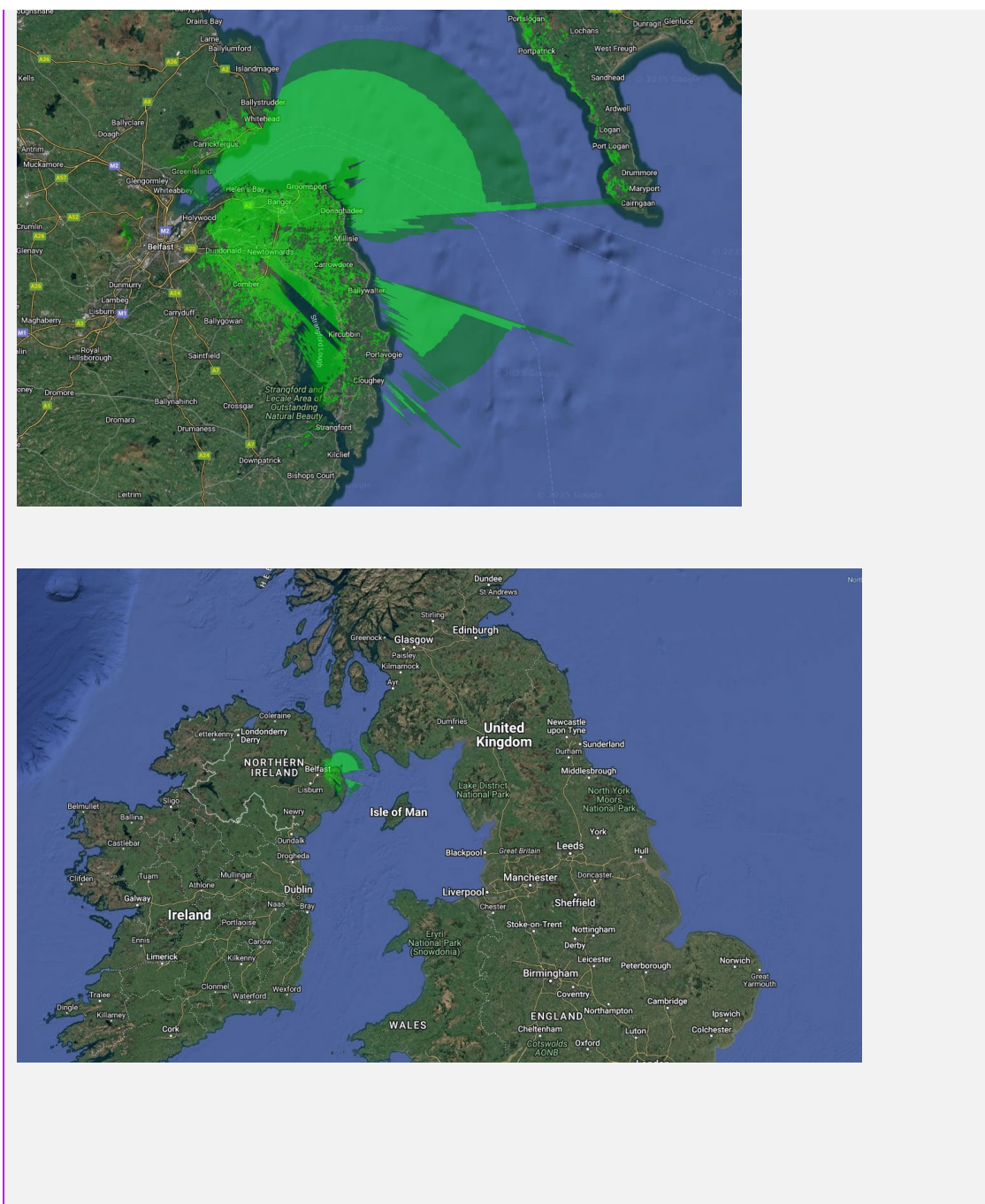
Site name	NGR	Antenna height (m agl)	Antenna type proposed with bearing	New or existing antenna	ERP (W)
Ards 1	NW 552 318	20m	Protel 3 element yagi 7.05 dbd gain	New on existing Craignalet Tower Mast	400W ERP (that's 150W from transmitter and allowing for cable and filter losses)

- 2.3 Please provide below 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 dBµV/m field strength and the advertised small-scale DAB area contour. [Advertised small-scale DAB areas in GIS format](#) are available on the Ofcom website. In the interests of transparency, you **must** embed an inline map image within this form (even if you also submit a map as a separate supporting file).



Ards Peninsula





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.	TowerCoverage.com – online RF coverage mapping tool (latest web version as of April 2025).
Detail the terrain model used by the software and its resolution.	USGS/NASA SRTM 1 Arc-Second (~30 <u>metre</u> resolution) global terrain model.

Detail the ground cover (clutter) data used by the software and its resolution.	OpenStreetMap-based clutter classification with local vegetation/urban overlays; resolution varies regionally (~25–100 m accuracy).
What propagation algorithm has been used?	Longley-Rice (Irregular Terrain Model, ITM) – point-to-point mode with terrain and clutter consideration.
Where multiple sites are proposed, describe what methodology has been used to assess the network (SFN) gain	<u>TowerCoverage</u> is not SFN-aware; overlap areas were visually inspected and assessed manually using map overlays to confirm acceptable predicted gain zones.
If these predictions have not used Ofcom-provided population data, state what population data has been used and its source.	Population coverage has been estimated using OSNI data and postcode overlays via NISRA's Small Area Population Statistics (SAPs) and local postcode sectors.
Have your predictions been generated by a commercial organisation? If so, by whom?	Coverage Predictions were produced by Ulstermux Limited using TowerCoverage.com and GIS assessment in-house.

3. Ability to establish the proposed service

About this section

In Section 3, we are asking questions about the applicant company, its financial and business plan, the relevant expertise and experience of those who will be involved in providing the small-scale radio multiplex service, and the timetable for coverage roll-out. The answers to these questions will enable Ofcom to assess the application under section 51(2)(c) of the 1996 Act. Additional information is requested in Part B of the application form.

In the first part of this section we are asking for details of the applicant's officers (directors or, in the case of LLPs, designated members), its shareholders and participants. Where applicable, we are also asking for details of the officers of the applicant's parent and associated companies or LLPs etc.

If any of the individuals named in your responses are known by more than one name/version of their name, all names must be provided.

Certain persons are disqualified from holding a small-scale radio multiplex licence. This section asks the questions which enable us to consider this for those types of disqualification which apply specifically to bodies corporate. It also asks questions which are relevant to our assessment of the applicant's fitness and properness to hold a small-scale radio multiplex licence.

The response boxes and tables should be expanded or repeated where necessary, or provided in a separate annex.

'Officerships' in this section refers to: directorships of bodies corporate, designated memberships of LLPs, or membership of a governing body of an unincorporated association (including partnerships).

The remaining questions in Section 3 relate to the applicant's financial and business plan, the expertise and experience of those involved, and the planned timetable for launching the proposed multiplex service.

Applicants should note there are confidential questions relating to extent of coverage area in Part B of the application form.

Applicant's details

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

East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited T/A Ards Community SSDAB

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

NI690488

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:

East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited, Media Ireland, Enterprise House, Win Business Park, Newry, Down, United Kingdom, BT35 6PH

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

Yes

If no, please submit the up-to-date document and indicate you have done so in the checklist in Section 7 of Part B of the application form.

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 ¹	Country of residence	Other officerships held (and nature of the business concerned)	Other employment
Dr John Coulter	East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited, Media Ireland, Enterprise House, WIN Business Park, Newry, County Down. BT35 6PH.	Northern Ireland	Director of Sunshine 1049 Ltd Director of Lagan SSDAB Limited	Journalist Lecturer Broadcaster
Mr Joseph McCormick	East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited, Media Ireland, Enterprise House, WIN Business Park, Newry, County Down.	Northern Ireland	Director of Belfast FM Ltd. Director of Lagan SSDAB Limited	Business Consultant Broadcaster

¹ This should be the same address as is held and published by Companies House.

Full name of individual	Correspondence address ¹	Country of residence	Other officerships held (and nature of the business concerned)	Other employment
	BT35 6PH.			
Mr Christopher Barber	East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited, Media Ireland, Enterprise House, WIN Business Park, Newry, County Down. BT35 6PH.	Northern Ireland	Director of Blast106 Ltd Director of Lagan SSDAB Limited	Broadcaster Media Trainer
Sean Og Mac Braoin Shane M.J. Mc Breen	East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited, Media Ireland, Enterprise House, WIN Business Park, Newry, County Down. BT35 6PH.	Northern Ireland	Director of Blast106 Digital Limited Director Carberry House Limited. Director Media Ireland NI Ltd.	Company Direct & Broadcaster

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
Belfast FM Limited	N/A	2000		25%
Blast106 Limited	N/A	2000		25%
Sunshine 1049 Limited	N/A	2000		25%
Blast106 Digital Limited	N/A	2000		25%
<p>Comments:</p> <p>East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited is a company limited by guarantee and without share issue. The 4 participants are equal participants and are three Ofcom licenced community radio stations and a DSP Licence Holder who all have a connection to the polygon and one of which (Sunshine 1049) is based within the polygon. Each of the participants has a director on the Board of East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited.</p> <p>The members have each agreed to invest £2,000 if required although there may be a variety of sources of funding available to the not-for-profit company. If so the members investment will form part of a contingency to be called upon if necessary.</p>				

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 (or 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		

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		

- 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	

- 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	

- 3.11 In relation to each body corporate identified in response to question 3.8, complete the following table, 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.)

Name of body corporate identified in response to question 3.8

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Full name of participant	Number of shares	Total investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
N/A				
Comments:				

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	
A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a political nature, or which is affiliated to such a body	No	Note: Dr John Coulter is a voluntary Press Officer for the East Londonderry constituency party. His work is constituency based and not linked in any way to the Ards Peninsula or any constituency connected to the Ards Peninsula.
A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a religious nature; ²	No	Note: Sunshine 1049 Limited operates one of Belfast's Community Radio Station serving the Christian community from all denominations across Belfast. However, the company is not itself a religious body nor is its objects wholly or mainly of a religious nature.
An individual who is an officer of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	
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	
An advertising agency or an associate of an advertising agency	No	

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):

☐ Is the applicant a current licensee of Ofcom?

No (delete as appropriate).

☐ Has the applicant ever held an Ofcom broadcasting licence before?

² 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.

No (delete as appropriate).

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

Yes (delete as appropriate).

- 2) Does the applicant control an existing Ofcom licensee?

No (delete as appropriate).

- 2) 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 (delete as appropriate).

- 2) 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 (delete as appropriate).

However, East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited submitted an application for the Larne Newtownabbey & Carrickfergus Polygon but withdrew it immediately and prior to consideration by Ofcom and prior to the filing of the Fee.

The company had prepared an application for the Ards Peninsula polygon when it was first advertised but was unable to submit at that time due to the loss of a transmitter site days before the submission deadline.

In the interest of transparency, some members of East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited are also involved in the successful Lagan SSDAB multiplex.

They have not been involved in a licence which has been surrendered or revoked.

- 2) 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)?

Yes / No (delete as appropriate).

This appears to be the same question as (f)

- 2) 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 (delete as appropriate).

- 2) 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 (delete as appropriate).

- 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
(a)	CR100062	Belfast FM Limited holds a Community Radio Licence for Belfast (Belfast 89) Joseph McCormack is a director of Belfast FM Ltd and appointed by it as a director of Lagan SSDAB Limited
(b)	CR000140	Blast106 Limited holds a Community Radio Licence for Belfast (Blast106) Christopher Barber is a director of Blast106 Ltd and appointed by it as a director of Lagan SSDAB Limited.
(c)	CR102263	Sunshine 1049 Limited holds a Community Radio Licence for Belfast (Sunshine 1049) Dr John Coulter is the representative from Sunshine 1049.
(d)	DP105476BA/1	Blast 106 Digital Limited holds a Digital Service Provider Licence. Sean Og Mac Braoin is the representative from Blast106 Digital Ltd
(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 (delete as appropriate).

If yes, please provide the following details:

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

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.

Our projections are based on our real world experience of having brought Lagan SSDAB to air across Greater Belfast and having operated that multiplex and knowing the costs involved. We have also through this involvement become aware of better priced suppliers and have an increased ability to do contra-deals for equipment and services.

Capital investment for transmitter, filter and antenna at £6,000.00. There are no site works required.

Installation of antenna by Gordon Miskimmin £150

Our Site costs monthly are £150 plus £25 for broadband.

Electricity usage is metered but our experience of the Lagan SSDAB site at White Mountain would be £85-100 per month.

Cost of Commissioning will be £500 to Ulstermux who have the necessary equipment and experience.

We already have a secure cabinet for holding the equipment within the transmitter site Block-build building.

There is no additional site rental costs and our technical services and multiplexing is carried out on a contra-deal for carriage.

Evidence of current cash funding at bank has been provided in the Appendices.

Once the Mux is launched, day-to-day ongoing operating costs will be met through renting capacity on the multiplex to third parties. Accounting for a free period of 3 months for all services on air at launch, the Mux will be financially self-sufficient from Month 3 onwards.

The applicant, East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited, is owned and run by experienced operators of Ofcom licensed Radio services and Transmission installations in the region area who are familiar with the costs of set up and operating transmission facilities.

The management of the multiplex, including its technical start-up, will be contracted to Ulstermux Limited through John Gartlan. They will be responsible for the day-to-day technical management of the multiplex under the supervision of the Directors. Ulstermux Limited has established an effective management and ownership platform for SSDAB operations.

All administrative, finance, compliance and regulatory functions will be managed by the company directly, to ensure it achieves its aims of serving our CDSP and DSP Service Providers and benefitting the local community.

Our proposed carriage fees are set at a level such as not to be a barrier to services participating in the Mux while at the same time ensuring that the running costs can be met and re-investment in the Mux can be made.

In line with our community ethos, it is proposed that the Reserved Capacity CDSP spots will be provided Free of Charge.

East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited is a community owned not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Any surplus generated by the Mux will be used as follows:

1. Reinvestment in the Mux.
2. To create a fund for training and development initiatives in the radio sector with a specific emphasis on the community radio sector.

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

☐ Share capital

The company is limited by guarantee and therefore does not have share capital however the members of the company have given an undertaking to provide up to £2000 from their own resources if needed.

☐ Loan stock

We have a Letter of Offer of Soft loan facilities in place.

We can also access Loan Funding from Community Finance Ireland.

☐ Leasing/HP facilities (capital value)

☐ Bank overdraft

☐ Grants and donations

We will be applying to National Lottery Awards for All towards the Capital Cost (although we are not reliant on that)

☐ Other (please specify)

We have £6200 available at Bank.

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 (£)
Belfast FM Limited	N/A	£2,000
Blast106 Limited	N/A	£2,000
Sunshine 1049 Limited	N/A	£2,000
Blast106 Digital Ltd	N/A	£2,000

- 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.

Although we are not reliant on National Lottery Awards for All Funding we will be making an application towards Capital and first 2 years site costs. This provides up to £20,000 funding over 2 years.

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.)

East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited is a cooperative consortium of 3 Ofcom licensed Community Radio Stations in the Polygon and not-for-profit DSP Licence Holder who have been working away behind the scenes since we submitted an expression of interest and in expectation of the re-advertisement of the Multiplex.

As such the consortium have unrivalled experience in the operation of low power transmission services in the region, and unlike many commercial radio stations, community radio stations generally self-manage their own transmission facilities which gives our consortium first-hand knowledge invaluable to the successful operation of this Multiplex.

In addition, the directors were responsible for launching Lagan SSDAB serving Belfast & Lisburn so have the proven track record for bringing these projects to fruition.

The directorship of East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited T/A Ards Community SSDAB is made up of designated representatives of the 3 individual community radio stations and the DSP which own the company. In appointing these directors, great thought was put in to ensuring that their skills were complimentary to enhance the management of the company to ensure the success of the multiplex.

Sean Og Mac Braoin (Director)

Sean Og Mac Braoin is perhaps the most experienced community radio practitioner in Northern Ireland. He has been involved in the application, launch or management of 6 stations here and has designed many systems, procedures and training courses used in the management and operation of community radio stations including the manual 'Community Radio – 90% Community 10% Radio'.

An alumnus of Edinburgh Napier University, University of Ulster and Durham University his dissertation studying the impact of Community Radio on Community & Youth Work in Northern Ireland.

He guest lectures to 3rd level students as well as supporting other community radio stations with whom he hasn't been involved and is a keen enthusiast of the expansion of community radio and diversity amongst stations.

Career wise he is a company director and owned a successful group of promotion & marketing businesses in Ireland and Great Britain with clients globally. He is Chairman of The Irish Trust, an Irish-American Charity which funds initiatives on both sides of the Atlantic.

Sean Og's role will be to maintain the necessary statutory and regulatory records and ensure reports and returns are made as necessary and regulatory compliance is maintained.

Sean Og was responsible for the launch of Lagan SSDAB and manages the daily operations of that multiplex.

Joseph McCormack (Director)

Joseph McCormack, has been involved in the provision of Business Training Services, Business Consultancy and the publication of training materials and other business literature over the past 30 years. He specialises in helping small and medium sized businesses gain competitive advantage from their existing IT and telecommunications resources and the business has particular expertise in the area of remote working, internet applications and the mentoring of small businesses in e-business techniques. Prior to his current consultancy role, Joe was a marketing and sales professional with BT in Northern Ireland for almost 20 years.

He was a founder Director of Townsend Enterprise Park Ltd from 1993 until 2016 and served three terms as Chair and twice as Finance Director.

Training and post training one to one mentoring services have also been provided to InvestNI, Irish Rugby Union Professionals Association (IRUPA), Donegal County Enterprise Board, Meath County Enterprise Board, Monaghan Local Enterprise Office and Cavan Local Enterprise Office together with many of Northern Ireland's Local Enterprise Agencies.

He has also worked on programmes for Belfast City Council, Lisburn City and Castlereagh Council, Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Council, Derry and Strabane Council and InterTradeIreland.

Joe is a Fellow of the Institute of Consulting (Chartered Management Institute) and holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Marketing (UUJ).

He is also a Director and Chair of Belfast FM Ltd which operates Belfast 89FM. The company's broadcasting remit from OFCOM is to serve the needs of the over 45s across the city and since beginning broadcasting in 2015, Belfast 89FM has gone from strength to strength.

Belfast 89 has recently been relicensed for another 5 years.

On the Board, Joe will lead liaison with public, statutory and industry bodies as well as governance matters of the company.

Dr John Coulter (Director)

John Coulter has been involved in the community radio sector for over 10 years in many different fields including presentation, production, compliance, programming and training.

A retired Head of Course for Broadcast Journalism at Belfast Metropolitan College, he continues as a Lecturer Emeritus there in Broadcast Law & Ethics in Journalism.

John's core strength is training & skills and will bring these to the Board along with a wealth of contacts in the sector.

Christopher Barber (Director)

Chris is one of the longest serving (and surviving) members of the community radio sector in Northern Ireland.

He began his involvement with Feile FM before progressing to broadcast with Blast106 where he was made a director in 2014 and has served in that role ever since.

Efficiency, attention to detail and collegiate personality make Chris the perfect Board member, able to work with people from all walks of life. He is also generous with his time, broadcasting on numerous stations, acting as Head of Volunteering at Blast106 (responsible for recruitment, induction, training & mentoring) and most recently he has been assisting with workshops with a community radio group in Armagh who are at the start of their journey.

Over almost 20 years, his knowledge of the community radio sector in Belfast is unparalleled and his networks among people in the sector is invaluable to the Board. Chris key role within the Board will be liaison with the Service Providers (both CDSP and DSP).

East Antrim Community SSDAB Ltd T/A Ards Community SSDAB has also ensured the success of the Multiplex by contracting experienced specialists (Warren Wilding, Ulstermux & John Gartlan) to operate the technical requirements both in terms of installation and ongoing management and maintenance of the equipment and systems.

- 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	John Gartlan, Warren Wilding and Gordon Miskimmin	Significant experience of installation of transmission systems for broadcasters across Northern Ireland. Worked on the installation of the 2 sites for Lagan SSDAB and John Gartlan (Ulstermux) installed 10 for Newry Mux
Ongoing maintenance of the transmission equipment	Warren Wilding & John Gartlan	Significant experience of installation of transmission systems for broadcasters across Northern Ireland. Worked on the installation of the 2 sites for Lagan SSDAB and is responsible for their ongoing maintenance. John Gartlan has responsibility for Newry Mux and Lagan Mux in part.
Installation of the Multiplexing equipment	Warren Wilding (installation) John Gartlan (commissioning)	Significant experience of installation of DAB transmission systems for Small Scale DAB
Day-to-day technical management and maintenance of the multiplexing equipment (if different from response to question 3.28 above)	John Gartlan (Ulstermux)	Currently runs Newry Multiplex and is involved in management of Lagan Multiplex having taken over from The DAB Mux.

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:

Our outline Project Plan which is attached indicates a realistic timescale for roll out towards launch of 9 months, however, we would be targeting a 6 months launch timescale after award as the transmission site is an existing commercial tower mast with immediate capacity and services (electricity & broadband) and the team behind this application have the proven track record of delivering the Belfast &

Lisburn Multiplex (Lagan SSDAB). The funds are in place or available and we know the equipment (transmitter, filters and antenna) that we will be ordering.

Accordingly we would want to move to submission of the Final Technical Plan to Ofcom's engineering department as soon as is practicable after award.

- 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.

Supplied as Appendix.

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

About this section

Section 51(2)(ca) of the 1996 Act requires Ofcom to take into account the desirability of awarding a small-scale radio multiplex licence to a body corporate that is providing – or proposing to provide – a C-DSP service in the locality being advertised (or involving such a person as a participant in the licence-holding company).

Section 51(2)(f) of the 1996 Act requires Ofcom to take into account evidence that the applicant has support from providers interested in having their existing or planned programme services carried on the proposed multiplex.

Note that we do not require applicants to provide us with a full line-up of services they intend to provide, or details about the content of those services.

Involvement of C-DSP providers

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

Yes (please delete accordingly)

- 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:

If awarded the multiplex licence, East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited would plan to provide a CDSP on the multiplex which would be a shared community facility/channel for community organisations, youth groups, festivals and events to host their own community radio station for up to 28 days at a time (similar to the old short term RSL licences on FM). The service would be non-competing with any other CDSP or DSP on the multiplex. This channel would also host an annual Christmas-themed station for kids of all ages from 0-100.

- 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):

As Sunshine 1049 falls within the polygon (on its western extreme), it would plan to apply for a CDSP licence as it already provides the requirements of a CDSP on its FM obligations.

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.

Heads of Terms attached.

Also copies of emails included in Fair & Effective Competition Appendix.

Name of service provider and station name (if known)	Proposed C-DSP or DSP	Nature of evidence of support provided
East Antrim Community SSDAB Limited	CDSP	Heads of Terms
Sunshine 1049 Ltd	CDSP	Heads of Terms
BFBS NI (Holywood)	CDSP	Email correspondence with Niki
FM105 Down CR	CDSP	Email
Belfast 89	DSP	Heads of Terms
Blast 106 Xtra	DSP	Heads of Terms
Eirewave	DSP	Email
Lisburn Live	DSP	Phone Conversation J Glover 27 th April 2025
Energy 106	DSP	Email
Juice 1038	DSP	Email
Blast Country	DSP	Heads of Terms
Blast Rock	DSP	Heads of Terms
Blast Dance	DSP	Heads of Terms
Wild Country	DSP	Email confirmation
Juice 1038	DSP	Heads of Terms
BFBS Gurkha	DSP	Email correspondence with Niki

5. Fair and effective competition

About this section

Section 51(2)(g) of the 1996 Act requires Ofcom to assess whether, in contracting or offering to contract with programme service providers, the applicant has acted in a manner calculated to ensure fair and effective competition in the provision of community and local digital sound programme services.

In assessing applications, we need to have confidence that the prospective small-scale radio multiplex licensee has approached a wide range of potential service providers. Negotiations that have taken place between the applicant and potential service providers need to have been demonstrably fair, and the terms of any contract for service provision must be fair and non-discriminatory.

Applicants should note there is one further question relating to fair and effective competition in Part B of the application form.

- 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.

For example, how have you sought to engage a broad range of prospective service providers including those not directly involved as participants in the application and those who have decided not to proceed to express an interest or agree heads of terms at this stage, and how have you sought to make prospective service providers aware of your proposals and potential terms for carriage?

We have effectively been working on our preparations for this application since when it was first advertised the first time. We had to pull our application at the last minute for Ards due to the loss of a site.

As part of that we contacted a large number of prospective Service Providers resulting in the Confirmation and the Heads of Terms Agreements. These are attached by way of Appendices. The Heads of Terms outline the proposed rate card.

In addition, the proposed service was publicised on Radio Today, a major industry website and more locally featured on the news bulletins of local community radio stations and an on-air promotion campaign was also run on stations.

When readvertised in January we did interviews on Blast106 and Lagan Radio.

We issued Press Releases a copy of which is in the Appendix marked Fair & Effective Competition.

We will have a website which is currently under creation as of the date of application but will be live before the application is assessed to ensure that all information about the mux will be publicly available.

The only Ofcom licensed Community Radio Station in the area is Sunshine 1049 as Bangor FM appears to have closed but we have attempted to contact them and have provided evidence of this in the Appendix.

Our experience in being involved in Lagan SSDAB serving Greater Belfast we have demonstrated a completely open approach to all Service Providers even those who would be considered to be in competition to the community radio stations which own that Mux. We will take a similar approach with the Ards Mux.

We also believe that pricing for carriage is very important for fair & effective competition so that the cost of carriage cannot be a barrier to accessing the Mux. Naivety in pricing has resulted in some Muxes in the UK struggling to attract services. That is why we have proposed that our Reserved Capacity spots will be free and we are offering both commercial and non commercial DSP spots at a low cost to encourage participation. This is achievable because we are not-for-profit and we are maintaining a low cost base, something that the 3 FM community radio stations have been successful in doing over the past decade and more.

6. Declaration

About this section

This form must be submitted by the body corporate which will hold the licence. The declaration must be certified by a company director or the company secretary, and covers all information provided by in the applicant in both Part A and Part B of the application form. The declaration must also be dated.

- ☒ 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.
- ☒ I further declare and warrant:
 - ☒ 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;
 - ☒ 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;
 - ☒ 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
 - ☒ 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.
- ☒ 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:

SEAN OG MAC BRAOIN

Date of application:

28th April 2025

I am authorised to make this application on behalf of the applicant in my capacity as (delete as appropriate):

Company Director

You now need to complete the [confidential section \(Part B\)](#) of the application form.