



## #MEDIA2012:

# Media Blueprint for London 2012

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**This article outlines Professor Miah's proposal for the #media2012 network, a citizen journalism community created around the London 2012 Games.**

### 1. Context

- 1.1 In 2009, the IOC stated its intention to develop a new strategy for its role in a time of radical media change. London 2012 will be the first Summer Games to be informed by this new approach to promoting the value of social media
- 1.2 London 2012 coincides with the scheduled targets set by the Digital Britain report & Race Online 2012, indicating a new era of potential media engagement in a nation where 9million people remain offline. This provides an opportunity to re-think the new media infrastructure within the United Kingdom.
- 1.3 The Games are the largest media event in the world, with broadcasters covering over 200 countries happens.

These broadcasters now include YouTube.

- 1.4 **The Games is a media event, but it should also be a media festival**, where the media are enabled to report much more than just the sports competition. The Cultural Olympiad should be at the heart of this festival of ideas.
- 1.5 **Olympic & Paralympic media centres** must shift from being spaces of information and mediation, to become factories for creativity, collaboration, and engagement, which can amplify the Olympic mission.
- 1.6 **The London 2012 Media Landscape** will include 13,000 broadcast journalists, 7,000 print journalists, who will cover sport. There will be an additional 12,000+ non-accredited professional journalists who will want cover all non-sport content. However, the largest population of reporters will be self-designated citizen reporters who want to share and organize their Olympic & Paralympic content.

**1.7** If the IOC can expand media participation without jeopardizing its financial base, then it can more adequately fulfil its role as a progressive social movement.

**1.8** Olympic cybercitizens are already taking ownership of reporting the Games and they will create a structure for their participation in 2012.

**1.9** In this context, the London 2012 Games can be a moment for realizing a new media legacy for the United Kingdom, built on the idea of citizen media reporting and the recognition that the Games are more than just sports competitions. They are social movements with high humanitarian and cultural aspirations.

**1.10** To achieve a broader media participatory culture, it is necessary to develop an extended media network for Games time reporting, which builds on the strategic development of non-accredited media centres at previous Games, linking them to citizen media projects.

**1.11** Such a network should be founded on principles of 'open media' to facilitate community legacies and build stories about London, the Nations and the Regions that reach an international audience. It will focus on reporting all non-sporting legacy stories, locating

culture and art at the heart of its practice. Its work will transcend national boundaries in ways that no other Games has achieved before, by promoting peer-to-peer conversations.

## **2. The #MEDIA2012 National Backbone**

**2.1** The #media2012 network is a UK wide initiative founded by London 2012 Creative Programmers, the Abandon Normal Devices festival and the University of the West of Scotland.

**2.2** Since its launch in 2010, it has expanded with leadership in Scotland, England's North West and South West, London, East Midlands, and West Midlands, with expressions of interest from Wales.

**2.3** The #media2012 network will bring into force the full commitment of Olympic aspirations, to promote dialogue and social change in the interests of humanity. These values accord with the fundamental principles of the Olympic Charter (2010).

**2.4** The #media2012 network is funded from existing budgets which have developed scoping for these infrastructures. It actively seeks new funds to support the 2012 programme of activity in London and to support regional programmes.

- 2.5 **The focus of the #media2012 network** interactions is on operational challenges, collaboration logistics and infrastructure aiming to bring engagement with the IOC and LOCOG and the potential UK partners.
- 2.6 **The journalists who work in #media2012 centres** should have a local commitment, but global aspirations. Transcending national boundaries is the biggest task. We're not yet global, despite our achievements in digital culture.
- 2.7 **The #media2012 draws on expertise from around the world**, building partnerships towards activity at future Games sites.

### 3. Goals

- 3.1 **Augment the Olympic media narrative** towards portraying broader dimensions of the philosophy of Olympism.
- 3.2 **Create public engagement** around Games time.
- 3.3 **Promote community legacy** for the nations and regions.
- 3.4 **Develop an 'open media' policy** for the Games.

### 4. Research Led

- 4.1 **The centres will function as real-time experiments**, providing focal points for understanding the social media community and its interface with mass media.
- 4.2 **Coming to terms with the politics of the citizen journalist** will greatly assist future event hosts, like Glasgow 2014, Sochi 2014, Rio 2016 and World Cup 2018.
- 4.3 **The International Olympic Committee can focus its conversation** with citizen media around these hubs.

### 5. Values

- 5.1 **Through the Olympic & Paralympic Games**, we want to create space for intercultural dialogue and collaboration.
- 5.2 **We value the Olympiad** as a time to address issues of critical social importance for Britain.
- 5.3 **We will support communities** to tell their Olympic & Paralympic stories and work with professional journalists to meet their needs.
- 5.4 **We want to expand media privileges** to concerned citizens.
- 5.5 **We promote responsible and fair journalism** in an open media culture, where

content is shared and power distributed.

- 5.6 **We will respect the right of groups** to express their political views and support different voices in being heard

## 6. Need

- 6.1 **The Olympic & Paralympic media are focused on sports** almost exclusively during Games time, but this can and should encompass broader legacy stories.
- 6.2 **Digital media has given rise to a proliferation of citizen journalists** who want to report the Games.
- 6.3 **Legacies for the Nations and Regions**, along with London's story need other media centres to have space to explain what the Games have meant to them.
- 6.4 **These centres raise a number of questions.** Who should fund them? How should they relate to the Olympic & Paralympic infrastructure more broadly? Can they even exist given their desire to build into the intellectual property of the Olympic & Paralympic Games?"

## 7. How this fits with the nations' aspirations for London 2012

- 7.1 **The bid promise from London 2012 was to create a national Games**, but we would be the only media centres to tell those stories.
- 7.2 **We celebrate Olympic & Paralympic values** by promoting the broad ideology of the Olympic & Paralympic Games as a social movement.
- 7.3 **We are a not-for-profit infrastructure**, fostering educational practice and public engagement with the Games.
- 7.4 **Through our network**, we will constitute the largest network of social media producers throughout the UK and reinvigorate the core media partners of the Games.
- 7.5 **Our content will reach** international networks that other media will not reach.
- 7.6 **Our journalists will produce** the largest volume of Olympic content and influence trending topics on social media platform, crating the largest Olympic and Paralympic archive of any Games.

## 8. Why accredited Olympic media will need us

- 8.1 **Media organizations in the UK** will traverse the country around Games time, requiring facilities and stories we can provide, particularly around the torch relay.
- 8.2 **To fully report on the London 2012 Games**, it will be necessary to see what is happening in the Nations and Regions.
- 8.3 **The Olympic Games is a social movement**, not a sporting event. What happens in the country will become its central legacy
- 8.3.1 **CASE STUDY:** For example, NBC is setting up a media space around Birmingham City University, as the USA team will be based here. The local community media can interface with this. As well, the CitizensEye in Leicester will create a community media centre that will operate around Games time. Team GB will be in Loughborough. Creating an infrastructure to bring about media change could markedly change how the Olympics works
- 8.4 **While the proposal should aspire to build a network** that includes all nations and regions, it will be useful to begin with a hub of centres based on known interests.

- 8.5 **These centres will draw stories from each other** to communicate what has been happening and what is happening during Games time. However, events should also build on global networks, particularly previous Games experience to develop the idea of a cultural legacy that extends beyond London. Satellite centres will provide programmatic content during the Games.

## 9. What was achieved at previous Games: Vancouver 2010

- 9.1 **True North Media house accredits a 5 yr old** as a journalist and an Olympic mascot.
- 9.2 **W2 is the first independent social media centre** to work with an Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games.
- 9.3 **VANOC appoints a number of young people** to be its official citizen journalism team during the Games

## 10. What will these media hubs look like?

10.1 The influence of any specific media centre will be restricted by its funding, its technology and its community, but primarily the latter. Hub centres can be high-tech facilities with large venue space, but all should aspire to similar networked facilities to maximize participation. We all should be able to plug into each others' space at any time to deliver audio, visual and interaction.

## 10.2 Imagine

- High technology facilities
- Networked Infrastructure
- Community Generated Content
- International Media Attention
- Lasting Media Legacy

**In closing, this proposal brings together the primary instigators of independent Olympic & Paralympic media centres and creative, artistic practice from the last 10 years of the Olympic & Paralympic Games, along with social media leaders from future Games cities. With the right support, it has the potential to tell the full story of the London 2012 Games**

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