

# Google fund to develop French media websites launched

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A 60-million-euro (\$81 million) fund set up by Google to help French media develop their presence on the Internet was launched Thursday following a deal to settle a row over royalty payments.

The US search engine signed an agreement with the French government in February to settle a spat with French publishers who had wanted

Google to pay them for linking to their content.

The fund will be set up for three years with 20 million euros available annually.

The fund will be managed by Google and a body grouping news outlets called the Association of Political and General Information (AIPG).

Online political and general sites can apply for funding for "innovative" projects, Google and AIPG said.

The projects will be funded for a maximum of 60 percent of the total cost, with a two-million-euro ceiling for each proposal.

Applications can be made online at [www.finp.fr](http://www.finp.fr).

Google had in a letter to the French government, made public by AFP in mid-October, threatened to stop including French media in its Internet search results if it had to pay [royalties](#).

The body overseeing the fund will be headed by Ludovic Blecher, who was in charge of digital strategy for the French newspaper Liberation.

During the row with Google, President Francois Hollande had threatened to draft [new legislation](#) to force the company to pay for content used from French media. But that threat was dropped when Google came up with the fund offer in February.

Google has been involved in similar spats in Belgium and Germany.

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