

NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed until 00:00hrs, Sunday 2 November 2025

On The Record launches national design competition for memorial to honour journalists killed in conflict

*Announcement coincides with International Day to End
Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists (2nd November)*

A national design competition has been launched with the goal of creating the UK's first permanent memorial dedicated to British and UK-based journalists who have lost their lives while reporting from conflict zones. Through the creation of a world-class work of art, the initiative, titled *On The Record*, seeks to honour the courage and sacrifice of journalists and media workers who died in pursuit of the truth.

The memorial sculpture will be located at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, the country's year-round place of remembrance. A complementary sculpture will also be installed at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street – the journalist's chapel – with a dual presence creating both a national recognition and an enduring legacy.

The competition is being run in partnership with the Royal Society of Sculptors, with submissions open from today until 9 January 2026. Shortlisted artists will be invited to present maquettes and costings in March, with installation planned for spring 2027.

Chair of Trustees, Sarah Sands, former editor of BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme and the *Evening Standard*, said:

"Journalists bear witness to the worst of humanity so that the world cannot turn a blind eye to it. The memorial will be a place to reflect on their courageous dedication to the truth and to remind future generations of the preciousness and the cost of free speech. We are proud to launch this competition and invite artists to imaginatively express these journalists' stories."

The On The Record campaign was conceived at the time of the death of renowned war correspondent Marie Colvin in Syria in 2012. Since then, at least 17 UK journalists have been killed while reporting from conflict zones. Globally, the toll is far higher – with 128 journalists and media workers killed in 2023 alone, according to the International Federation of Journalists.

The memorial will be complemented by a digital tribute hosted by Press Gazette, featuring an online database of those commemorated, alongside archive footage, interviews with family members and educational resources. This digital platform will ensure that the stories of fallen journalists are preserved and accessible to all.

Among those supporting the campaign is Karola Zakrzewska, whose brother Pierre Zakrzewski was killed while reporting for the UK-based division of Fox News while in Ukraine in 2022. She said:

"Pierre believed deeply in the power of journalism to shine a light in dark places. He risked everything to tell the stories that mattered. This memorial means his sacrifice – and that of so many others – will not be forgotten. It's a way of putting their stories 'on the record' for generations to come."

The trustees have confirmed initial funding pledges of £300,000 out of a total campaign target of £1 million. Artists shortlisted for the second phase of the competition will receive a small honorarium to support their work.

The launch coincides with the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists, a date chosen to highlight the risks faced by media professionals and the urgent need for greater protection.

For more information on the competition and how to get involved, visit <https://www.ontherecordmemorial.co.uk>.

ENDS

To request an interview

Please contact Andrew Baud, Trustee for On the Record, on 07775 715775 or andrew.baud@teamtala.com