



ISBA

# Media Excellence Certificate



June 2026

One  
Voice

# Introduction

As the advertising and media landscape continues to evolve, those responsible for leading media agency relationships face increasing complexity and responsibility for effectiveness. Success requires the confidence, knowledge, and skills to get the best out of agency partners, ensure that planning remains both media-neutral & results-driven, and to lead transformative change within their own organisations.

Our members asked us to help them with this challenge. In response, ISBA joined forces with The Aperto Partnership in 2024, to launch the CPD-accredited Media Excellence Certificate.

This two-day course is designed specifically for senior professionals, responsible for leading the relationship with their media agencies, enabling participants to learn alongside peers, set individual learning goals, and create actionable plans with measurable outcomes.

The course has been a great success, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants. My aim is to ensure that this initiative continues to evolve, alongside others, helping today's marketing & communications leaders to stay ahead, embrace change, and have impact. Together, we will aid the understanding and effectiveness of advertising in the UK and ensure that both ISBA & its members remain relevant and impactful in the market.



**Simon Michaelides,**  
Director General, ISBA



# About The Aperto Partnership

## THE APERTO PARTNERSHIP

The Aperto Partnership is an independent expert media advisory business, with real practitioner expertise in helping advertisers drive business and brand growth through the use of media and building more valuable media agency partnerships. Their team have worked in senior roles client-side at advertisers including Sky, Coca Cola, Proctor & Gamble, PepsiCo and Coty, and agency-side in WPP, Publicis, Omnicom, Havas, IPG and Dentsu.

Consultancy support includes helping advertisers set up their internal media operating models and building effective media agency partnerships, contract, and commercial consultancy, and running media agency pitch processes.

UK brands The Aperto Partnership has worked with include L'Oréal, Barclays, Sky, Specsavers, M&S, BBC, Morrisons, Direct Line Group, MoneySupermarket and TUI.





## Who is the Media Excellence Certificate suitable for?

This two-day course is tailored for senior professionals with seven to 10+ years of experience or at least one year leading media agency relationships. It is CPD-accredited for 14 hours of learning and development.

## How will it be delivered?

Delivered by senior practitioners from The Aperto Partnership, with experience in client-side and media agency roles, and guest speakers from media agencies. The course will be a combination of trainer-led learning and group discussion. Participants will be encouraged to bring their own perspectives to share with the wider group and to connect on a longer-term to build a network of support and advice.

## What is the cost of participating?

For ISBA members the price per person is £1,500 plus VAT and for non-members the price per person is £1,750 plus VAT.

## Timings and dates

The course will run over two full days at ISBA's offices in Covent Garden from 09:00 – 17:00 with refreshments and lunch provided. The next cohort is taking place on Tuesday 2 and Wednesday 3 June 2026.

# About

## How will participants be evaluated?

During the course, attendees will be asked to capture learning outcomes, identifying new learnings and any gaps in knowledge that have been filled, and reflecting on what they can do differently moving forward.

At the end of the training course, attendees will create an action plan of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound objectives, of what they will do differently back within their organisations. They will be encouraged to agree the action plans with their line-managers and team and the value that will add to their companies.

## Terms & Conditions

We can accept name changes once members have applied. However, if you cancel your place less than one month prior to the practical, we cannot offer refunds.

# Key modules

	Modules	Learning outcomes
<b>The role of media in an organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the role of media within a company?</li> <li>• Different tasks performed by in-house media teams</li> <li>• Structure, resources and capabilities needed</li> <li>• Engaging with other stakeholders in the organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A framework to build an internal media operating model</li> <li>• Setting up a media team for success</li> <li>• Dealing with internal finance stakeholders and demonstrating the contribution of the media team to brand and business outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Getting the best from a media agency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up to get the best from your media agency</li> <li>• Best practice briefing and feedback</li> <li>• How a media agency works commercially</li> <li>• Aligning goals for effective media planning and buying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A framework for building an external media agency model</li> <li>• Considerations in setting up the advertiser-media agency partnership to maximise success</li> <li>• Practical methods for leading agency relationships, coaching the agency team for best performance</li> </ul>
<b>The wider media ecosystem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should the advertiser and media agency work with other partners?</li> <li>• Creative and media agency integration</li> <li>• Working with other third-party media partners, for example measurement, price benchmarking, financial compliance, outdoor specialist, digital verification</li> <li>• Responsibility in the media supply chain</li> <li>• Data, technology and AI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considerations for how to make a successful relationship between media, creative and other agency partners</li> <li>• Understanding the roles and potential contribution of different media partners in measuring and optimising agency performance</li> <li>• Approaches to measuring media effectiveness, from attribution to econometrics</li> <li>• Awareness of ways to look at brand safety, ad fraud, sustainability and carbon footprint in the media supply chain</li> <li>• Impact of technology on the media operating model</li> </ul>
<b>Building your media operating model</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the right partners</li> <li>• Media agency contract and commercial considerations</li> <li>• Achieving strategic and commercial outcomes without a pitch</li> <li>• Running a competitive media agency pitch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaching an agency contract and commercial negotiation</li> <li>• Understanding how a media agency makes money</li> <li>• Building the best advertiser-media agency contract</li> <li>• Identifying when not to run a pitch</li> <li>• Best-practice principles for running a media agency pitch process</li> </ul>

# Testimonials

'Thank you so much for this course, it was one of the best I have ever done!'

Global Retail Hair Media Director & UK Media Lead, Wella

'The Media Excellence Certificate was a valuable two-day course to really get under the hood of how media operates and agencies work. Getting to hear from and share with likeminded senior media leaders about their goals and challenges was very beneficial in sparking new ideas and opportunities to take back to giffgaff. It was expertly facilitated by the Aperto Partnership and was an overall very engaging experience. Thank you ISBA for introducing this offering to your members.'

Head of Go To Market & Media, giffgaff

'This two day session was packed with really tangible content and takeaways for not just day to day media planning but also more future focussed on how to drive media excellence both internally and with external agencies.'

The group was also great and there was a lot of discussion in the room around the different subjects covered which added a lot of value to the training. Overall I would recommend this course to anyone who works in media and leads agency relationships.'

Group Marketing, Specsavers

'Absolutely loved this course! Lots of food for thought that I've already started implementing!'

Head of Marketing Planning, Performance & Analysis, Aviva

'Fantastic course from ISBA and the Aperto Partnership. As an exclusively client-side marketer, the course was a great induction to the inner workings of a media agency and how to optimise our agency partnerships for success.'

Head of Marketing, easyJet



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To join the next cycle of ISBA's Media Excellence Certificate, please send your details to [JaneP@isba.org.uk](mailto:JaneP@isba.org.uk).