



WASTE REPORT for July 25, 2016

Panning in on Waste

From slowly panning in when things get serious, to the fast-paced pursuit of a running back breaking away, television cameras and their operators play an integral and often unsung role in our TV viewing experience. But operating a TV camera is not easy; it is a technical job that requires advanced training. Thanks to the U.S. Department of State (State), you are paying for some of that special training... in Estonia.

State is currently advertising a \$60,000 grant opportunity to train camera operators for ETV+, Estonian Public Broadcasting's (ERR) Russian-speaking channel. Interested parties are invited to submit proposals, which should include sending an American team of trainers, including a Russian-English translator, to Estonia to conduct training there. Separately, in July or August, "when [the] ETV+ production team is on leave," the grant recipient is expected to bring **five camera operators to the U.S. for a 10-day training session in a "learning-studio."**¹

Since it is a public broadcasting channel, ETV+ is primarily funded through Estonia's Ministry of Culture, receiving about €1.8 million in startup cash last year² and having a €2.53 million budget for 2015 - in which it planned to air just two hours of original programming daily.³ **ETV+, by the way, is ERR's third TV channel, so one might expect the technical expertise for camera operation to already exist within the ERR family.**⁴

We also should note that since we first discovered this grant opportunity, the original posting has been taken down and replaced with a new posting under a similar, but different, grant opportunity number. The only other change was to take out reference specifically to ETV+. Perhaps someone realized an observer (such as the FSO Subcommittee) might start looking into ETV+ and asking why the U.S. taxpayers are funding this?

¹ DOSEST-16-GR-002

² <http://news.err.ee/v/politics/2f900ed2-e23c-4dbe-9ba5-12be9a5d1104>

³ <http://news.err.ee/v/society/1a77dc4b-6405-4c29-b41d-7566fc4e9e70>

⁴ <http://www.err.ee>