

Building Stronger Communities Through Media

INNOVATIONS IN LOCAL JOURNALISM, PUBLIC MEDIA, AND STORYTELLING



Wyncote Foundation | PUBLIC MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

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THE LAST BARN DANCE: JASON ARTHURS AND TED RICHARDSON / REEL SOUTH



NEW ORLEANS FILM SOCIETY



MAKEEN OSMAN / MIZNA



NOISE OMAHA



MAKEEN OSMAN / MIZNA



LOUIS FELIX / KPCC

Introduction

News and stories about where we live shape the identity of our communities, for better or worse. At their best, these stories inspire and inform us, usher in new ideas, help us listen and learn from each other, and connect us to our government, civic institutions, and local businesses.

This report offers short profiles of innovative local and regional media projects that are bringing news, insight, stories, and public engagement activities to communities across the United States. We share these examples in order to contribute to the emerging dialogue among place-based foundations about ways local media can help animate and advance our diverse grantmaking missions and program priorities.

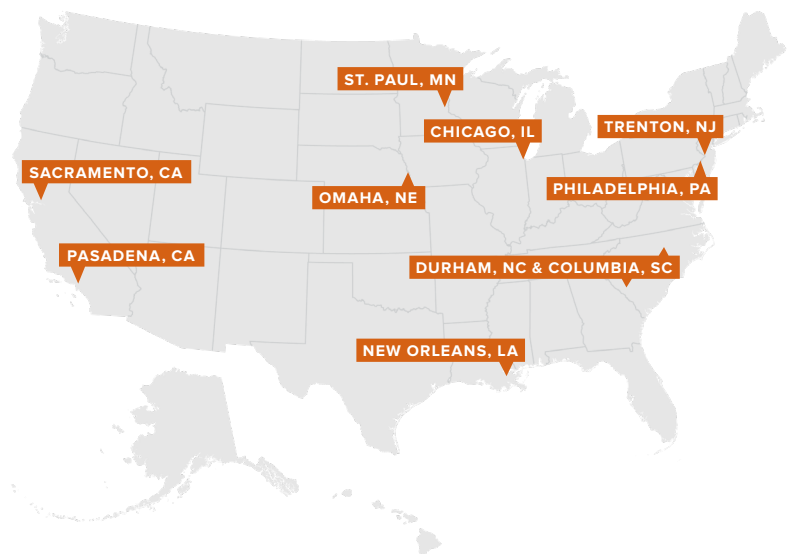
Grantmakers across the U.S. are investing in new ways to connect citizens through media across a range of topics and to serve their communities' needs for information, shared stories, and expression. The projects highlighted in this report illustrate different forms this work is taking and are intended to broaden the pool of examples that grantmakers can draw upon to inform their own program strategies.

The inspiration for this report comes from our own experience in media funding, and several of this report's examples highlight initiatives we've supported. Beyond these, examples include those nominated by our grantmaking peers and grantee partners, or those featured in publications or at conferences where we've learned about the work.

There are through-lines in these examples that bear lifting up.

Deeper community engagement: Local media organizations are exploring new forms of community engagement that bring the public into the journalism process and give citizens a greater role in deciding what stories are told and how. City Bureau, a civic journalism laboratory on the South Side of Chicago, aims to make media coverage more democratic by building the journalism skills of neighbors and creating opportunities for them to participate in coverage. Their goal is to shift journalists' stance from coverage *of* communities to coverage *with* communities. Likewise, public media organizations such as Southern California Public Radio (KPCC) and Capital Public Radio have dedicated newsroom staff, whose role is to foster community engagement and support two-way communication among audiences and journalists.

Bolder community empowerment: People and communities that feel left out of mainstream news coverage and stories are finding new ways to communicate, express themselves, and be heard. Organizations like Mizna, which fosters Arab-American film, literature, and art, and NOISE, a hyperlocal news initiative in Omaha's predominantly black northside neighborhood, are engaging with their communities to identify and share stories as reflected in their own lived experiences.



Innovation in collaboration: News organizations are finding new ways to work together to increase and strengthen local and regional coverage. Resolve Philadelphia facilitates editorial collaborations that now involve 23 nonprofit and commercial newsrooms in coverage of efforts to tackle their region’s most pressing social problems.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion: If our nation is to realize its promise of being “of the people, by the people, and for the people,” we must work diligently to ensure that the full diversity of voices is heard and served. This includes media, which has been historically less diverse than it must be in order to adequately serve civil society. In projects like UNC-TV and SCETV’s *Reel South*, Emerging Voices of the New Orleans Film Society, at City Bureau, and in our other examples, project leaders are constructing new pathways toward fuller inclusion. They’re building reciprocal relationships across neighborhoods and geographies, and working to bridge barriers of race, gender, age, or language.

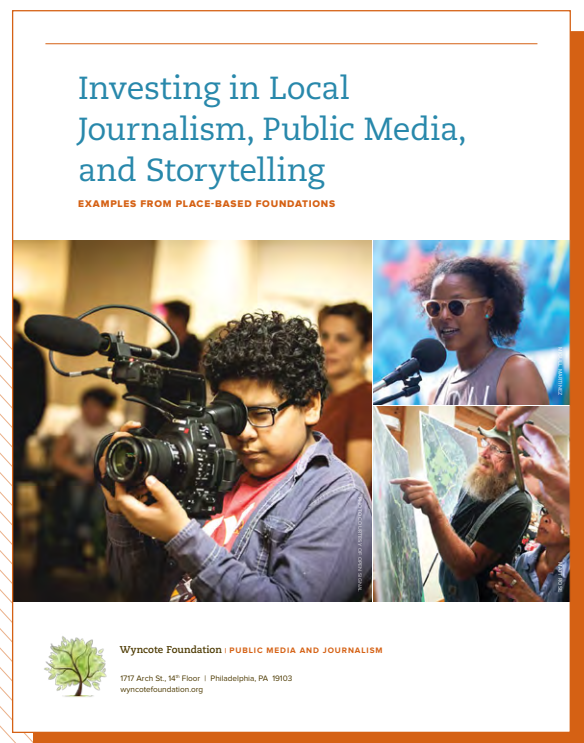
In developing this report we were inspired and renewed, once again, by the creative work happening in local communities across our nation. These organizations and projects—and the funders who are furthering this work—give us hope for the future and offer other grantmakers new approaches that can truly make a difference in “place.”

Together with our report published early in 2018 profiling place-based grantmakers that have chosen to invest in media, this report aims to foster and inform a community of practice among local funders whose inspiration and motivation come from their desire to strengthen the places where we live, work, and create.

We are eager to connect with you, learn from your experiences, and share more information that documents and connects the work of place-based funders nationally. Please be in touch!

David Haas

Vice Chair, Wyncote Foundation
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Check out *Investing in Local Journalism, Public Media, and Storytelling: Examples from Place-Based Foundations*, our 2018 report profiling place-based grantmakers that have chosen to invest in media.

<https://bit.ly/2G9VqIV>

What are public radio newsrooms doing to reach beyond their traditional audiences and learn from the communities they cover?

Capital Public Radio's broadcasts reach the halls of California's state government in Sacramento and also bring news and public affairs programming to Central Valley farmlands and to the resorts and wilderness areas of the Sierra Nevada. CapRadio's innovative community engagement efforts intentionally reach out to and draw insights from these diverse regions.

CapRadio puts the public at the center of news gathering even before reporters start to develop stories. For example, the newsroom's recent *Place and Privilege* project began with a newsroom field trip to an affordable housing complex and convening a regional housing summit to listen to and learn from people on the front lines of Sacramento's housing shortage. Going deeper, CapRadio gathered community members to identify housing needs, barriers, and solutions and then organized "story circles" in partnership with nonprofits around the region, providing an opportunity for on-the-ground conversations to shape and inform reporting.

Place and Privilege delivered an hour-long radio documentary, eight podcast segments, photojournalism, and an interactive website that profiled families' and individuals' stories. CapRadio shared its news stories with communities via participatory "PostCast" events that spurred both reflection and action. An evaluation by Impact Architects shows that *Place and Privilege* had unusually wide reach—beyond traditional public radio audiences—and resulted in increased empathy among the project's participants.

Asked what's hard about the work, jesikah maria ross, senior community engagement strategist, says that, "Newsrooms produce daily news in a fast-paced environment. Deep community engagement takes time. News is often deadline-driven; engagement is relationship-driven. Bridging these different orientations is at the heart of what we are trying to do, to make engagement a wraparound approach and not a sidebar."

CapRadio is doing careful work in documentation and evaluation, writing about and sharing their learning. "Local funders have played a critical role in supporting our innovations. Without them we can't move the field," ross says.

Insight podcast introduces The View From Here: Place and Privilege, an in-depth multimedia initiative examining the housing crisis in Sacramento. Host Beth Ruyak joined by reporters Amy Westervelt, Pauline Bartolone, Cosmo Garvin, and Amy Quinton. (Image courtesy of Capital Public Radio)

CAPITAL PUBLIC RADIO
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Public radio station

OPERATING BUDGET:
\$9.5 million for the year ending June 30, 2016

KEY FUNDERS:
The California Endowment

Sierra Health Foundation

CONTACT:
jesikah maria ross,
Senior Community
Engagement Strategist,
jmross@capradio.org

LINKS:
CapRadio: capradio.org

Place and Privilege website:
capradio.org/news/the-view-from-here/2017/10/06/place-and-privilege

Community engagement impact report:
capradio.org/media/6434963/From%20Storytelling%20To%20Solutions.pdf

Place and Privilege impact report:
drive.google.com/file/d/1aMdQN4joemdsL43I9rBWllqKw9Ewk_nV/view

Medium post about CapRadio's community engagement: medium.com/@jesikahmarioross/designing-powerful-public-conversations-945e3097e77e





How can citizens get directly involved in reporting on their communities?

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:

approximately \$500,000 in 2018

KEY FUNDERS:

Illinois Humanities Council

MacArthur Foundation

McCormick Foundation

CONTACT:

Darryl Holliday, Co-Founder and Director,
News Lab, darryl@citybureau.org

LINKS:

City Bureau: citybureau.org

Belt Magazine story: [beltmag.com/
reimagining-local-journalism](http://beltmag.com/reimagining-local-journalism)

Medium site: medium.com/city-bureau

City Bureau was formed in 2015 as a working civic journalism lab in the Woodlawn neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago. City Bureau operates three main programs that “model a more democratic way of making media.” City Bureau’s vision is “a future in which all people are equipped with the tools and knowledge to effect change in their communities.”

The City Bureau Public Newsroom is a free, open weekly gathering, where the public is invited to exchange ideas and information with working journalists. Citizens have the opportunity to inform stories and share community resources, and journalists are able to interact directly with readers to identify and shape stories. As part of Public Newsroom programming, free workshops equip citizen-participants to navigate journalism processes like accessing government data, initiating Freedom of Information Act requests, and using audio and video, thereby helping to open up and share journalists’ tools.

The City Bureau Documenters program recruits, trains, and pays citizens to participate in the news gathering process. Documenters attend and report on public governance meetings and support research and data gathering for City Bureau reporting. To support documenters’ work, City Bureau engaged volunteers to create City Scrapers, an open source app that mines government websites and aggregates notices of public hearings and meetings into a central database for citizen access.

City Bureau publishes original reporting on its own digital platforms and creates partnerships to bring stories and themed collections to local and national news outlets. To offer experience with its approaches, Civic Reporting Fellowships provide a stipend for early-career journalists to take part in City Bureau programs and reporting for 10 weeks, and then bring their experiences to their own newsrooms.

Co-founder Darryl Holliday says that many aspects of City Bureau’s work are replicable in other communities. However, helping journalists move from deficit-based reporting on communities to an asset-based approach to co-creating news with communities is slower going in terms of replication. “A lot of journalists could stand to learn from organizing tenets,” he says. “People are not powerless players; they can actively bring their assets to strengthen their communities and our shared work as journalists covering them.”



Sierra Council, former City Bureau Fellow, poses a question at a May 2017 Public Newsroom on how Chicago’s South Side is represented in the media. (Image courtesy of City Bureau)

What happens when storytelling and art are used to give voice to communities and perspectives absent from mainstream media?

MIZNA

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA



Based in St. Paul, Minnesota, Mizna is a nonprofit cultural organization that celebrates Arab-American culture and its multifaceted contemporary voices and representations. Now in its 20th year, Mizna's work encompasses literature, art, film, and dialogue, serving audiences and artists that span the local to the global and articulate many identities in between.

Mizna began publishing its biannual journal, *Mizna*, in 1999 and launched its first Arab Film Festival soon afterward. These flagship media projects provide platforms for Arab and Arab-American artists to represent themselves on their own terms, embracing their diverse experiences, identities, and perspectives. Mizna serves Arab-American artists by providing avenues for expression, enables Arab-American audiences to see themselves represented with depth and humanity, and offers broader audiences the opportunity to engage with Arab and Arab-American cultures outside of common stereotypes and orientalist conventions.

While Mizna's work has national and international reach, the organization has also developed substantive local programming. Through Mizna Pages, writers lead discussions in high school classrooms based on readings from *Mizna*. Lively film programming includes filmmaker Q&As, local filmmaker series, gatherings, and tours that bring films to local neighborhoods. In 2019, Mizna's distinct programs will intersect with *History Is Not Here: Art and the Arab Imaginary*. This retrospective exhibition, created in collaboration with the Minnesota Museum of American Art, will feature artists whose work has appeared in *Mizna*, with the journal's winter issue serving as an exhibition catalog.

Noting that a community's self-representation is often burdened with funder expectations of "the be all, end all," Lana Barkawi, executive director, underscores, "If Arab-Americans are already seen as a monolith by the broader culture, Mizna shouldn't be in the business of recreating that problem." The organization therefore strives to create a balance of the many voices that are encompassed by the limited term "Arab." Explaining that, "You can't exist with the identity of being Arab or Muslim without it being political," Barkawi emphasizes, "We don't want to box people into, 'What does it mean to be making Arab art?' You're an Arab person making art, that's it."



Discussion with Leilah Abdennabi, Palestinian activist, and Ahlam Muhtaseb, co-director/executive producer, 1948: Creation & Catastrophe, at Mizna's 2018 Arab Film Festival. (Image by Makeen Osman)

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:

approximately \$225,000 in 2017

KEY FUNDERS:

Arts Midwest

McKnight Foundation

Metropolitan Regional Arts Council

St. Paul Cultural STAR

CONTACT:

Lana Barkawi, Executive Director,
lane@mizna.org

LINKS:

Mizna: mizna.org

Mizna: mizna.org/articles/journal

Arab Film Festival: mizna.org/arabfilmfest

History is Not Here: Art and the Arab Imaginary: startribune.com/in-historic-st-paul-buildings-a-museum-has-been-reborn/501558872

NJ SPOTLIGHT
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
News website

OPERATING BUDGET:
approximately \$1 million in 2018

KEY FUNDERS:
Community Foundation of New Jersey
The Fund for New Jersey
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
William Penn Foundation
Wyncote Foundation

What can determined journalists do when staffing cuts jeopardize statehouse coverage?

In 2010, New Jersey journalists John Mooney, Lee Keough, and Tom Johnson launched NJ Spotlight, a news website focused on statewide policy and legislative coverage. Just two years prior, amidst nationwide downturns in newspaper revenue, Newark's *The Star-Ledger* eliminated a quarter of its news staff. Stepping up to fill the resulting coverage gaps, the founding journalists behind NJ Spotlight built on their decades of experience covering New Jersey beats like education and energy, and on their knowledge of the state's policy history and its citizens' information needs.

Seasoned reporters with established reputations and extensive networks were central to NJ Spotlight's vigorous initial launch. In the glutted media market, Mooney notes, "You don't have much of a runway to do this." Carving out a niche of in-depth analysis and contextualization that is distinct from other daily publications, NJ Spotlight met receptive audiences early on. The website has since become

an important source for policymakers, businesses, advocates, community leaders, academics, activists, and New Jerseyans seeking relevant local reporting.

NJ Spotlight has gained accolades and attention, even while challenged to move from start-up mode to sustainability. A core sustainability strategy is building partnerships with other media outlets in the state and beyond. This work has ranged from being part of a national consortium with a membership model to partnering with public television and radio on content and projects.

Describing these media crossovers and NJ Spotlight's existing live events and podcasts, Mooney compares content platforms to revenue streams. "You've got to diversify. Different people get things differently. Podcasts work for some, video works for some...and then you have people who will read 1,000 words. We create on all platforms because we realize we've got to. You can't be a one-trick pony."

NJ Spotlight's deep coverage of New Jersey makes the organization attractive to funding partners seeking comprehensive analysis of topics such as healthcare, the environment, and education. As Mooney emphasizes, "We're covering the issues they care about."

Left: John Mooney and Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka discuss New Jersey's urban agenda during the keynote session of NJ Spotlight on Cities, 2016. (Image by Amanda Brown)
Right: NJ Spotlight roundtable, 2018. (Image courtesy of NJ Spotlight)



CONTACT:
John Mooney, Chief Executive Officer, Founding Editor,
jmooney@njspotlight.com

LINKS:
NJ Spotlight: njspotlight.com

NJ Spotlight: Building Transparency and Improving State Policy Debates: knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/media_pdfs/KCICCaseStudiesNJSpotlight_1.pdf

Opportunities for Leadership: Meeting Community Information Needs 2011: knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/publication_pdfs/Leadership_Profiles_full_bklt_9-12.pdf

How does supporting career pipelines help diversify voices in media?

NEW ORLEANS FILM SOCIETY

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



The New Orleans Film Society (NOFS) works to advance local film culture through year-round screenings and professional development activities, as well as the annual New Orleans Film Festival. Now in its 30th year, the festival is known for championing underrepresented voices, with 54 percent of films in the 2018 festival made by directors of color and 60 percent by women and gender non-conforming directors.

Building on the festival's ethos and networks, in 2014 NOFS launched Emerging Voices, a yearlong professional development program that facilitates access to industry gatekeepers for filmmakers of color. Each year six to eight mentees receive training for pitching their work, participate in the intensive nine-day New Orleans Film Festival, travel to regional festivals, gather for workshops, and are shortlisted for opportunities referred to NOFS. Additionally, during the festival each participant is paired with a visiting industry mentor who provides guidance and helps advance a project. To build the film community for the long-term, NOFS hosts Emerging Voices alumni events, produces works-in-progress screenings, and promotes a social media group in which current and past participants connect for networking, collaboration, and feedback.

NOFS efforts are designed to be place-specific, serving filmmakers based in Louisiana whose obstacles include geographic isolation. Distance from networks and opportunities based in the hubs of New York and Los Angeles often entices regional filmmakers to move away from New Orleans. NOFS works to counter this pull by creating viable local career paths, furthered by initiatives like Emerging Voices and the newer Southern Producers Lab and Rural Filmmaker Initiative.

Fallon Young, NOFS executive director, maintains, "Especially in the South, we need to nurture creators who have experiences that look different from what the mainstream considers valuable and lift up those voices, so that we can have media that reflects our actual society. ...If we want social change, if we want stories of social change, we need to empower makers connected to those issues." Through supporting filmmakers who can tell these stories, the impact of Emerging Voices extends beyond mentees, serving audiences and decision makers as well.



*2018 Emerging Voices cohort.
(Image courtesy of New
Orleans Film Society)*

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:

approximately \$1 million for the year ending June 30, 2019

CONTACT:

Fallon Young, Executive Director,
fallon@neworleansfilmsociety.org

KEY FUNDERS (EMERGING VOICES):

21st Century Fox Inclusion (21CF)

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Greater New Orleans Foundation

National Endowment for the Arts

LINKS:

New Orleans Film Society:
neworleansfilmsociety.org

"Culture and Community at the New Orleans Film Festival" by Meredith Alloway: pastemagazine.com/articles/2016/11/the-culture-and-community-of-the-new-orleans-film.html

Southern Producers Lab:
neworleansfilmsociety.org/southern-producers-lab

Rural Filmmaker Initiative:
neworleansfilmsociety.org/rural-filmmaker-initiative



What can an “information ecosystem assessment” reveal about a community left out of mainstream news coverage?



Community members with the NOISE team during Power Hour after the midterm elections. (Images courtesy of NOISE Omaha)



North Omaha Information Support for Everyone (NOISE) is a hyperlocal news initiative formed by and for Omaha's predominantly black northside neighborhood. NOISE grew out of an information ecosystem assessment led by the Listening Post Collective through which leaders in north Omaha described and documented gaps and bias in mainstream media coverage of their community.

The Listening Post Collective is a project of Internews, an international nonprofit that works in community development through media. Internews strives to ensure that people have access to quality information that empowers them to have a voice in their communities' futures.

The Listening Post described its work in north

ORGANIZATION TYPE:

NOISE is housed within the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation, an independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:

less than \$50,000 in its start-up year

KEY FUNDERS:

Sherwood Foundation

Weitz Family Foundation

CONTACT:

Dawaune Hayes, Founder and Director,
noiseomaha@gmail.com

LINKS:

NOISE Omaha: noiseomaha.org

Listening Post Collective:
listeningpostcollective.org

North Omaha Information Ecosystem Assessment: internews.org/sites/default/files/2018-11/North_Omaha_Information_Ecosystem_Assessment-web.pdf

Mind and Soul 101.3 FM:
mindandsoul1013fm.org

Omaha Star: theomahastar.com

Omaha as aiming “to support a richer and more useful flow of information and conversation through the community, so that residents can get the news they need and have their voices heard.”

The Listening Post's interviews and final report spurred north Omaha residents to be proactive in advancing the exchange of news, information, and storytelling inside and outside of their part of the city. Led by Dawaune Lamont Hayes, a north Omaha native with a journalism background, NOISE began in 2018 to engage people and partners to build needed media connections and increase the quality of news and information available for neighborhood residents.

Through its own website and in partnership with other neighborhood media outlets, NOISE is sharing community-created news reports; promoting community events; and highlighting government information on topics like zoning, public health, schools, and public safety. NOISE produces a weekly radio report for the neighborhood-based Mind and Soul Radio (101.3 FM), a project of the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation; publishes an insert for the *Omaha Star*, one of the nation's longest-standing woman-founded, black-owned newspapers; and convenes community listening sessions where local residents meet in person to share story ideas.

As a largely volunteer project, NOISE is actively seeking funding from area foundations, businesses, and individuals. A recent grant from the Sherwood Foundation is providing welcome start-up capital.

What opportunities can public television stations create for filmmakers and audiences by supporting documentaries with a deep connection to place?

The public television series *Reel South* promotes independent southern filmmakers and embraces the rich tradition of southern storytelling through curated seasons of documentaries. Featuring a breadth of perspectives, topics, voices, and histories, *Reel South* brings films exploring the complex fabric of the American South to regional and national audiences.

In 2016, UNC-TV Public Media North Carolina, South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV), and the Southern Documentary Fund partnered to pilot the first season of *Reel South*. The program responded to substantial challenges—a lack of outlets for local filmmakers, a dearth of southern stories on national public television, and misrepresentations of the South on mainstream platforms. The series has been continued by UNC-TV and SCETV with added open submissions calls and resources for license fees and post-production. The program has showcased over four dozen documentaries, from five-minute digital shorts to sixty-minute films, with archives of past seasons online. Intentional selection of films and filmmakers has created a diverse roster of stories, featuring female filmmakers and filmmakers of color, rural communities, and almost every state in the Southeast.

By its second season, *Reel South* had achieved national reach, with carriage in all 10 top markets, over 3,000,000 broadcast viewers, and 250,000 digital streams. The momentum continues with stations in Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana joining the producing partnership for season four in 2019.

Rachel Raney, UNC-TV's director of national productions and executive producer of *Reel South*, stresses the importance of remaining accessible and compelling for local audiences even while expanding to national audiences. "We don't talk a lot in our social media, promotion or marketing about independent film. We talk about southern storytelling," she explains. "That's intentional because we want people to...watch *Reel South* that don't necessarily even think that they like documentaries, but they want to watch stories from their region." Likening *Reel South* to a reliable mutual fund, Raney notes that a curated series can suit grantmaking foundations who hesitate to fund individual films. With *Reel South*, "Grantmakers have seasoned curators vetting films that you can bet will be seen by millions of people."

REEL SOUTH

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA, &
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA



ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Public television collaboration

PROGRAM BUDGET:

approximately \$500,000 per season

KEY FUNDERS:

National Endowment for the Arts

South Arts

CONTACT:

Rachel Raney, Director of National Productions and Original Content,
UNC-TV Public Media North Carolina,
rraney@uncvtv.org

LINKS:

Reel South: www.reelsouth.org

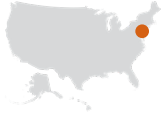
Reel South Season 3—all episodes:
www.scetv.org/reelsouth

Reel South films:
pbs.org/show/reel-south



Production still from *Eat White Dirt*, directed by Adam Forrester.
(Image courtesy of Reel South)

**RESOLVE
PHILADELPHIA**
PHILADELPHIA,
PENNSYLVANIA



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:
approximately \$250,000 in 2018

KEY FUNDERS:
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Lenfest Institute for Journalism
Solutions Journalism Network
Wyncote Foundation

What happens when a region's newsrooms collaborate to report on promising approaches to addressing a community's most pressing problems?

Resolve Philadelphia is among the largest solutions journalism collaboratives in the U.S. It leads reporting among 23 commercial and nonprofit news organizations including partners from the city's largest general interest news operations; community, ethnic, and neighborhood media outlets; and digital journalism start-ups.

Solutions journalism is an approach to news that focuses reporting on efforts to address social problems. Solutions journalism aims to inspire changes in policy and practice and to shift dominant narratives from problem identification toward hopeful solutions. Advocates for a solutions approach believe that news stories can leave audiences ready to engage and participate instead of feeling frustrated and powerless.

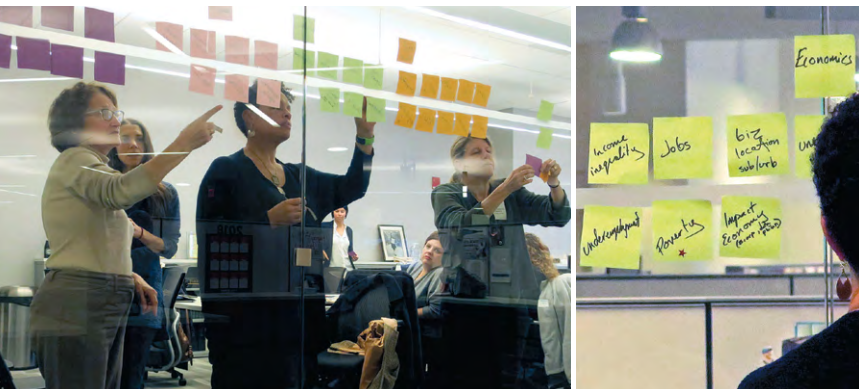
Resolve Philadelphia launched in 2016 when 15 newsrooms collaborated to report on prisoner reentry, a critical challenge in the city. The Reentry Project resulted in 200-plus stories that brought the subject to the forefront of civic discourse and won the American Press Media Editors' annual award for community engagement.

Broke in Philly, the group's next project, focuses on the city's persistent rates of poverty. As a result of concerted outreach efforts, Broke in Philly is involving more newsrooms, which collaborate on reporting, events, and a central website. Shared web content incorporates features such as a map of resources for housing, food, healthcare, and other services; a guide to encourage charitable

giving to nonprofits working on economic mobility; news and resources in Spanish; and a phone number for texting ideas to lead editors. Partners' newsroom personnel meet in person every four to six weeks to share story ideas and discuss next steps.

Asked about the downstream effects of this work, co-founder Jean Friedman-Rudovsky says, "We are overcoming some of the very legitimate and inherent obstacles to work on collaboration among newsrooms, and we're elevating topics and potential solutions in our community. Together we can move a problem from intractable to unacceptable."

Grants from the Lenfest Institute for Journalism, the Wyncote Foundation, and the Knight Foundation advanced the collaborative's early work and helped encourage partners to be involved. Watch for a forthcoming impact report due in early 2019.



*Media partners strategic planning session for the Reentry Project.
(Images by Jim MacMillan)*

CONTACT:
Jean Friedman-Rudovsky,
Co-Executive Director,
jean@resolvephilly.org

LINKS:
Resolve Philadelphia: resolvephilly.org

Broke in Philly: brokeinphilly.org

The Reentry Project: thereentryproject.org

Nieman Lab article on
Resolve Philadelphia:
niemanlab.org/2018/09/how-the-broke-in-philly-collaboration-is-focusing-local-medias-attention-on-poverty-and-economic-mobility

How can newsrooms build consistent and meaningful new community relationships by engaging directly with citizens?

Southern California Public Radio, known by its call letters KPCC, brings the public into the news gathering and reporting process through community engagement and live events. Dedicated events and engagement staff facilitate public forums on civic affairs topics, produce civic and cultural events programming, and develop customized community engagement activities in partnership with newsroom editors, producers, and reporters.

Recent examples include a public panel discussion on the black infant mortality rate in Los Angeles; an in-person conversation with pianist and composer Nicholas Britell; the *Feeding the Conversation* series, which brings together reporters, editors, and community members for discussion over lunch; and a live taping of the national program, *1A*. Additionally, KPCC convenes open public forums such as an event for parents to ask early childhood education questions of a panel of child development experts, allowing reporters to learn more about community concerns.

Unheard LA: The Stories of Where You Live is KPCC's signature engagement-driven series. A 2017 pilot season in three geographically diverse settings offered Angelenos the opportunity to share their experiences through storytelling, poetry, and music before a live audience. To encourage people to participate, engagement staff reached beyond KPCC's existing audiences and networks, using community bulletin boards, local libraries, a text messaging platform, dedicated newsletters, and in-person engagement. More than 250 people responded. KPCC staff worked with participants to help them prepare for the public event.

The pilot series was successful in terms of attendance but even more so in terms of reaching new, diverse audience members who are now contributing to KPCC's journalism. A second season of six programs concluded in September 2018, with two additional seasons in the planning stages.

"We are a newsroom that is audience first and engagement first, with a creative set of engagement resources and strategies," says Ashley Alvarado, director of community engagement. "*Unheard LA* is the physical manifestation of our organization's mission and has led us to deeper community relationships and deeper community service. We've been given the space to experiment and succeed. Our organizational mandate is to strive to reflect the community we serve."

**SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA
PUBLIC RADIO**
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:
\$27.6 million in 2018

KEY FUNDER:
California Wellness Foundation

CONTACT:
Ashley Alvarado, Director of
Community Engagement,
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Jon Cohn, Managing
Director, KPCC In Person,
jcohn@scpr.org

LINKS:
Southern California Public Radio:
scpr.org

KPCC In Person:
kpccinperson.org

Unheard LA:
kpcc.org/unheardla

Unheard LA in Nieman Reports:
niemanreports.org/articles/what-happens-when-news-outlets-stop-talking-and-start-listening

Russ Fega presenting at Unheard LA, 2018. (Image by Louis Felix/KPCC)



RESOURCES FOR PLACE-BASED FOUNDATIONS INTERESTED IN FUNDING MEDIA

TOOLS AND GUIDES:

- *Foundation Maps for Media Funding:* A data visualization tool created by the Foundation Center in partnership with Media Impact Funders enables users to scan the global funding landscape, analyze funder and nonprofit networks, and increase knowledge of media funding.
maps.foundationcenter.org/?acct=media
- *Journalism and Media Grant Making: Five Things You Need To Know, Five Ways To Get Started:* This booklet, revised in 2018, serves as a guide for grantmakers interested in becoming more involved in supporting media. Media Impact Funders with Knight Foundation and Wyncote Foundation (Michele McLellan).
mediainc.org/reports/journalism-and-media-grantmaking-five-things-you-need-to-know-and-five-ways-to-get-started
- *An Introduction to Funding Journalism and Media:* This comprehensive white paper was prepared for European funders but has many interesting examples and references for U.S.-based grantmakers.
ariadne-network.eu/introduction-funding-journalism-media
- *Journalism Impact Primer:* The Walton Family Foundation developed this guide to inform foundation-wide grantmaking strategy for media projects within its multiple program areas. Previously, Walton programs supported journalism and media grants but not within a consistent framework. Walton Family Foundation (Lindsey-Green Barber, Impact Architects).
waltonfamilyfoundation.org/journalism-impact-primer

FUNDING REPORTS:

- *American Views: Trust, Media, and Democracy:* An initiative from the Knight Foundation. Reports and updates from this comprehensive Knight Foundation project examine the reasons and remedies for the public's distrust in media.
knightfoundation.org/topics/trust-media-and-democracy
- *What 2018 Has Taught Us About Building a Stronger Future for American Democracy:* Sam Gill, the Knight Foundation's vice president of communities and impact, reflects on lessons learned.
medium.com/trust-media-and-democracy/what-2018-has-taught-us-about-building-a-stronger-future-for-american-democracy-a201add36e8b

- *Funding the News: Foundations and Nonprofit Media:* This report includes detailed analysis of more than 32,000 grants made nationally to journalism and media projects, plus information on funding trends and gaps. Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy in collaboration with Northeastern University's School of Journalism (Aleszu Bajak, John Wihbey, Matthew Nisbet, Sijje Kristiansen).
shorensteincenter.org/funding-the-news-foundations-and-nonprofit-media
- *NewsMatch 2017 Learning Report:* NewsMatch provides matching gifts in support of nonprofit news organizations. This report on 2017 activities includes lessons learned for local grantmakers. Knight Foundation, Democracy Fund, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, in partnership with The Miami Foundation, the Institute for Nonprofit News, and News Revenue Hub.
s3.amazonaws.com/gg-day-of-giving/inn2017/NewsMatch+2017+Learning+Report.pdf
- *Charting New Ground: The Ethical Terrain of Nonprofit Journalism:* americanpressinstitute.org/publications/reports/nonprofit-news
Guidance on the Philanthropic Funding of Media and News: americanpressinstitute.org/publications/nonprofit-funding-guidance
These reports from the American Press Institute (API) give an overview of and detail the growth in philanthropic funding of news and media: 43 percent of respondents said their funding of media and news had increased over the past five years.

TREND REPORTS:

- *Philanthropy and Digital Civil Society: Blueprint 2019, The Annual Industry Forecast:* Issued annually by principal author Lucy Bernholz, the blueprint presents key trends in digital civil society from the perspective of the philanthropic sector. Stanford PACS Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society.
pacscenter.stanford.edu/publication/philanthropy-and-digital-civil-society-blueprint-2019
- *2019 Trend Report for Journalism, Media, and Technology:* Amy Webb's annual compilation includes scenarios for optimistic, pragmatic, and catastrophic results of over 100 trends in journalism, media, and technology. There is also an online slide deck.
futuretodayinstitute.com/2019-journalism-media-tech-trends

INITIATIVES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT:

- *NewsMatch* is a national matching-gift campaign to build fundraising capacity in nonprofit newsrooms and promote giving to journalism among U.S. donors. In 2018 NewsMatch raised funds for 155 news organizations from thousands of donors.
newsmatch.org
- *Gather* is an engaged journalism collaborative from UO-SOJC's Agora Journalism Center. *Gather* is a password-protected hub for conversations and resources related to engaged journalism. Weekly email digests are available.
medium.com/lets-gather
- The Center for Cooperative Media database, maintained by the Center for Cooperative Journalism, collects collaborative journalism projects from around the world and offers a useful inventory of projects from which to study and learn.
collaborativejournalism.org/database-search-sort-learn-collaborative-projects-around-world

SUBSCRIBE TO INTERESTING NEWSLETTERS FROM THESE ORGANIZATIONS:

- *The Benton Foundation*: Daily newsletter that tracks policy developments in the communications sector.
benton.org/headlines
- *Columbia Journalism Review*: The United States Project newsletter offers updates on developments in local news.
cjr.org
- *Current*: Weekly newsletter for people in public media. Watch for their annual "Local That Works" series.
current.org
- *Democracy Fund*: Place-based grantmakers will especially appreciate the newsletter, "The Local Fix," at <https://tinyletter.com/localfix/archive>
democracyfund.org
- *Institute for Nonprofit News (INN)*: INN provides education and business support services to its nearly 200 nonprofit member organizations and promotes the value and benefit of public-service and investigative journalism.
inn.org
- *Lenfest Institute's Solution Set*: This email report, created by the Lenfest Institute for Journalism and the Solutions Journalism Network, profiles a single notable innovation in news.
lenfestinstitute.org/solutionset
- *Media Impact Funders*: News, trends, and events through monthly email newsletters and the AIM (Assessing Impact of Media) Bulletin, as well as webinars and public events.
mediaimpactfunders.org
- *Nieman Journalism Lab*: "Helping journalism figure out its future in an Internet age" with a daily email.
niemanlab.org
- *Poynter*: "An instructor, innovator, convener, and resource for anyone who aspires to engage and inform citizens," offers a daily morning Media Wire newsletter and a weekly Local Edition.
poynter.org

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