



COLORADO MEDIA PROJECT

Local news is a public good.

INFORMED COMMUNITIES FUND: TWO NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- 1) **Advancing Equity in Local News**
- 2) **Community News Network**

INFORMED COMMUNITIES FUND

Colorado Media Project's Informed Communities Fund supports journalism outlets, news/community partnerships, and projects that put community listening and information needs at the center of the journalism process — with a special emphasis on better serving communities of color, linguistically diverse communities, rural communities, and others not adequately served, reached or represented.

- 2020: **COVID Reporting & Projects** (10 grantees, \$50,000 total)
- 2021: **COVID Vaccine Reporting & Projects**
(10 grantees, \$85,000 total)

Grant Opportunity: Advancing Equity in Local News



Grants will support projects that are informed by and responsive to the types of recommendations put forth by Black Voices and Latinx Voices working groups convened by Free Press, COLab and CMP in 2021, and Indigenous Voices and AAPI Voices working groups to be convened by COLab and CMP in partnership with local community groups and members in 2022.

Advancing Equity in Local News

These grants will support projects that address **one or more of these three priorities:**

- Support internal diversity, equity and inclusion capacity-building efforts in Colorado newsrooms;
- Strengthen connections and build trust between Colorado newsrooms and the diverse communities they serve; and/or
- Support more diverse and inclusive civic news leadership, entrepreneurship, ownership and narratives.

A total of at least \$250,000 is expected to be available for 2022. The total grant amount per project for most projects will range between \$5,000 and \$25,000, with potential for more funding for projects that involve multiple partners and/or deliver more impact.

This opportunity is made possible with support from The Colorado Trust, Gates Family Foundation, Democracy Fund, Rose Community Foundation - and other donors TBA.

Advancing Equity in Local News

PRIORITY: Support internal diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) capacity-building efforts in Colorado newsrooms

Project examples:

- DEI training for newsroom leaders and reporters
- Content audits to examine trends in sourcing, framing and/or language
- Leadership development for staff journalists of color or those representing diverse perspectives or abilities
- And more!

Advancing Equity in Local News

PRIORITY: Strengthen connections and build trust between Colorado newsrooms and the diverse communities they serve

Project examples:

- Community engagement or reporting projects co-designed by newsrooms and community groups
- Support for public accountability boards that provide ongoing and actionable community feedback to newsrooms
- Systemic approaches to connect newsrooms with expert sources, storytellers and collaborators from diverse communities
- And more!

Advancing Equity in Local News

PRIORITY: Support more diverse and inclusive civic news leadership, entrepreneurship, ownership and narratives.

Project examples:

- Capacity-building that builds media leadership, entrepreneurship, storytelling and/or reporting skills among journalists, content creators and residents of color, low-income residents, or those from rural or other underserved communities
- Support for media ownership transitions, innovations or growth that significantly impact communities of color, rural or other underserved communities
- Editorial projects *led by and for* those whose stories are not being told
- And more!

Advancing Equity in Local News: *Who should apply?*

- **Colorado nonprofit news organizations** and **small, locally owned and operated for-profit or public benefit newsrooms** are qualified to apply as lead applicants
- **For-profit newsrooms owned by national corporations** may access project support by applying as part of a collaborative application with a qualified lead applicant
- **Nonprofit community organizations** that are proposing to collaborate with a Colorado news or media organization
- **Projects initiated by freelance journalists, storytellers, or media entrepreneurs** MUST apply under an eligible fiscal sponsor (which is a nonprofit or for-profit news organization or nonprofit community organization)
- Applicants must be **located in Colorado** and/or **projects must serve Colorado communities**
- **Current CMP grantees** are eligible to apply. Applicants must outline whether the proposed project relates to their other CMP-funded work

Advancing Equity in Local News: *What makes a strong application?*

- **Quality of project plan:** Project exhibits clear objectives, a realistic timeframe, strong buy-in from leadership and/or partners, and is properly scaled and sustainable for the organization
- **Potential impact of funding:** The project will have strong impact within the organization and/or the community if well-executed, and grant support will be critical to the applicant's ability to execute
- **Potential for learning:** Project is unique and will test or produce some original learning for the field and/or for the applicant and their community
- **Organizational uniqueness/fit for grant opportunity:** Applicant plays a unique role in the state's information ecosystem, and exhibits strong commitment to advancing equity

TIMELINE

- Applications Due: **Weds., Dec. 1, 2021 by 5 p.m. MT**
- Grantees Notified: By **Jan. 5, 2022**
- Funds Distributed: **January 2022**, pending signed contract
- Mid-Year Learning Interviews: **June 2022**
- **Fall 2022** Convening: Reporting on Inequities
- Grant Period Ends, Reports Due: **Dec. 1, 2022**

Community News Network

Small, community-based news outlets currently serving a core audience that, because of language, race or ethnicity, and/or geography, is not adequately served by other news outlets in the state are invited to apply for a **new, three-year grant** that provides support for growth and enhanced community service.

The total grant amount per news organization may range between \$30,000 and \$60,000 per year for three years, with funding starting in January 2022.

This opportunity is made possible with funding from The Colorado Trust.

Community News Network: *Who should apply?*

- Local news outlets located in the Colorado communities they serve, with staff members that live in and belong to those communities
- Regularly produce original, independently reported, nonpartisan, accurate news and critical information on critical topics -- including public health, education, transportation, environment and planning, economic development, civic life, political life and public safety
- Serve an audience that, because of language, race or ethnicity, and/or geography, is not adequately served by other news outlets in the state
- Center the perspectives of people most impacted by inequities, particularly people of color, non-English speakers, and lower-income Coloradans
- Have a track record of financial sustainability and a long-term commitment to serving the community

Community News Network: *Strong applications ...*

- **Organizational uniqueness/target audience:** Outlet plays a unique role in the state's information ecosystem, and directly serves (as its target audience) one of the grant's priority groups -- communities of color, people with limited English proficiency or language barriers, low-income rural or mountain communities
- **Quality of community/civic news:** Outlet regularly provides high-quality, original local news on the eight topics identified as critical information needs by the FCC (politics, education, economic development, emergencies, civic information, health care, environment, transportation); outlet provides an accountability check on powerful forces in the community
- **Community service, engagement and representation:** Outlet describes community engagement strategies that go beyond source interviews for specific stories; outlet demonstrates an awareness of differing narratives and issues facing underserved communities
- **Potential impact of funding:** Grant support will be critical to the outlet's ability to do a specific project or additional, focused coverage for and/or with the community it serves

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- Mid-Year Learning Interviews: **June 2022/2023/2024**
- Year-End Impact Reports Due: **Dec. 1, 2022/2023/2024**

Applications are now live

**Log in or create an account
on the Rose Community Foundation grant portal today**

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=rcfdenver>

Questions?

Advancing Equity in Local News inquiries:

Melissa Davis at mdavis@gatesfamilyfoundation.org

Community News Network inquiries:

Lauren Archuletta at larchuletta@coloradomediaproject.com

Technical assistance in completing your grant documentation:

(via the Rose Community Foundation portal)

Kelly Costello at kcostello@rcfdenver.org