



NEW MEDIA MAKERS

A Toolkit for Innovators in Community Media and Grant Making

A report by J-Lab: The Institute for Interactive Journalism

Written by Jan Schaffer, J-Lab Executive Director

■ Meet the New Media Makers

This DVD provides a compelling look at what it takes to produce grassroots news sites. It focuses on three community projects produced by citizen journalists and three other projects spearheaded by professional journalists. In short, supplemental chapters, these New Media Makers discuss their ethical conundrums, their civic impact, and their roles in the new media ecosystem.



See a full table of contents for the DVD on page 24.

Find a link to the DVD online at the Knight Citizen News Network: www.kcnn.org/toolkit

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A Toolkit for Innovators in Community Media and Grant Making

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Meet the New Media Makers

From bedroom communities outside New York City to the rural exurbs of Boston to postindustrial behemoths like Philadelphia, new media makers have begun launching news and information projects to fill information gaps in their communities.

These are not random acts of journalism, such as eyewitnesses uploading photos or videos of a major catastrophe. Nor are they the rants of Internet cowboys opining on the state of neighborhood affairs in their individual blogs.

Rather, these new projects are often organized acts of journalism, constructed with an architecture and a mind-set to investigate discrete topics or cover geographic areas. The projects provide deliberate, accurate and fair accounts of day-to-day happenings in communities that nowadays have little or no daily news coverage.

And increasingly, as legacy news organizations fret about future business models or fail entirely, these shoestring start-ups are attracting support from philanthropic organizations whose mission statements never mention the word "media."

J-Lab has discovered that 180 community, family and other foundations have contributed nearly \$128 million since 2005 to news and information initiatives in communities across the United States. Our initial reporting excluded grants to public broadcasters because we've long known of the generous philanthropic

support for their work. Nor do we include in this amount such things as underwriting for documentaries or grants for journalism training or for student news services.

This is funding that went to support at least 115 news projects in 17 states and the District of Columbia in the last four years, with some projects receiving multiyear funding. We're sure there are more grants we haven't yet found, but one thing is clear: Philanthropic foundations are increasingly embracing the idea that journalism projects can be a funding fit.

Some foundations are just getting their feet wet in this arena, enticed by matching grants from traditional journalistic funders such as the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation or urged by the alarm bells sounding as news coverage vanishes in communities across the country.

For the most part these foundations are not so much seeking to shore up commercial news enterprises as they are looking to shore up community knowledge sharing. They are looking to *build* community, not simply to cover it.

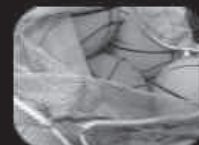
And they can be forthright in acknowledging this. Listen to San Diego philanthropist Buzz Woolley, who founded the enterprising Voice of San Diego (www.voiceofsandiego.org) in 2004 out of frustration that news critical to the city's health was not being brought to citizens' attention.



Schools Seek to Fill Coiffers with Free Lunches



Rollover on Saw Mill Parkway Traps Driver



Town Officials Defend Proposed Budget



"We did not start this as an act of journalism or an act of business," Woolley said of his news site. "We did this as a civic effort to provide information to the community about things that are important."

Woolley likened journalism's civic importance to that of public schooling: "Good-quality journalism – knowledge of what's going on in the community – is in my estimation just about as important as K-12 education."

Many funders see their support as no less than a bulwark to defend democracy. "The core of all this is that democracy needs a free flow of information," said Alberto Iburgüen, president and CEO of the Knight Foundation, which has blazed a trail in funding news start-ups with initiatives such as the Knight News Challenge and the Knight Community Information Challenge and with support for J-Lab's New Voices community news projects.

Now Iburgüen is jump-starting a role for other foundations to fund media by promising to match their support for community news and information projects to the tune of \$24 million over the next five years. The first call for projects attracted 170 proposals for \$5 million in Knight funding. Twenty-one winners were announced in February 2009.

■ A Starting Point

Whether you want to start a community media project or possibly fund one, this toolkit is a place to start. It includes online and video resources to capture lessons from the new media makers and their funders, and it draws on J-Lab's continuing research and discovery from the field.

In the coming pages you'll find chapters on:

- How foundations and philanthropists are matching their missions with media.
- How new media makers are affecting their communities.
- How site funders and site operators measure success.
- Who's funding what: a database of grants since 2005.

Plus we offer short case studies of four successful grant-funded initiatives:

- New Haven Independent and one of the Connecticut foundations that helps fund the site (www.newhavenindependent.org).
- PlanPhilly (www.planphilly.com) in Philadelphia.
- Voice of San Diego (www.voiceofsandiego.org) in California.
- New Castle News & Opinion Weekly (www.newcastlenow.org) in Chappaqua, N.Y.

The accompanying DVD offers some compelling looks at how citizens and professional journalists are creating new kinds of news sites.

If you're already involved in community media, we hope this toolkit will give you a sense of the larger landscape as well as tips and resources to help you stay in the game.



Jan Schaffer

Executive Director

J-Lab: The Institute for Interactive Journalism

May 2009



National Day of Service



Bridge Construction Update



Town-Gown Talk on Topics of Mutual Interest



Finding the Funding Fit

After longtime New Haven journalist Paul Bass finished a book in 2005, he didn't want to return to his newspaper. Instead he embarked on exploring some new kinds of local Web sites just cropping up around the country.

Before long he had a good idea of what he wanted to do. It wasn't a blog. Rather, he wanted to publish a Web site that would return to real community reporting. It would cover neighborhoods, government meetings, criminal justice and public schools.

He launched the not-for-profit New Haven Independent (www.newhavenindependent.org) in 2005 with \$80,000, including his first grant, \$50,000 from The Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut to bolster the site's coverage of health care reform.

The funding was a first for the foundation, too. It had never given a grant for journalism before.

A key part of Bass' business plan was to solicit grants from foundations like Universal to support specific kinds of reporting. Now Universal has funded the New Haven Independent for four years. It's one of five foundations that provide most of the support for the site.

Very few foundations fund journalism per se – with the exception of grants for public broadcasting. Journalism, after all, has typically been a for-profit business. But that is beginning to change as foundations across the nation realize that shrinking news coverage of local and national issues threatens not only the topics they care about, it also handicaps communities and threatens democracy itself.

Indeed, J-Lab has discovered that since 2005, 180 foundations, large and small, have contributed nearly \$128 million to U.S. news and information projects. These numbers don't include the many generous grants to public radio and television or for the production of documentaries. They also don't include funding for student news services or support for journalism training. It's likely we will discover even more grants that have supported newsgathering over the last four years and we will add them to our online database.

Funding news about their areas of key concern is just one way that philanthropies are matching their missions with new media makers.

Other funders are investing in new media for different reasons. Some believe journalism is critical to organizing and building community. Some fund one-shot projects that have a beginning and an end. And others are determinedly funding experiments and innovations to pioneer ways in which communities will get their news and information in the digital future.

■ Experimentation Grants

A leader in paving the way for funding news experiments that serve community and democracy is the Knight Foundation. It used to fund journalism training projects.

"When the world turned upside down in this digital revolution, we decided we couldn't really continue to teach best practices for a world we couldn't foresee," said Alberto Ibargüen, the foundation's president and CEO. "We thought we needed to start experimenting, since we were admitting that we weren't sure where things were going."

The foundation changed its priorities to fund innovations in media with the five-year, \$25 million Knight News Challenge. More recently, it is addressing the "information needs" of communities with a five-year, \$24 million matching-grant program, the Knight Community Information Challenge, to jump-start participation by community foundations in local news and information projects.

"We do not mean for this to be Knight Foundation's area of exclusivity," Ibargüen said. "The more people we have engaged in this, the happier I'll be."

A total of 170 foundations applied in the Information Challenge's first request for proposals. Twenty-one winners were announced in February 2009, with Knight investing \$5 million and the community foundations anteing up an additional \$4.1 million for various local news and information projects.

The community foundations' support runs the gamut from a \$488,500 grant from the San Antonio Area Foundation to improve communications in diverse communities to \$90,000 from the Berks County Community Foundation to create online community information hubs.

"With the media landscape in upheaval and old models failing, we need to figure out how to replace them and with what," said Gary Kebbel, Knight's journalism program director. "We don't have the answer for that. ... Therefore, we're looking to the widest variety of people to give us the widest variety of possible solutions.

"What you have is the ability for everybody to commit an act of journalism."

■ Topic-Based Grants

As the New Haven Independent has discovered, foundations are increasingly open to funding journalism about topics that reflect their core issues.

When site founder Paul Bass approached The Universal Health Care Foundation, he tapped into its board's concern that health care "was getting short shrift" in mainstream media, said Kate Gervais, the foundation's senior development officer. It helped too, she said, that Bass was respected "and his ethics are well known."

"The topic was oversimplified, so problems seem minimized and solutions seem easy," Gervais said of health care coverage. "We thought many more people needed to get informed."

With \$185,000 in grants from the foundation, the New Haven Independent has reported many health care stories, including articles on how small businesses navigate the insurance market and why insurers in many states charge women higher premiums for care.

"The fact that we've continued to fund them shows how happy we are," Gervais said.

Promoting more effective state governance was the issue that motivated California's James Irvine Foundation to give the Center for Investigative Reporting in Berkeley \$1.31 million over three years. Most of that funding will support the launch of CIR/California, a Sacramento news bureau that will partner with existing news outlets to produce and disseminate in-depth coverage of state issues.

Amy Dominguez-Arms, Irvine's program director, sees the grant as addressing the "diminished capacity of news organizations to conduct in-depth reporting to illustrate what's going on in our [state] government." That fits with the foundation's California Perspectives mission to improve decision-making on significant state issues.

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has anted up an additional \$1.2 million for CIR's Sacramento reporting project.

■ Investigative Journalism Grants

Indeed, investigative journalism ventures are the leaders in securing grant support. Of the nearly \$128 million granted to news and information projects since 2005, more than \$56 million has gone to fund three investigative projects, with most of that going to ProPublica (\$30.8 million), the Center for Public Integrity (\$18.1 million) and the Center for Investigative Reporting (\$7.3 million).

Other investigative outlets include three newcomers that launched in 2008-2009 and have found willing funders. They include the Investigative Reporting Workshop at American University, the New England Center for Investigative Reporting at Boston University and the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism, a Madison-based nonprofit that plans to work with traditional news outlets in the state.

■ Community-Building Grants

Collaborations with alternative news outlets – local ethnic and community newspapers and Web sites – is



The Twin Cities Daily Planet launched in 2005 with a \$17,000 J-Lab/New Voices grant.

what prompted the McKnight Foundation to fund the Twin Cities Daily Planet, a 2005 start-up in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Communication is a huge issue in community organization, said Neal Cuthbert, interim program director for McKnight, which focuses on grants to strengthen Minnesota communities. “There is a pretty long tradition of community newspapers in Minneapolis,” he said. “The Daily Planet seemed like an effective tool.”

TCDailyPlanet.net launched with a \$17,000 J-Lab grant to aggregate news from the Twin Cities’ ethnic and community newspapers. The Web site now reports news and information from more than 80 ethnic and

community news outlets and neighborhood groups and it has developed a network of contributing bloggers.

McKnight began supporting the site with a \$30,000 grant in 2006 and since has provided an additional \$105,000. It is one of six funders that have supported the news site with more than \$480,000 in grants since it launched.

“It’s one of a cluster of things we do to support neighborhood organizations,” Cuthbert said.

“The whole collapse of journalism as a civic structure, in the marketplace, has been the most concerning thing for us and a lot of folks,” he added. “We’re watching that happen in our community. That’s the scariest thing.”

Deciding What to Fund

How does a foundation decide what to fund? A good place to start is to map out the information needs of its community.

“It boils down to, ‘What is the community lacking?’” said Gary Kebbel, Knight Foundation’s journalism program director. “What is specific to that community where a community foundation can make a difference?”

“Has the local newspaper just laid off an investigative reporter? Maybe there’s a way to fund an investigative chair at that newspaper. Has the local newspaper just laid off the arts critic? Maybe there’s an arts blog that you ought to be funding. Has education reporting in the community always been weak? Maybe now’s the time to try to strengthen that.” Needs will be different from community to community, Kebbel said, so it’s best to ask, “What’s missing and what niche could I fill?”

Maybe it’s a one-time project around an election or the Olympics that doesn’t have to extend beyond the event. Maybe it’s an innovative or experimental project. It’s difficult to know how long to support an innovative project. Typical timelines of two-, three- or five-year grants may be off the mark. “It might need just one or two more years beyond your initial set of funding,” Kebbel said.

If a project is addressing a need that nobody else is filling, he advised, “then I’d say keep at it.”

Knight Foundation’s Alberto Ibarguen said

funders need to realize they will be making some bets. “Fund the things you’re interested in,” he said. “I think it’s really important not to fund castor oil – that is, stuff you don’t like but you kind of think is good for you.”

J-Lab has learned some lessons from funding 46 community news start-ups culled from 1,249 proposals since 2005. Among them:

- Stable and strong leadership is critical.
- Project leaders must have a precise focus and clearheaded vision of what they want to accomplish.
- Site founders must have enough civic capital in their communities to attract both contributions of content and financial support.
- Projects must act with both journalistic and business sensibilities.
- Year-round frequency of content is necessary to build momentum and recognition.
- The community recognizes and rewards ethical stewardship of community news and information.

Old media used to think that new media would threaten it, challenge it or put it out of business, Kebbel said, but old media are starting to realize that the two can live side by side: “As they both work together and supplement one another, I think that we can come out with a greater and stronger media ecosystem.”

Cuthbert said foundations miss valuable community-building opportunities when they ignore media projects just because they don't fit traditional funding silos. A proposal for a news site may straddle a couple of program areas but might not "hit the sweet spot" in either, he said.

In the view of Knight's Keibel, new media projects, news and information, and community building are all tied together. "I think it's harder and harder to disengage news, information and journalism from what we hope result from news, information and journalism – which is, people coming together ... to use that news and information to solve problems or to create communities."

■ Discretionary Grants

At the Chicago-based Joyce Foundation, community information initiatives fall under its discretionary grant-making program.

In a departure from supporting programming for public radio, Joyce has funded three neighborhood news desks run by Chicago Public Radio/WBEZ with \$325,000 in grants over three years. The enterprise is designed for "people who don't feel they have a voice in the community and don't know what's going on," said Charles Boesel, Joyce's communications director. Providing residents with a platform is one way the foundation makes public policy debates more inclusive, he said.

Without an informed citizenry there is no good policy, Boesel said: "You always [want] the public [to have] access to as much information as possible."

■ Innovation Grants

At the Blandin Foundation in Grand Rapids, Minn., grants director Wade Fauth says funders should embrace innovation in media and not wait for a critical mass of new media start-ups – or for wide cultural acceptance of the new media makers.

Blandin has given a three-year, \$225,000 grant to MinnPost.com, a Web site led by Joel Kramer, a former editor and publisher of the Minneapolis Star Tribune, even though Fauth labels it a "high risk" project. "It's an intentional risk-reward assessment," he said, explaining that fewer than 10 percent of Blandin's projects are considered risky. "We're looking for coverage that's going to help leaders grapple with fundamental economic, educational and civic issues across the board."

In New York, Ruth Ann Harnisch, president of The Harnisch Foundation, has given grants for pioneering news initiatives as well as for journalism centers. "Right

Tips for Funding Community News and Information Projects

- First, analyze the information needs of your community and your capacity to meet those needs.
- Zero in on the best platform to deliver information in your town or region.
- Look for a sharply defined focus to start.
- Scout out prospective grantees who are not for sale but interested in collaboration.
- Be comfortable with the organization and its leader.
- Look for broad inclusivity of participants.
- Check for tech, marketing, business and fundraising skills in a project's governing or advisory board.
- Consider offering nonmonetary support, such as subsidized office space or back-office support.
- Know what you're trying to accomplish and think about what a public-interest journalism project might do for you.
- If you want advocacy, go to advocates.
- If you want a credible source of information for people, understand what journalism really is.
- Ask: Have you got the stomach for this? Can you stand the heat that might come from publishing truth or opinion?

now, what I'm interested in funding is the kind of journalism that helps produce responsible citizens and a healthy society," she said.

As the head of a small family foundation, she's comfortable funding journalism start-ups. One of her grants has gone to Representative Journalism, a crowd-sourced and community-financed project for Northfield, Minn.

"Every foundation that cares about democracy owes something to help create new information systems," Harnisch said.

"This is not a cycle, it's a reset," she said of the evolving media environment. "And it's your opportunity to be part of creating a free-flowing connection of important information that will help citizens make intelligent, informed decisions about our individual and collective future."

Harnisch echoes Knight's Iburguen. Bottom line, what most interests him, he said, is this: "What is going to be the next way that we as citizens inform ourselves?" ■

CASE STUDY

Spurring Innovation

The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

In nearly 70 years of grant making, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (www.cfgnh.org) had targeted its investments in the areas of education, health, youth, community and economic development.

Program staff functioned as domain experts, vetting the urgency and potential impact of grant requests. But in 2006, following listening sessions with local leaders, the foundation – one of the oldest and largest of the nation’s 700 community foundations – dismantled traditional funding silos. It reorganized its giving into a flexible framework that prioritized grants that spur innovation and expand capacity.

Staff now serve as “quarterbacks of the process,” providing operating and technical assistance to community service providers, said William Ginsberg, the foundation’s president. The new focus gives the foundation “more discretion to choose the best and strongest projects to make the biggest difference in the community,” he said.

One of the first grantees to benefit from the new priorities was the New Haven Independent (www.newhavenindependent.org), a vibrant commu-

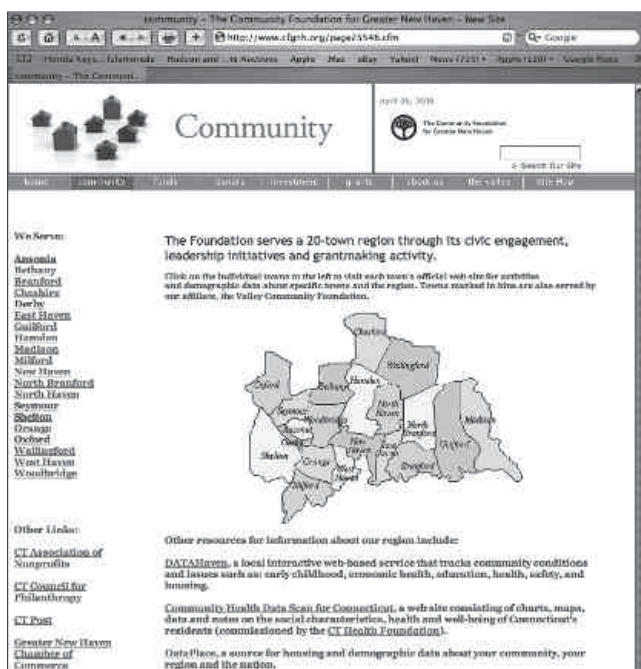
nity news site launched in 2005. From an initial, two-year gift of \$21,600, the community foundation has become the New Haven Independent’s major funder.

By mid-2009, the community foundation will help fund a related news site to serve nearby towns as part of a matching grant program with the Knight Foundation.

Shared news and information are “one of the things that holds a community together,” Ginsberg said. When people understand what’s going on, they can advocate for their own interests.

Support from funders such as New Haven’s community foundation has provided more bandwidth for the New Haven Independent. The site’s founder and editor, Paul Bass, a respected, longtime local journalist, said

From an initial, two-year gift of \$21,600, the community foundation has become the New Haven Independent’s major funder.



The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven serves a 20-town region in Connecticut.

his community news enterprise had a budget of \$180,000 in 2008. With the new Knight grant, which will be matched by the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, that annual budget will grow to \$450,000 starting in mid-2009.

The Knight matching grant will help fund a sister news site, the Valley Independent Sentinel. Knight will fund \$500,000 over two years, which will be matched with \$140,000 from the community foundation.

When launched, the new site will serve five towns of the lower Naugatuck Valley, a region largely abandoned by legacy media. Bass – as executive director of the nonprofit Online Journalism Project, the umbrella group for the New Haven Independent and the Valley Independent Sentinel – will effectively serve as publisher for the two news sites.

Knight’s deep investments in community journalism can be a game-changer for foundation boards, Ginsberg said, especially as they are pressed to boost support for direct-service providers.

His foundation serves 20 towns and 600,000 people through a \$300 million endowment. It awarded a total of \$13 million in 2008 and expects to increase overall grant making in 2009.

Ginsberg's board doesn't see the foundation's grants to the New Haven Independent in isolation but as part of "a big national initiative growing out of the same root," he said.

However, Ginsberg says that persuading his board to fund journalism is not always easy. "Not everybody agrees with it. Sometimes it's a struggle at the board level, especially in a time of needs like this," he said. But Ginsberg hammers home his point that journalism is crucial to community building. "That's what it takes to mobilize a community," he said. "First [citizens] have to understand." ■

A Look at the New Haven Independent

In its fourth year of operation, the New Haven Independent has a staff of three full-time and two part-time journalists, as well as stringers. The site attracts about 16,000 unique users per week, and its audience grows about 25 percent every six months, said site founder and editor Paul Bass.

Users can drill into 40 topic areas plus sections on 24 neighborhoods, be they home to blue-collar workers or Yale University faculty.

Community response to the site may be due in part to the curtailing of traditional media coverage in the city. The daily newspaper, the New Haven Register, let go 7 percent of its news staff in 2008 and its owner, the Journal Register Co., filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in early 2009. WTNH, the ABC affiliate, was sold in 1994 to LIN Interactive in Rhode Island.

With the sell-off of local media, "there was such a hunger for information in New Haven," Bass said.

Stories on his online news site can prompt 50 to 100 comments per day – and those comments can bloom into full-fledged discussions, in which residents of effectively segregated neighborhoods thrash out solutions to local problems together.

"There are conversations that happen in the Independent that never happened in the years I was reporting" for other news outlets, Bass said.

As a result of New Haven Independent reports about shooting deaths in poor areas of the city, some members of the victims' families have wound up talking online with middle-class and suburban residents – and lawmakers – "who

would never go near [the victims'] neighborhood," Bass said.

Bass urges other journalists to take the plunge into the new media world. "Do it!" he said. "It's the future and it's fun and it makes a difference, and it's why you went into the business in the first place."



The New Haven Independent's budget will more than double with new funding in 2009.

Chapter 2

News with Civic Impact

When Philadelphians were tasked with electing a new mayor in 2007, there was uneasiness in both the local journalism and foundation worlds.

City races were known to be dirty, often with racial overtones, and people tended to cast their votes based on where they lived or worked. Candidates could say

one thing in North Philadelphia and another in Center City and get away with it.

So when two news outlets and a good-government group approached The William Penn Foundation (www.william penn foundation.org) with an idea for an interactive election project, the foundation was recep-

CASE STUDY

The Voice of San Diego

Pioneering In-Depth Local Journalism

By 2004, Buzz Woolley's concerns about the kinds of news and information San Diego residents were getting had reached a critical point. So the philanthropist and venture capitalist decided to do something about it.

He talked to professional journalists, researched the possibilities and made a personal investment: He launched an investigative news Web site, the Voice of San Diego (www.voiceofsandiego.org). Since its start-up, the site has been making a name for itself not only in the city, but also in the vanguard of online journalism.

"People really didn't have very good information and I think some very bad decisions were made because of that," Woolley said.

As a result of the Web site's in-depth reports, public officials have been fired or resigned, criminal investigations have been launched, development projects have been scrapped and the city's stewards have been held to new levels of accountability.

Now the site's journalists can see who's reading and making decisions based on Voice reports, said Woolley, who has invested \$1.3 million in the venture so far.

By mid-2009, the site's annual budget had increased to \$1 million – built mostly from foundation

grants, corporate sponsors and donors. Woolley's private foundation provides some back-office and payroll support, in addition to grants. And the San Diego Foundation gives the 11-person newsroom a deal on rent in its building as well as funding.

The site doesn't try to cover everything the city's daily newspaper does. Instead, it focuses intensely on six areas, said co-executive editors Andrew Donohue and Scott Lewis. Those core areas are: Politics, Education, Survival in San Diego (which includes housing, jobs and the local economy), Public Health (including the environment), Public Safety, and Science and Technology.

Local foundations have noticed that efforts around their key issues don't have much value if people don't know about them. So the site has attracted a grant to increase coverage of science and technology and another to expand K-12 education coverage. "Neither of those foundations told us what to write," Lewis said. "They've just told us what they would like us to put an emphasis on."

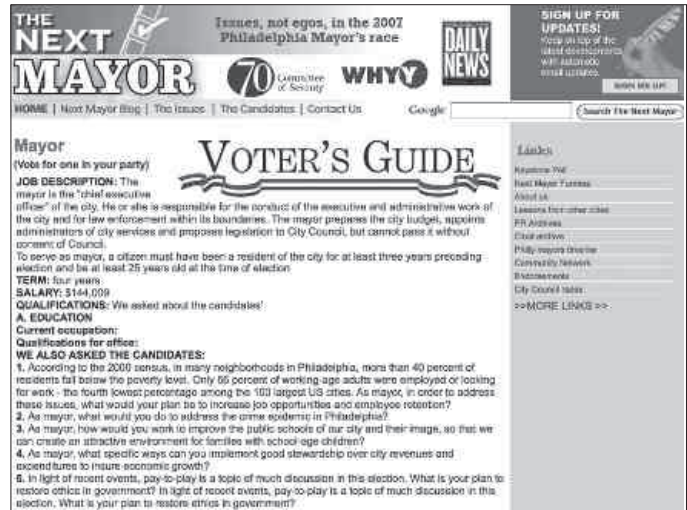
Distinguishing Voice of San Diego reporting have been award-winning investigations of city pension scandals and clandestine bonuses paid to officials of a redevelopment agency.

tive. "It looked like a great opportunity for us to make sure that the mayoral campaign had the content and the excitement and the accuracy that we were not confident could happen otherwise," said Feather Houstoun, the foundation's president.

The project's influence on the community turned out to be eye opening – not only to the news partners but to the funder as well. The Next Mayor, like many news and information projects now cropping up around the country, had a robust civic impact.

In Philadelphia, project partners listened to voters, cataloged their concerns, redefined issues, tracked every candidate, posted every press release, blogged and YouTube'd. Then, in the countdown to Election Day, traffic to their Web site, TheNextMayor.com, skyrocketed. (The site is no longer available online.)

Voters "had to go to the Web site and figure out



TheNextMayor.com provided robust coverage of Philadelphia's 2007 mayoral race.

The site's professional journalists also report on issues with imaginative enterprise.

When Voice reporter Rob Davis pulled records on how much water city officials were using, one City Council member was found to be consuming almost a million gallons a year – an eye-popping amount for a city that must import most of its water and where conservation is a regional mantra. Davis also examined high water usage among top business and government agencies, and his reports made clear that if the city's goal is water conservation, officials will have to "incentivize it differently," Lewis said.

"It's an alternative way of presenting what is a long-standing issue in San Diego," Lewis said. "And it's something that the local newspapers simply had never thought of."

Voice reporters regularly use their blogs to ask readers to weigh in with their knowledge or questions about an issue.

One questioner asked how many press people the new mayor had hired. The Voice of San Diego discovered that the number of press officers was at an all-time high. That story helped pave the way, Donohue said, for ongoing reports on "the way the mayor uses the media to sort of massage his message."

There's no money to hire lawyers to shepherd Freedom of Information Act requests, so the Web site's reporters instead use their blogs to give readers regular updates on their efforts to gain access to pub-

lic records. "We've had readers who have jumped on to these crusades with us and they've begun calling public agencies ... or people and saying: 'You know, these are public documents. You have to give them,'" Donohue said.

The Voice has attracted a loyal audience, with 75,000 unique visitors a month. "We've learned that the best way to drive readership ... is to write better stories and to get more of them," Lewis said.

Starting in 2009, the site's efforts are set to expand significantly as a result of The San Diego Foundation's winning a two-year, \$500,000 Knight Community Information grant that targets underserved audiences. The local foundation will contribute \$200,000 to the Voice to work with community partners to create digital "story stations" in 18 Native American reservations. The site also will develop a "San Diego-Pedia" feature to catalog the region's distinguishing characteristics.

Donohue and Lewis are grateful for the support of Woolley and others. "You need somebody who will stick with you as you prove your value to the community," Lewis said. This year, incoming support will allow Woolley to reduce his backing to 20 percent of the project's annual budget – down from 25 percent and 30 percent in earlier years.

Woolley sees the site having a positive effect on the community. "We did not start this as an act of journalism or an act of business," he said. "We did this as a civic effort to provide information to the community."

■ ■ The impact of the New Haven Independent is “about how the content and the dialogue produced by the content – the interactive nature – is shaping public response.”

– William Ginsberg, president of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

who to vote for,” said Wendy Warren, who spearheaded the project as a then-top editor at the Philadelphia Daily News.

So comprehensive was The Next Mayor that candidates had to be consistent. “I think one of the best surprises and perhaps the biggest one was ... that the candidates couldn’t triangulate among all the different neighborhoods,” Houston said. “They couldn’t say one thing at a policy forum about arts and culture and then dismiss arts and culture when they went to another part of town. Because it was all right there on the Web page.”

The project’s influence, moreover, continued to ripple through the community long after the new mayor took office. Two years later, many of the ethics recommendations that The Committee of Seventy urged candidates to endorse were actually being put into practice, said Zack Stalberg, the good-government group’s president and CEO.

As more and more community media start-ups emerge to supply or supplement local news, they are affecting more than just their communities’ media ecosystems. Their news and information are boosting voter turnout, unseating incumbents, expanding attendance at community meetings and spotlighting issues early enough for residents to have greater and better input.

- In New Haven, Conn., early attention paid to local housing foreclosures by the New Haven Independent prompted the mayor to appoint a task force long before the bottom fell out of the mortgage market across the country. “We covered the brewing foreclosure crisis as an ongoing story,” Bass said, crediting his staff’s “shoe-leather reporting” with the creation of the citywide “rescue team” to address the foreclosure epidemic.
- Ever since citizen journalists started writing about the towns near Deerfield, N.H., and hosting candidate

forums, voter turnout has increased, the number of empty ballot positions has declined and more races are contested, said Maureen Mann, founder of The Forum (www.forumhome.org), an online and occasional print newspaper.

- PlanPhilly.com is credited not only with building a constituency for design and planning in Philadelphia but also with “raising expectations” among both the public and elected officials “for the type of information that both developers and communities should expect for any project to happen,” said Michael Greenle, communications director for PennPraxis, the project’s sponsor at the University of Pennsylvania. PlanPhilly’s site, he said, drove 4,000 people to participate in a planning process for the Central Delaware riverfront. When the final plan was presented, a standing-room-only crowd of 1,500 packed the convention center to hear it. That’s “pretty rare” for a planning meeting, Greenle said.
- NewCastleNOW.org, in its first 18 months of existence covering the town and hamlets of New Castle, N.Y., got town council meetings aired live on the local cable station, persuaded the council to schedule new business at the start of meetings so residents could contribute more easily, and prevailed on school officials to move meetings closer to the center of town. The site’s reports also helped a newcomer defeat a school board incumbent.
- In San Diego, pension and bonus scandals uncovered by the five-year-old Voice of San Diego have led to resignations by public officials, criminal investigations and public outcries when officials don’t turn over public records.

How does a project measure its impact? “One way you can quantify it would be to see who of importance in the community is reading and making decisions based on what we come up with,” said the site’s founder Buzz Woolley. The city’s mayor has taken action the same day the site has reported big news.

While some sites might measure their impact by traffic, William Ginsberg, president of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, points out that “that’s the site being used; it’s not the *impact* the site is having.”

The impact of the New Haven Independent is “about how the content and the dialogue produced by the content – the interactive nature – is shaping public response,” he said. ■■

CASE STUDY

NewCastleNOW.org

Parlaying Knowledge Into News

Thirty-five miles north of New York, in the well-heeled hamlet of Chappaqua, three stay-at-home moms were struck, again and again, by how their community seemed to come to issues late in the game.

Community concerns about whether to build a new middle school or about how a development would alter local traffic patterns registered as late-breaking crises with residents, who'd express disbelief once they learned what was about to happen, said longtime community volunteer Christine Yeres.

Yeres and two of her fellow activists decided to do something to alert people earlier to town happenings. Emboldened by the start-up of a hyperlocal news site in Deerfield, N.H., the three women figured they could do the same thing for their town of New Castle, population 17,000, which governs the hamlets of Chappaqua and Millwood, N.Y. The town, at best, gets only occasional coverage in The New York Times and a regional newspaper.

In 2007, Yeres, with Susie Pender and Anne Marie Fallon, won a \$17,000 grant from J-Lab. A few months later they launched NewCastleNOW.org (New Castle News & Opinion Weekly), which has

since become a robust local news venture with considerable impact in its Westchester County community (also home to Bill and Hillary Clinton).

Yeres, Pender and Fallon are typical of many founders of hyperlocal news start-ups: They are older with more time on their hands now that their children are in high school or beyond; well-versed from years of involvement in school and community issues; keen about tracking down truths; impassioned about making community life go well.

"I couldn't have done this five years ago," said Pender, whose children are now in high school. "I wouldn't have had the time for it."

The three founders, all unpaid, do much of the reporting and writing themselves, working late every Thursday night to publish about 20 new articles by early Friday morning.

Pender says she wanted, in part, to hold public officials more accountable.

"I was shocked at how much people in a small town like this were willing to say, 'Those people know what they're doing, there's no reason to question the superintendent of the school board,'" she said by way of example. "The problem is there are things that need to be investigated."

As the news site has established a reputation for fairness, local officials increasingly have been willing to release information. "The more they cooperate in giving us what we've requested, the relationship has grown," Pender said. "And I think they're better for it, and I think the [news site] is better for it because we're getting more information out there."

The three editors are experimenting with how to spell one another in their weekly publishing cycle. When one of them needed a holiday break, the others decided that some of the new content for that week would be simply a listing of all the issues to be considered by the town board.

"That was the most-read story that week," Yeres said.

People often move to Chappaqua for its excel-



NewCastleNOW launched with a \$17,000 J-Lab grant and now sells ads.

(Case study continued from page 13)



“Sometimes we want to be The New York Times and sometimes we want to be the church bulletin.”

– Susie Pender, Editor, NewCastleNOW

lent schools, so school coverage, along with real estate and police blotter items, are top priorities.

“We’re not just delivering news,” Yeres said. “We are making the place where people can find out from one another both what’s happening in our town and what others think.” If an article deserves special attention by the public, the editors might print copies to distribute at the local commuter rail station. But the handout is meant to drive users back to the Web site.

The free site has signed up 3,000 subscribers and counts up to 2,000 unique site visitors each week. In 2008, NewCastleNOW also brought in about \$50,000 in local sponsorship advertising. One of Yeres’ neighbors, who has a sales and marketing background, sells the ads and takes a 20 percent commission.

The editors also have cajoled dozens of residents to write for the site – with assurances that they will be edited and not left, as they said, “to hang out there alone.” All submissions go through Pender’s rigorous editing process. A grammar-loving college student, also a volunteer, copyedits every article. The team won’t accept anonymous submissions.

“You scratch any person and, one, they’ve likely got a story and, two, they definitely know something that you don’t know,” Pender said. For instance, a resident who works in professional recruiting is writing a column for people who have lost their jobs.

The three women find the answers to questions that residents used to just speculate about. When a local storefront sat empty for more than a year, people began wondering whether it was the start of tough times for the prosperous town. Pender learned that a bank had rented the space, but that a town zoning issue was holding up the bank’s move-in date.

The news site has had a discernible impact on the area. Since it launched, a challenger has successfully unseated an incumbent in the local school board election – an unheard-of scenario in a town where elected school officials typically serve until they decide to step down.

While the NewCastleNOW team wants to be the eyes and ears for residents who don’t have the time to attend public meetings, the editors also have worked hard to make the meetings more accessible to all. When Yeres pressured the town council to air meetings on the local cable station, a board member feared it would discourage attendance. (“They weren’t in the 21st century,” Pender said.) The meetings are now carried live. The editors also persuaded town leaders to schedule new business at the beginning of each meeting to allow residents to contribute without having to stay out late on a work night.

Like most founders of community news sites, the three editors tread carefully when dealing with emotionally fraught stories. When a man in the community was convicted of shooting his wife, NewCastleNOW decided not to cover the story because the editors were sensitive to the suffering of the couple’s high school-aged daughter. “Sometimes we want to be The New York Times and sometimes we want to be the church bulletin,” Pender said. “In that case we decided to be more like the church bulletin.”

For now, the founders are pleased with community feedback: “I can’t go anywhere without people saying, ‘On Fridays I get my coffee, I get to my computer and I read the whole thing,’” Pender said. “It’s extremely well-read in our community.”



In 2008, NewCastleNOW brought in about \$50,000 in local advertising.

Measuring Success

New media makers often gauge how well they are doing by the impact their Web site has on civic life. But how should a foundation measure the success of its support for a news and information venture?

Metrics vary, depending as much on the aspirations of the funders as they do on the visions of the site operators.

Many of these projects are too new to crow about. "Experimental programs need new ways of evaluating, new ways to look at the success or failure or impact of what's happening, and we're in the process of working that out," said Gary Kebbel, Knight Foundation's journalism program director. "Maybe it's the grantee that makes the success. It might be the audience or the technology."

Foundation officials interviewed for the "New Media Makers" toolkit spoke of many benchmarks. They ranged from the quantity of news stories to the number of important eyeballs on the stories – to simply knowing whether anyone uses a news site. Sometimes foundation officials look at the very dynamics of the civic processes stirred by the news reports. Other times they log their own epiphanies about what journalism can do for their issues.

When PlanPhilly.com videotapes the emotional arguments between irate stevedores and historic preservationists over the future of the city's riverfront, "seeing that live makes the entire process a civic process in a way that it can't possibly be if it's left to those who have nothing to do but go to some meetings," said Feather Houstoun, president of The William Penn Foundation, which helped create and still supports the Web initiative. "It's really a very democratic process now."

In funding the Voice of San Diego (www.voiceofsandiego.org), The San Diego Foundation was looking to innovate in how it connects with people, said Cheryl Phelps, the director of civil society.

While she values sustainability and replicability, Phelps has other benchmarks: "community participation, the relevancy of the information people are exchanging with one another, the expansion of the readership of

the grantee."

She adds, though: "It's not just readership, but it's also *how* people are responding back, changing how information flows. ... You have a lot of people who consider themselves just as invested in what news is out there as traditional journalists. ... What has been the traditional model is news from the few to the many, and we're trying to change it from the many to the many."

Buzz Woolley, the venture philanthropist who launched the Voice of San Diego, says feedback is an important way to measure whether the site is meeting its goal of credible reporting for a wide variety of readers. "There was at one time within a week's period ... when we got an award from the League of Women Voters, which tends to be a fairly liberal organization. [Then] a local, very conservative talk-show host went on at some length on his program about how good Voice is. And a well-known Libertarian sent us some money. So if we can get those three entities to think that we're good ... I think we've accomplished that goal."

In supporting the Center for Investigative Reporting's push to step up state government coverage, the James Irvine Foundation wants to educate both the public and state legislators. But it also will be looking at "the volume of stories produced, the quality of people who have access to those stories, the extent to which the stories influence state agencies or lead to action on some of the topics being covered," said program director Amy Dominguez-Arms.

By the time it wrapped up its coverage of the 2007 Philadelphia mayoral race, TheNextMayor.com had "met every expectation we had," said The William Penn Foundation's Houstoun. "We had good journalism. We had a lot of eyeballs on the Web site. We had people talking about it. And ... the right people were watching."

She also credited the project with being a "learning experience" for the foundation. "I'm not sure, when this project started, we could have defined journalism other than [to say], 'Journalists are doing it.' ... But as we got into it, I think we began to appreciate what it meant

to have professional journalists covering an important story. ... We've been very careful not to give editorial direction."

The support of the Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut for the New Haven Independent was intended to counter the mainstream media's oversimplification of health care issues. The resulting news coverage, said Kate Gervais, senior development officer, has "changed the view of what news is."

The foundation might even reproduce some of the site's articles on health care. The articles "create a great primer on the subject," she said.

Knight Foundation President and CEO Alberto Ibarra says that, for now, he's looking to see if Knight-funded news initiatives are being used. "We're

■ ■ "Don't bury your mistakes. Put the
 ■ ■ thing out there for an autopsy."
 — Ruth Ann Harnisch, president of The Harnisch Foundation

going to measure success by whether it's used and what we learned about why it's used and how it's used. In the long term it seems to me that we need to look at: And then what happened?

"If it's not used, honestly, I hope we can learn something from failure. But it will be a failure in the sense that we learned that we couldn't get news and information out to the community.

"Will it be a failure as a funding project? Maybe not. Because maybe we'll learn why not, and the next time we try to do something we'll know what to avoid."

It's OK to fail, said several funders who are backing cutting-edge projects. As traditional news coverage shrinks, Ruth Ann Harnisch, president of The Harnisch Foundation, has supported such things as MinnPost.com and Representative Journalism, a community-financed news experiment in Northfield, Minn.

"We have to throw spaghetti and see what sticks," she said. "Don't bury your mistakes. Put the thing out there for an autopsy."

Concludes the Knight Foundation's Keibel: "It's not a problem to do something and find out you should have done something else. It's not a problem to do something and find out that that thing is a failure, because you've learned in both those cases.

"The greater problem," he said, "is to do nothing in a world where we desperately need information and we're getting less and less of it that's useful for us or that helps us govern our lives."

CASE STUDY

PlanPhilly.com

Covering the Passion Beat

In Philadelphia, issues of planning and development can evoke high passion and deep emotion. Concerns can pit hot-tempered stevedores against high-minded historic preservationists and opportunistic developers of waterfront casinos.

What happens, then, if there is little or no coverage of these powerful forces – even in a two-newspaper town?

One community funder, The William Penn Foundation (www.william penn foundation.org), paved the way for a new kind of niche newsgathering to shine a spotlight on these planning and development issues as part of an overall city visioning process.

In late 2006, the Web site PlanPhilly.com launched with William Penn funding. Since then it has become the go-to place for coverage of planning questions: Where should casinos be sited, should the port be expanded, and what happens when the expansion of the Center City convention center consumes entire city blocks?



PlanPhilly.com was created with a grant from The William Penn Foundation.

"The Planning Commission and the Zoning Code Commission have immense power over how people live in this city. And these commissions meet regularly," said Matt Golas, PlanPhilly's managing editor. "And the mainstream media doesn't cover them at all."

PlanPhilly attracts 16,000 unique visitors a month with its reporting on 11 issues and 12 neighborhoods. Five thousand subscribers receive its free e-mail updates.

PlanPhilly has earned a reputation as an honest broker on hot-button topics. Golas, a former Philadelphia Inquirer editor, populates the site with stories he assigns to eight or so freelance writers, as well as with reports from policy watchers and resource links. He also posts lively videotaped coverage of important meetings.

The videos permit everyone to "relive the excitement and tension" of the civic planning process, said Feather Houstoun, president of The William Penn Foundation. "You can watch 20 or 30 very irate stevedores yelling with the historic preservationists about what's going to happen to a certain part of the waterfront, where the stevedores want an expansion of the port and the historic preservationists want expansion of the grid of the city out to the water.


"Seeing that live makes the entire process a civic process in a way that it can't possibly be if it's left to the people who have nothing else to do but go to some meetings," she continued. "It's really a very democratic process now."

Indeed, it was PlanPhilly's video camera that chronicled – on Christmas Eve 2007 – the wrecking balls that demolished two buildings, considered historically significant, just north of City Hall to make way for a new convention center.

"It reminded me of how Pennsylvania got casinos on a July 4th weekend when no one was paying attention," Golas said.

PlanPhilly is an editorially independent project of PennPraxis, a consulting and management practice based at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Design.

"It's difficult to make planning and zoning interesting to the public," said Michael Greenle, PennPraxis' director of communications. But he credits PlanPhilly with outreach that engaged 4,000 people in deliberations about new plans for the city's Delaware



"The more things we cover, the more expectation there is to do more. ... As wonderful as that is... it also ups the ante in terms of, 'How are we going to sustain this project when people expect more of us?'"

– Matt Golas, PlanPhilly's managing editor

River waterfront. For the plan's final presentation, a standing-room-only crowd of 1,500 showed up at the city's convention center.

For a planning meeting, such a large turnout is "pretty rare," Greenle said.

Houstoun's board has invested \$600,000 in PlanPhilly from 2006 to 2009 as part of larger grants to PennPraxis. PlanPhilly also received a one-year, \$100,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in 2007.

What motivated The William Penn Foundation, which generally invests in regional quality-of-life projects, was the rapidity of the new city administration's planning and zoning processes. "We really want to hold that administration accountable for doing it the way we really believe it should be done," Houstoun said. "And the best way to do that is to let the stakeholders in that process know what's happening."

Golas feels pressure to meet the demand for stories and videos and to post them quickly after a meeting, a challenge when video production costs are increasing and his budget allows only \$7,500 a month to pay freelancers, who earn \$30 an hour. "The more things we cover, the more expectation there is to do more," he said. "As wonderful as that is... it also ups the ante in terms of, 'How are we going to sustain this project when people expect more of us?'"

The William Penn Foundation has learned some things, too, in funding media projects like PlanPhilly, including the difference between advocacy and journalism. Houstoun's advice to fellow foundations: "If a community foundation wants to accomplish something in a community, it has to figure out how it reaches people. And I think public-interest journalism is a really exceptional way to do it, if it's done with quality."



Database of Foundations and the News Projects They Fund

Foundation	Location	Community news site/s	Grant total since 2005
Abra Prentice Fdn	Chicago	Chi-Town Daily News	\$50,000
Allegany Franciscan Ministries	Palm Harbor, Fla.	Health News Florida ²	\$40,000
The Altman Fdn	New York	Gotham Gazette	\$20,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$5,000
Annenberg Fdn	Los Angeles	Center for Public Integrity	\$668,000
The Arca Fdn	Washington, D.C.	Center for Public Integrity	\$50,000
Around Fdn	Key West, Fla.	Center for Public Integrity	\$87,000
Mary Kay Ash Charitable Fdn	Dallas	Women's eNews ³	\$140,000
Asia Society/ Goldman Sachs Award	New York	Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$12,500
As You Sow Fdn	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$5,000
The Atlantic Philanthropies	New York	Huffington Post Investigative Fund	\$500,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$2,090,000
		ProPublica	\$25,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$100,000
The Legler Benbough Fdn	San Diego	Voice of San Diego	\$70,000
Berks County Cmty Fdn	Reading, Pa.	Community Info Hub ¹	\$90,000
Blandin Fdn	Grand Rapids, Minn.	MinnPost	\$225,000
Morton K. and Jane Blaustein Fdn	Baltimore	Center for Public Integrity	\$200,000
Blue Cross Blue Shield Fdn of Mass.	Boston	New England Ethnic Newswire	\$25,000
Blue Fdn for a Healthy Florida	Jacksonville, Fla.	Health News Florida	\$10,000
The Boston Fdn	Boston	CommonWealth magazine ¹	\$200,000
		New England Ethnic Newswire	\$25,000
Otto Bremer Fdn	St. Paul, Minn.	Twin Cities Daily Planet	\$75,000
Bydale Fdn	Harriman, N.Y.	Women's eNews ³	\$37,500
California Community Fdn	Los Angeles	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$15,000
The California Endowment	Los Angeles	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$1,195,591
California HealthCare Fdn	Oakland, Calif.	California Healthline ⁴	\$2,500,000
		Calif. Ctr for Health Care Journ	\$3,700,000
		iHealthBeat ⁴	\$2,500,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$5,000
California Wellness Fdn	Woodland Hills, Calif.	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$200,000
Keith Campbell Fdn for the Environment	Annapolis, Md.	Center for Public Integrity	\$150,000
Carnegie Corp of New York	New York	Ctr for Independent Media	\$100,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$150,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$1,861,400
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$563,000
		Women's eNews ³	\$138,000
Civitas Assoc (Carnegie Corp)		Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$50,000

Foundation	Location	Community news site/s	Grant total since 2005
The Annie E. Casey Fdn	Baltimore	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$50,000
Marguerite Casey Fdn	Seattle	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$225,000
Caw Foundation	Sacramento, Calif.	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$10,000
Central Carolina Cmty Fdn	Columbia, S.C.	Raising Digital Literacy ¹	\$200,000
The Chicago Cmty Trust	Chicago	Hyperlocal Information ¹	\$250,000
		Chicago Matters	\$3,660,000
Chicago Fdn for Women	Chicago	Women's eNews ³	\$5,000
Robert Sterling Clark Fdn	New York	Gotham Gazette	\$205,000
W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Fdn	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$30,000
Cmty Fdn for Greater Buffalo	Buffalo, N.Y.	GreenTable Virtual Meeting Place ¹	\$188,000
The Cmty Fdn for Greater New Haven	New Haven, Conn.	New Haven Independent	\$202,500
		Valley Independent Sentinel ¹	\$140,000
Community Fdn for Greater South Wood Cty	Racine, Wis.	Community News 2.0 ¹	\$87,500
The Community Fdn for Monterey County	Monterey, Calif.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$9,000
Cmty Fdn of South Alabama	Mobile, Ala.	Connect SW Alabama ¹	\$100,000
The Community Fdn Serving Boulder Cty	Boulder, Colo.	A Civic Blast ¹	\$33,000
Cmty Fdn Serving Richmond & Central Virginia	Richmond, Va.	Connect Network ¹	\$120,000
The Compton Fdn	Redwood City, Calif.	Center for Public Integrity	\$15,000
Connecticut Health Fdn	New Britain, Conn.	New Haven Independent	\$22,000
The Coral Gables Fdn	Coral Gables, Fla.	Bridging the Grey Digital Divide ¹	\$155,967
Cow Hollow Fdn	Larkspur, Calif.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$30,000
The Nathan Cummings Fdn	New York	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$300,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$307,500
Deer Creek Fdn	St. Louis	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$650,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$400,000
The Richard H. Driehaus Fdn	Chicago	Cmty Media Workshop	\$64,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$30,000
		Chicago Reporter	\$30,000
The Dudley Fdn	Portland, Ore.	Center for Public Integrity	\$36,500
Jessie Ball duPont Fund	Jacksonville, Fla.	Health News Florida ²	\$50,000
Educational Fdn of America	Westport, Conn.	Center for Public Integrity	\$130,000
		Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$100,000
Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Fdn	Oklahoma City	Chi-Town Daily News	\$25,000
		Government in My Backyard	\$54,450
		Wisconsin Ctr for Investig Journ	\$100,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$85,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$192,956
		Investigative Rept'g Workshop	\$75,000
		Fund for Investigative Journ	\$200,000
Everett Philanthropic Fund (at the New York Cmty Trust)	New York	Center for Public Integrity	\$52,800
Fisher-Cummings Family Fdn	Detroit	Women's eNews ³	\$5,000
Ford Fdn	New York	Center for Public Integrity	\$3,200,000
		Women's eNews ³	\$100,000
		Cmty Renewal Society	\$290,000
		New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$200,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$535,000
		Investigative Rept'g Workshop	\$260,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$2,417,000

Foundation	Location	Community news site/s	Grant total since 2005
Fredrikson & Byron Fdn	Minneapolis	MinnPost	\$2,000
Fdn for The Carolinas	Charlotte, N.C.	Virtual Cmty Library ¹	\$50,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$51,000
Fund for the City of New York	New York	Gotham Gazette	\$25,000
		New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$40,000
Fund for Constitutional Govt	Washington, D.C.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$7,500
Fund for Independence in Journalism	Washington, D.C.	Center for Public Integrity	\$2,125,000
The Funding Exchange	New York	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$10,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$10,000
The Bill and Melinda Gates Fdn	Seattle	New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$513,219
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$75,000
The Fred Gellert Family Fdn	Tiburon, Calif.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$18,000
Wallace Alexander Gerbode Fdn	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$75,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$20,000
Girard Fdn	La Jolla, Calif.	Voice of San Diego	\$80,000
The David B. Gold Fdn	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$50,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$50,000
Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund	San Francisco	Center for Public Integrity	\$250,000
Mary Graham Children's Shelter Fdn	French Camp, Calif.	ProPublica	\$400,000
Grand Rapids Cmty Fdn	Grand Rapids, Mich.	Neighborhood news bureaus ¹	\$128,000
Wm Caspar Graustein Mem'l Fund	Hamden, Conn.	New Haven Independent	\$55,000
Gruber Family Fdn	Ross, Calif.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$51,000
Gulf Cmty Fdn of Venice	Venice, Fla.	Health News Florida ²	\$50,000
Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$450,000
Walter and Elise Haas Fund	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$70,000
Haas Charitable Trusts	Philadelphia	Center for Public Integrity	\$80,000
The Harnisch Fdn	New York	Representative Journalism	\$61,000
		MinnPost	\$10,000
Health Fdn of South Florida	Miami	Health News Florida ²	\$71,100
Heinz Endowments	Pittsburgh	Center for Public Integrity	\$100,000
Hellman Family Fdn	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$100,000
The Herb Block Fdn	Washington, D.C.	Chi-Town Daily News	\$25,000
Wm and Flora Hewlett Fdn	Menlo Park, Calif.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$1,200,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$75,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$1,392,000
Roy A. Hunt Fdn	Pittsburgh	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$7,500
Hunt Alternatives Fund	Cambridge, Mass.	Women's eNews ³	\$7,500
J-Lab: The Institute for Interactive Journalism	Washington, D.C.	New Voices grants (46 sites)	\$1,081,000
		New Media Women Entrepreneurs	\$60,000
James Irvine Fdn	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$1,310,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$2,500,000
JEHT Fdn (now closed)	New York	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$50,000
		ProPublica	\$25,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$300,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$723,000
Jewish Cmty Fdn of St. Louis	St. Louis	St. Louis Beacon	\$1,250
Johns Hopkins Schl of Public Health	Baltimore	Center for Public Integrity	\$240,390
Robert Wood Johnson Fdn	Princeton, N.J.	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$100,000

Foundation	Location	Community news site/s	Grant total since 2005
Walter S. Johnson Fdn	Menlo Park, Calif.	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$150,000
The Joyce Fdn	Chicago	WBEZ Neighborhood News Desks	\$325,000
		Wisconsin Eye	\$50,000
The Henry J. Kaiser Family Fdn	Menlo Park, Calif.	Kaiser Health News ⁴	\$1,900,000
W. K. Kellogg Fdn	Battle Creek, Mich.	Women's eNews ³	\$300,000
		Investigative Rept'g Workshop	\$25,000
The Kendeda Fund	Wilmington, Del.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$150,000
William A. Kerr Fdn	Alamo, Calif. & St. Louis	St. Louis Beacon	\$20,000
The David L. Klein Jr. Fdn	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$20,000
John S. and James L. Knight Fdn	Miami	Knight Cmty Info Challenge (21 sites)	\$5,031,515
		Gotham Gazette news games	\$250,000
		Spot.us	\$340,000
		EveryBlock	\$1,100,000
		Web journalism (Boulder, Colo.)	\$90,000
		Chi-Town Daily News	\$435,000
		MinnPost	\$835,000
		St. Louis Beacon	\$90,000
		Voice of San Diego	\$100,000
		PlanPhilly	\$100,000
		New England Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$250,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$1,507,000
		Comm Fdn of Palm Beach & Martin Ctys	\$916,084
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$575,000
Kohlberg Fdn	Mt. Kisco, N.Y.	ProPublica	\$50,000
Lannan Foundation	Santa Fe, N.M.	Nation Institute Investigative Fund	\$900,000
Leavens Fdn	Long Valley, N.J.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$25,000
Litowitz Foundation	Miami	Investigative Rept'g Workshop	\$200,000
The Reva and David Logan Fdn	Chicago	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$500,000
MAC AIDS Fdn	New York	Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$201,900
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fdn	Chicago	ProPublica	\$250,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$75,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$900,000
Manatee Comm Fdn	Bradenton, Fla.	Connect Manatee ¹	\$37,500
Marajen Stevick Fdn	Champaign-Urbana, Ill.	Access to Basic Info ¹	\$50,000
Marisla Fdn	Laguna Beach, Calif.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$15,000
McCormick Fdn	Chicago	Chicago Reporter	\$428,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$490,000
		New England Ethnic Newswire	\$30,000
		New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$100,000
		Women's eNews ³	\$70,000
		Twin Cities Daily Planet	\$80,000
The McKay Foundation	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$10,000
McKnight Fdn	Minneapolis	Twin Cities Daily Planet	\$135,000
Media Democracy Fund	Washington, D.C.	New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$25,000
Medtronic Fdn	Minneapolis	MinnPost	\$5,000
Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Fdn	New York	Women's eNews ³	\$20,000
The Minneapolis Fdn	Minneapolis	MinnPost (donor-funded news beats) ¹	\$100,000
		Twin Cities Daily Planet	\$129,500
Minnesota Community Fdn (also The St. Paul Fdn)	Minneapolis	IdeaMN ¹	\$500,000
Ms. Fdn for Women	Brooklyn, N.Y.	Women's eNews ³	\$30,500

Foundation	Location	Community news site/s	Grant total since 2005
Moore Family Fdn	Los Altos, Calif.	New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$25,000
		Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$200,000
John and Florence Newman Fdn	San Antonio	Center for Public Integrity	\$230,000
New York Community Trust	New York	Center for Public Integrity	\$141,600
		New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$55,000
The New York Times Co. Fnd	New York	Gotham Gazette	\$20,000
NoVo Fdn	New York	Center for Public Integrity	\$100,000
Open Society Institute	New York	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$276,000
		Women's eNews ³	\$50,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$835,000
The Overbrook Fdn	New York	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$20,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$180,000
		New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$60,000
The David and Lucille Packard Fdn	Los Altos, Calif.	High Country News	\$240,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$150,000
Palm Healthcare Fdn	W. Palm Beach, Fla.	Health News Florida ²	\$61,100
Panta Rhea Fdn	Sausalito, Calif.	Voice of San Diego	\$200,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$25,000
Park Fdn	Ithaca, N.Y.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$30,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$950,000
		Investigative Rept'g Workshop	\$150,000
The Park City Fdn	Park City, Utah	Carbon and Water Footprint ¹	\$86,740
Peninsula Cmty Fdn	San Mateo, Calif.	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$50,000
Peter G. Peterson Fdn	New York	ProPublica	\$50,000
The Pew Charitable Trusts	Philadelphia	Stateline.org	\$7,500,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$35,000
The Philadelphia Fdn	Philadelphia	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$20,000
Popplestone Fdn	Boston	Center for Public Integrity	\$1,450,000
Irwin Andrew Porter Fdn	Minneapolis	Twin Cities Daily Planet	\$800
Price Family Charitable Fund	San Diego	Center for Public Integrity	\$25,000
Lynn R. and Karl E. Prickett Fund	Greensboro, N.C.	Center for Public Integrity	\$40,000
Prince Charitable Trusts	Chicago	Center for Public Integrity	\$60,000
Public Welfare Fdn	Washington, D.C.	Investigative Rept'g Workshop	\$10,000
The Puffin Foundation	Teaneck, N.J.	Nation Institute Investigative Fund	\$50,000
Emily Rauh Pulitzer	New York	Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$1,763,000
The Quantum Fdn	W. Palm Beach, Fla.	Health News Florida ²	\$75,000
Bernard & Audre Rapoport Fdn	Waco, Texas	Nation Institute Investigative Fund	\$50,000
The Rauch Fdn	Garden City, N.Y.	Center for Public Integrity	\$30,000
The Charles H. Revson Fdn	New York	Gotham Gazette	\$600,000
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	New York	Center for Public Integrity	\$300,000
		Gotham Gazette	\$180,000
		New York Cmty Media Alliance	\$60,000
		Women's eNews ³	\$25,000
		New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$50,000
Helena Rubenstein Fdn	New York	Women's eNews ³	\$10,000
The St. Paul Fdn	St. Paul, Minn.	Twin Cities Daily Planet	\$60,000
San Antonio Area Fdn	San Antonio	NOWCasts ¹	\$488,500
The San Diego Fdn	San Diego	Voice of San Diego	\$1,040,500
		Reg'l Info Initiative ¹	\$200,000
		Women's eNews ³	\$9,852
Sandler Family Supporting Fdn	San Francisco	ProPublica	\$30,000,000
		Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$10,000
The San Francisco Fdn	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$42,000

Foundation	Location	Community news site/s	Grant total since 2005
The SCAN Fdn	Long Beach, Calif.	Kaiser Health News	\$200,000
The Scherman Fdn	New York	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$45,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$70,000
Elaine and Gerald Schuster	Boston	Schuster Inst for Investig Journ	\$5,000,000
Schumann Ctr for Media & Democracy	Montclair, N.J.	Center for Public Integrity	\$500,000
Shifting Fdn	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$50,000
Joan Shorestein Center	Cambridge, Mass.	Center for Public Integrity	\$178,333
The Sister Fund	New York	Women's eNews ³	\$31,000
The Alfred P. Sloan Fund	New York	Gotham Gazette	\$260,000
Toni Stabile Investigative Project Fund	New York	Stabile Ctr for Investigative Journ	\$1,000,000
The Stanley Fdn	Muscatine, Iowa	Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$105,000
The Streisand Fdn	Woodland Hills, Calif.	Center for Public Integrity	\$20,000
The Stuart Fdn	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$175,000
Surdna Fdn	New York	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$70,000
Tides Fdn	San Francisco	Women's eNews ³	\$54,000
Town Creek Fdn	Easton, Md.	Center for Public Integrity	\$210,000
Trio Fdn of St. Louis	St. Louis	St. Louis Beacon	\$5,000
The Universal Health Care Fdn of Conn.	Meriden, Conn.	New Haven Independent	\$185,000
U.S. Institute of Peace	Washington, D.C.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$35,000
Van Loben Sels/ RembeRock Fdn	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$25,000
Wallace Global Fund	Washington, D.C.	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$25,000
		Center for Public Integrity	\$310,000
The William Penn Fdn	Philadelphia	The Next Mayor (closed)	\$330,000
		PlanPhilly	\$600,000
		Public School Notebook ¹	\$910,500
		It's Our Money	\$227,000
Nell Williams Family Fdn	Chicago	Center for Public Integrity	\$40,000
Winter Park Health Fdn	Winter Park, Fla.	Health News Florida ²	\$77,000
The Woodheath Fdn	New York	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$25,000
Working Assets	Atlanta	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$100,000
YouTube Project Rept Svcs		Pulitzer Ctr on Crisis Reporting	\$15,000
The Jacquelyn and Gregory Zehner Fdn	New York	Women's eNews ³	\$5,000
Zellerbach Family Fdn	San Francisco	New America Media/Pacific News Svc	\$135,000
11th Hour Project	San Francisco	Ctr for Investigative Rept'g	\$800,000
TOTAL 2005-09:			\$127,786,547

Footnotes:

¹ Matching grants for Knight Community Information Challenge (21 sites).

² These seven foundations work as a collaborative under the Florida Health Policy Center.

³ These funds were given through the Fund for the City of New York.

⁴ Projects are directly funded by the sponsoring foundation.

How to Add Information:

If you've awarded a grant or received a grant for a news initiative and it's not in this database, please tell us and we'll add it online. Go to the Knight Citizen News Network: www.kcnn.org/toolkit

New Media Makers

A Toolkit for Innovators in Community Media and Grant Making

Table of Contents for DVD

Citizen Journalists Expand Community Coverage (TRT 9:45)

- The Forum, Deerfield, N.H.
- NeighborMedia, Cambridge, Mass.
- NewCastleNOW.org, Chappaqua, N.Y.

Professional Journalists Create New Ventures About Critical Issues (TRT 14:35)

- TheNextMayor.com, Philadelphia
- PlanPhilly.com, Philadelphia
- VoiceofSanDiego.org, San Diego

Grant Makers as Innovators (TRT 11:10)

A conversation with Alberto Ibargüen, president and CEO, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

The People Behind the Projects

- The People Behind Community News Projects (TRT 5:00)
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- Local Coverage Generates Civic Impact and
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PlanPhilly.com
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- Community Media in a New Media Ecosystem
(TRT 6:25)
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Getting Noticed
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Filling the Gaps: PlanPhilly.com
Delivering More News: VoiceofSanDiego.org
Making Every Dollar Count: The Forum

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Ed Fouhy produced and narrated the accompanying DVD, a compelling look at what it takes to produce grassroots news sites. **Melanie Soich** and **Robin Smith** at Video Action Fund in Washington, D.C., skillfully edited the video with production assistance from **Anna Tuzin**.

Reporter and researcher **Patrice Pascual** interviewed foundations and site founders and tracked down the information for the toolkit's database, the first of its kind to our knowledge.

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The toolkit is available online at the Knight Citizen News Network: www.kcnn.org/toolkit

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