

New Grant Opportunity for Media Organizations: Citywide Election Initiative

The Lenfest Institute for Journalism is embarking on a comprehensive citywide effort to catalyze civic action and dialogue leading up to Philadelphia's Mayoral Election in November 2023. The initiative will equip Philadelphians with what they need to ensure an informed voting experience through the support of public-opinion research, intensive community listening, issues coverage in multiple languages, voter guides, civics information, and events and debates.

The project's overarching goal is to ensure that the issues that matter most to all of Philadelphia's diverse communities are amplified and centered in the 2023 election by media, community organizations, and the candidates.

Through collaborative reporting and grants we will partner with a wide array of media and community partners to deliver high quality journalism and information about the 2023 election. Through these partnerships, we will engage both mainstream and community media, support and conduct in-person and virtual events, community conversations and debates, and utilize traditional and social media to maximize reach and impact of the project. All reporting, event summaries, and materials produced by our partners will be aggregated on a project website.

In addition to the opportunity for financial support, any organization can become a project partner. Project partners will join a vibrant community of practice and have access to the project's resource center, which includes elections reporting, voter guides, civics education materials, community data and research, media trainings, and partner events.

GRANT GUIDELINES

Any organization who meets the eligibility requirements below may apply for grant funding. Collaborative projects are also eligible for funding, please submit one application per project with both organizations listed. Funding amounts will range from \$5,000 to \$100,000. Only a small number of grants between \$50,000 and \$100,000 will be awarded. The grant term will run from November 2022 through November 2023.


Media Partners: Philadelphia-based media outlets of all kinds— community-based media, ethnic media, neighborhood-specific media, legacy and traditional media, public media, producing print, digital, radio, and television content – are encouraged to apply for community-centered journalism projects related to the 2023 City of Philadelphia elections.

Funds may be used for:

- [Solutions](#), [service](#), and [engaged](#) journalism
- Elections products (voter guides, texting programs, etc.)
- Community engagement activities
- Events, convenings, debates, forums
- Capacity-building and hiring as it relates to staffing the proposed project
- Social media

Preference will be given to projects that incorporate one or more of the following funding priorities:

- Solutions journalism focused on key issues important to Philadelphia communities
- Service journalism about the electoral process and government responsibilities
- Translation services or multi-lingual products, services, or activities (specifically in Spanish, Chinese, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian, Khmer, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese)
- Public debates and forums

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- Outlets serving distinct Philadelphia communities (based on geography, culture, ethnicity, etc)
 - Projects that emphasize social media engagement, including influencers

Additional considerations:

- Funded projects must be fact-based and non-partisan. Funding cannot be used for opinion pieces or candidate endorsements.
- Content produced through the funded project must be made available to audiences free of charge (outside of paywalls).
- Content produced through the funded project must be made available for republishing on the aggregate project site.
- Content produced through the funded project must include project branding and acknowledgement when it appears on the outlet's own channels.
- Content produced through the funded project must disclose support from project supporters.

HOW TO APPLY

Organizations who meet the eligibility requirements above may submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) [via Submittable](#) by **October 11, 2022**.

LOIs should be no more than three pages, and include:

- Description of the proposed project and activities
- Proposed start/end dates
- Proposed collaborators or partners
- Communities served/engaged
- Expected audience reach
- Overview of anticipated expenses

LOIs will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Alignment with the initiative's overall goals and funding priorities
- Diversity of communities served, and authentic/non-extractive engagement of the defined community(ies)
- Reasonable ability to achieve the proposed project (budget, management)

Selected organizations will be invited to submit a full application in late October. The full application will include details on project goals, metrics, promotion, and a full project budget.

QUESTIONS AND MORE INFORMATION

The team from the Lenfest Institute will hold virtual "office hours" for interested applicants. Anyone is welcome to attend to learn more about the grant process and ask specific questions about proposed projects. Below are the schedule and topic areas for office hours. Pre-registration is required.

Media partners: Thursday, September 29 at 12:30pm
[Register here](#)

Community partners: Friday, September 30 at 11:00am
[Register here](#)

General inquiries: Thursday, October 6 at 3:00pm
[Register here](#)

For more information, please contact grants@lenfestinstitute.org.