



Press
Forward »»

Building the Movement: A Look at Our Work to Date

An Interim Report

Letter from the Director

Friends,

As we get close to our first anniversary, we wanted to take a moment to celebrate our progress in securing support for the reimagination of local news. Working with our coalition partners, we've been able to achieve the following:

- **Our funder coalition is growing.** We launched with 22 enthusiastic partners and have more than doubled the number of Press Forward funders to 62. Donors big and small have responded enthusiastically to our call to join this once in a generation movement to reinvigorate local news.
- **Millions in funding are flowing to local news outlets.** By the end of our first year, with anticipated additional aligned funds being awarded, we project that we will invest more than \$100 million in local news efforts across the country. The bulk, \$60 million-plus, is moving through Aligned Grantmaking, while the Pooled Fund will invest \$20 million before the end of 2024 and our Locals are just getting started.
- **We are putting down roots in communities across the country.** Our Press Forward Locals are growing rapidly - and are now operational in 25 communities from Alaska to Pennsylvania and South Florida.

I joined Press Forward just a few months ago, so much of this success is thanks to our coalition members, who in concert with The Miami Foundation, worked diligently to carry out our mission. I am in awe of what this small, committed group has achieved. Thank you to our partners and staff for laying the groundwork. I'm thrilled to carry the mantle forward, as we work together to support a healthier democracy through local news.

Dale R. Anglin

Director, Press Forward

Press Forward >>

Press Forward is a \$500 million+ movement to reimagine local news. Here's what the initiative has accomplished:

62

funders joined the coalition

\$100,000,000+

in investment in local news in Year 1 projected

25

local chapters established across more than 20 states

\$850,000

in funding awarded to local chapters to catalyze their work

62 national and local funders have agreed to aligned values, vision, and priorities.

Shared Values

- Prioritize transformation
- Center community needs
- Enable growth with equity and diversity of thought
- Ensure accessibility to the widest population
- Independence and interdependence

Vision

- Strengthen communities over the next five years
- Catalyze a local news renaissance
- Raise significant new resources for local news
- Move from individual grantmaking strategies to a shared vision and coordinated action

Priorities

- **Journalism sustainability** - strengthen local newsrooms that have the trust of local communities
- **Infrastructure** - accelerate the enabling environment for news production and dissemination
- **Equity** - close longstanding inequalities in journalism coverage and practice
- **Policy** - Advance public policies that expand access to local news and civic information

National Funding Partners

Press Forward is
powered by:

The
Miami
Foundation
For A Greater Miami

ARCHEWELL
FOUNDATION



Avis Family
Foundation



Coxe Family
Fund



Ford
Foundation



KFF



Lorber Family
Foundation



MacArthur
Foundation

OUTRIDER



Mary W. Graham

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Local Funding Partners



Program Areas

Press Forward invests in local news initiatives in three ways:

➤ Pooled Fund

Created by a group of national donors, this fund invests in promising ideas and emerging best practices that will reinvigorate local news.

Co-Chaired By:



Neha Gohil Singh
Hewlett Foundation



Josh Stearns
Democracy Fund

➤ Locals

Locals are a network of chapters across the country where funders bring new donors and foundations together to expand resources for local news.

Co-Chaired By:



Teresa Gorman
Democracy Fund



Duc Luu
Knight Foundation

➤ Aligned Funding

The bulk of funding committed to Press Forward so far is being invested through Aligned Grantmaking, where individual funders give directly and independently to local news initiatives.

Co-Chaired By:



Angelica Das
Democracy Fund



Jenny Montoya Tansey
Skyline Foundation

Pooled Fund

Open Call on Closing Local Coverage Gaps

100 newsrooms will receive \$100,000 each over two years in unrestricted funds

This first open call addresses the longstanding inequalities in journalism coverage and practice in the U.S., by investing in small, local newsrooms that provide original reporting in underserved communities.

Eligibility and Features:

- Non-profit or for-profits with an operating budget of less than \$1 million for 2024
- Must demonstrate a commitment to editorial excellence, editorial independence, and transparency
- Support for applicants provided in the form of applicant webinars and fundraising coaches offered in partnership with Lenfest News Philanthropy Network
- Community reviewers to read and advise on applications
- Funding recipients will be announced this fall

A second open call on local news innovation will open this fall.

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A woman selling a local newspaper. Credit: Planeta Venus; Courtesy of the Wichita Foundation

Press Forward Locals

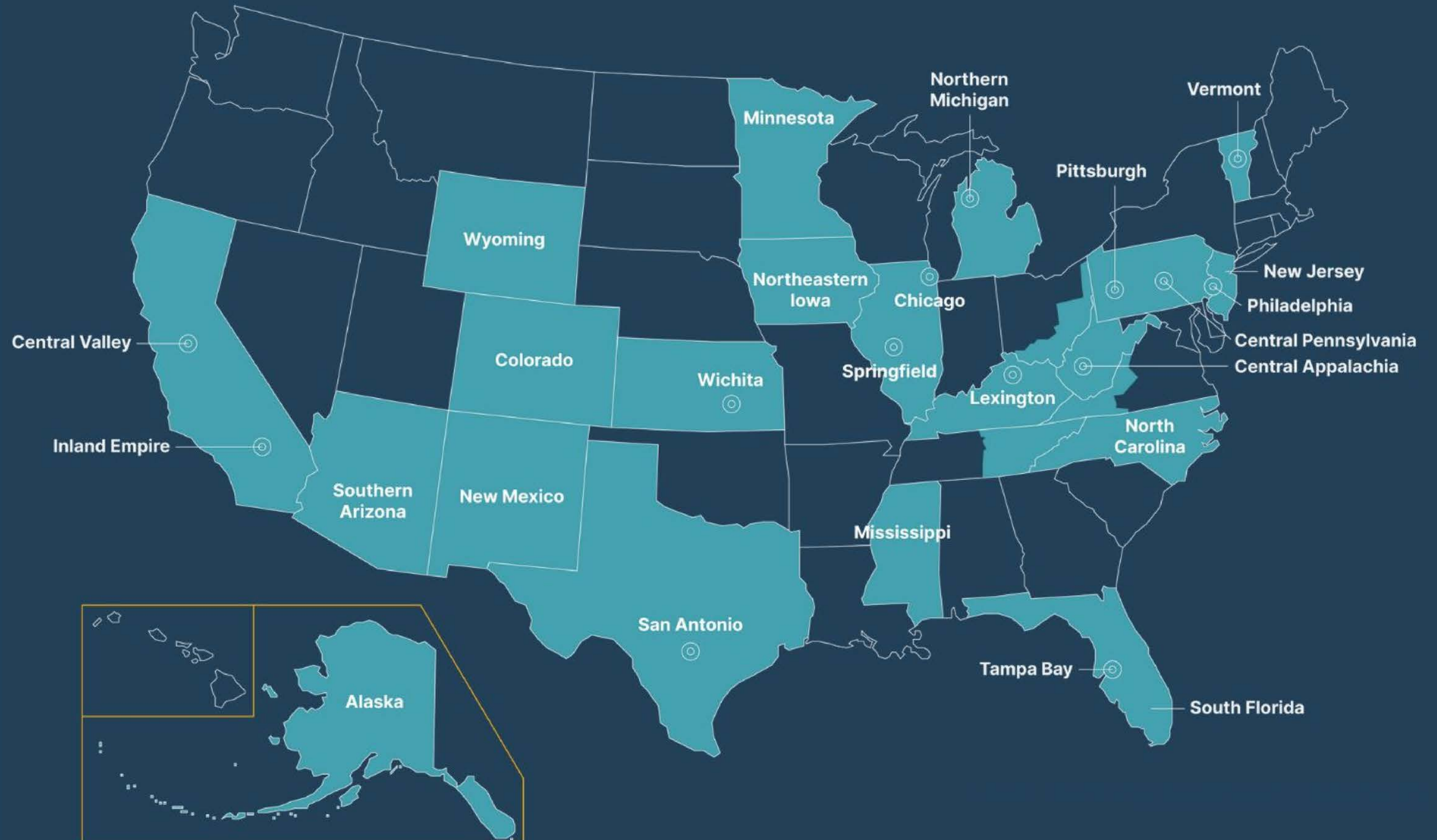


25 communities across more than 20 states have raised their hand to form a local chapter and reinvigorate local news in their own backyards.

In this video, we spoke with local leaders about why their communities need to increase funding for local news and information

[Watch the video.](#)

Press Forward Locals



Focus on Local

Press Forward continues to be heavily focused on building on-ramps and resources for local chapters.

These Locals are an opportunity to create place-based initiatives, driven by the specific information needs of their communities.

For communities that were eager to begin investing in local news, Press Forward published a toolkit, **Press Forward: A Guide for Local Funders**, that offers approaches, case studies and resources. The guide offers an introduction to some of the issues that place-based funders may want to consider when it comes to investing in local news and information.

The toolkit was written in January 2024 by Sarah Gustavus Lim and Katie Hawkins-Gaar but leverages previous work done by many local leaders, including Molly de Aguiar from Independence Public Media Foundation (IPMF) and Josh Stearns from Democracy Fund.

Visit pressforward.news/guide to check out the toolkit.



Community members and media gather for the ribbon cutting of a community solar garden on the roof of Shiloh Temple in North Minneapolis. Courtesy: McKnight Foundation

Press Forward Minnesota

In September 2023, the McKnight Foundation was announced as the founding member of Press Forward Minnesota. But McKnight's funding in the media and journalism space goes back several decades.

"We are a place-based funder, working across the state of Minnesota, across the Midwest on climate, as well as globally on food systems," explained Tim Murphy, a program officer at McKnight who oversees the foundation's Press Forward efforts. He explained that McKnight has long supported local news and information in Minnesota "as an acknowledgement that having strong media and journalism in our backyard — in the areas that we work — is a key determinant of civic health. It strengthens the environment for civic engagement and democratic participation and for communities to be more connected and informed."

When conversations about Press Forward began to take place across Minnesota and nationwide, Murphy said, "there was an opportunity for McKnight to step up and play a leading role." Given the family foundation's history in supporting news and information, existing relationships with local news partners, and commitment to the work, it was a natural fit.

Press Forward defines Minnesota as a nascent ecosystem, meaning it's in the earliest stages of development. Despite the state's strong commitment to philanthropy, Murphy explained, "there hasn't been a lot of dedicated funding in this space." Now, with Press Forward Minnesota's pooled grantmaking fund, Murphy said there's a renewed interest in supporting local journalism and thinking more strategically about how to better support Minnesota's news ecosystem.

Nascent Ecosystems

Nascent ecosystems are in the early stages of development. Potential donors are new to funding journalism, particularly for the first grants in this area. So activities of nascent ecosystem leaders include conducting landscape research, building the case for funding local news, and identifying potential partners.

These ecosystems may include news areas where there is limited access to information, including lack of broadband access and few reporters in the language people speak or read. They may be geographically large area or a dense community.

Other nascent news ecosystems include Press Forward Alaska, led by the Atwood Foundation, and Press Forward Springfield, which is supported by the Community Foundation for the Land.

Here are a few of Press Forward Minnesota takeaways for other local funders looking for information in their communities:

Hire early for the positions you need to get up and running. Because Murphy splits his time between Press Forward Minnesota and his other responsibilities as program officer at McKnight, getting the program up and running has taken some time. As chapters take shape, Murphy recommends a plan from the outset to dedicate enough resources "to go full steam ahead."

In McKnight's case, the foundation is helping help develop and manage Press Forward Minnesota. A consultant will be working in 2024 on the following:

- A shared set of values and goals to guide the work in Press Forward Minnesota
- A grantmaking framework for the Press Forward Minnesota pooled fund
- Strategic recommendations for session-level journalism convenings in Minnesota
- Fundraising opportunities for the pooled fund
- A recommended structural approach to ensure long-term success and
- A policy agenda and identification of potential policy approaches.

Catalyst Grants for Locals

\$1.9 million awarded to local chapters

Press Forward Local Chapters can apply for up to \$250,000 in grant funding. Through these grants, Press Forward aims to support Locals as they launch or expand their efforts to build a funder collaborative and invest in a healthy local news ecosystem.

Catalyst Funds can be used to support a wide range of potential local chapter needs, such as supporting ecosystem research, regranting to media organizations, investing in fundraising or programmatic capacity, incentivizing funding from local donors, or gathering partners to create a shared vision.

To date, 10 chapters have received \$1.9 million in total:

- Wichita
- New Mexico
- New Jersey
- Colorado
- North Carolina
- NE Iowa
- Southern Arizona
- Central Pennsylvania
- San Antonio
- Lexington

In addition to grant funding, Press Forward is working with local chapters to help grow their efforts, provide technical assistance, including coaching and training, and cultivate peer networks to cultivate shared learning.



Aligned Funding

\$60 million invested directly in local news initiatives

As part of their commitment to Press Forward, funders have invested directly in our four priority areas:

- **Sustainability: Strengthening local newsrooms that have the trust of local communities**

Example: Strengthening Enlace North Carolina's mission to provide accountability and investigative reporting on civic issues for the state's Spanish-speaking communities, with funding provided by the Skyline and MacArthur Foundations.

- **Equity: Closing longstanding inequalities in journalism coverage and practice**

Example: Creating a new journalism center at the University of Southern Mississippi, where students will report on undercovered communities and discover and address local mis and disinformation, with funding provided by the Scripps Howard Fund.



Aligned Funding

\$60 million invested directly in local news initiatives

As part of their commitment to Press Forward, funders have invested directly in our four priority areas:

- **Infrastructure: Accelerating the enabling environment for news production and dissemination**

Example: Allowing for expanding the Big Local News Data Platform, which will equip newsrooms with a “one-stop shop” for data that aids local news story production, with funding provided by Knight Foundation.

- **Policy: Advancing public policies that expand access to local news and civic information**

Example: Helping Free Press build and strengthen the capacity of local and state civic actors to inform the creation of policy environments that prioritize local information needs of underserved communities, with funding provided by the Henry Luce and MacArthur Foundations.



Press Forward's first full-time hire
was Dale R. Anglin.

Dale R. Anglin

Director
Press Forward

Dale Anglin, a leader in philanthropy and journalism, brings expertise crucial to Press Forward's mission, particularly in fostering collaboration among funders to tackle systemic challenges, supporting local news initiatives and crafting initiatives focused on racial equity.

Prior to joining Press Forward, Dale served as Vice President for Proactive Grantmaking at the Cleveland Foundation, the oldest community foundation in the country, where she led the effort to invest in a regional network of nonprofit journalism initiatives.



Christina Shih joined Press Forward first as a Contractor and then as Associate Director.

Christina Shih

**Associate Director
Press Forward**

Christina Shih has dedicated her career to helping local news initiatives thrive. Before Press Forward, Christina served as the senior vice president of revenue at the News Revenue Hub, where she was instrumental in helping the organization grow from a pilot project into a multimillion-dollar mission driven operation that has helped newsrooms across the country launch membership programs.

Christina is a San Diego native and holds a bachelor's degree in art history from the University of Washington and an executive M.B.A. from the Rady School of Management at UC San Diego.



Management Committee

Our management committee oversees and advises on the operational activities of Press Forward.



Jim Brady
Knight Foundation



Neha Gohil Singh
Hewlett Foundation



Jenny Montoya Tansey
Skyline Foundation



Silvia Rivera
MacArthur Foundation



Josh Stearns
Democracy Fund

Press Forward is in the process of adding Management Committee members from the journalism field, in addition to creating an advisory council.

Spreading the Word

The Press Forward staff and management committee have been traveling the country to recruit funding partners and spread the word about the importance of investing in local news.

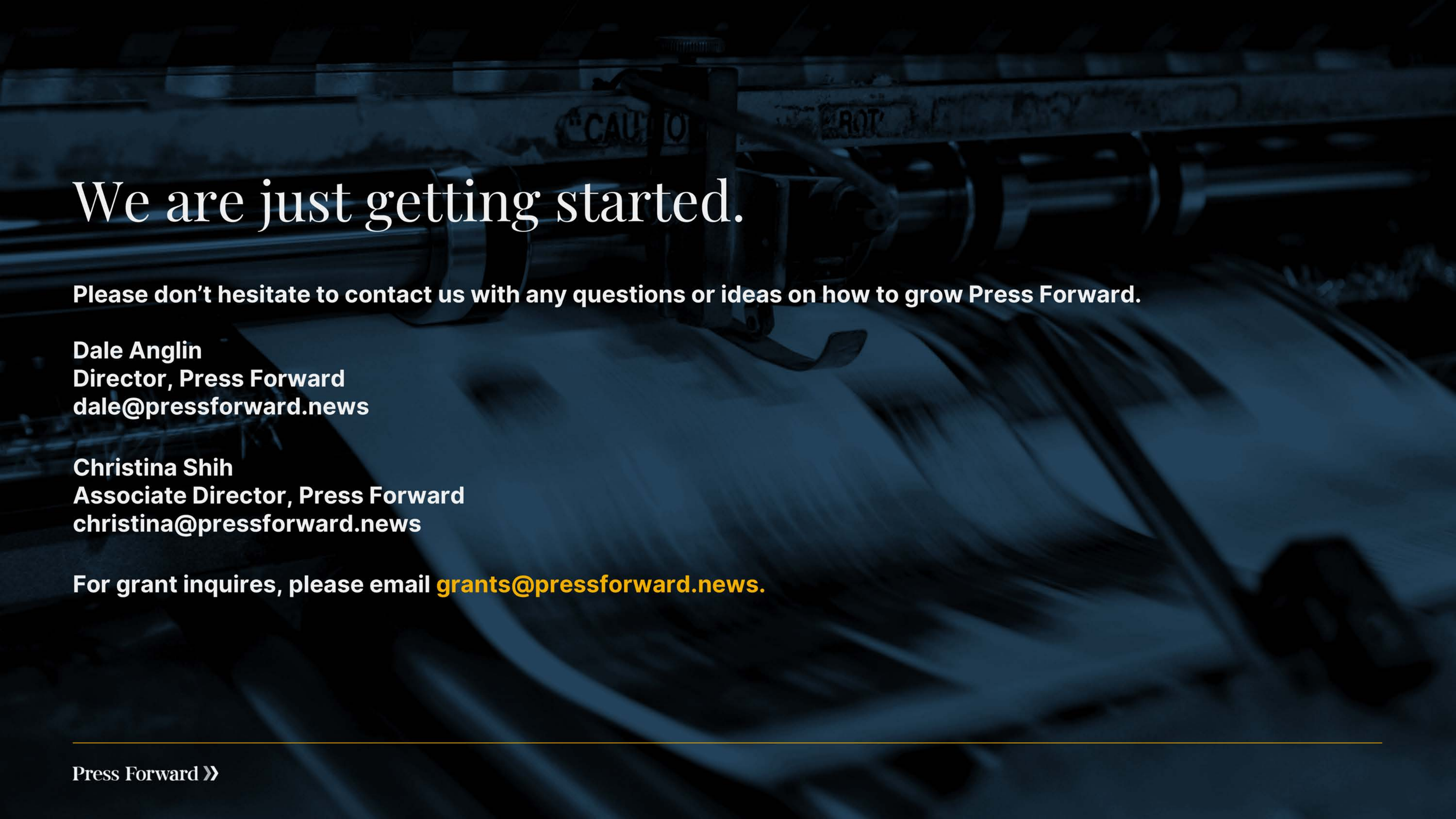


Above, left: Press Forward Alaska donor event with Diane Kaplan, Judy Woodruff and John Palfrey

Above, right: John Palfrey kicking off the Press Forward Wichita ecosystem showcase

Top right: Dale Anglin and Jim Brady speaking to Kansas funders

Bottom right: Press Forward panel at the ISOJ conference



We are just getting started.

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or ideas on how to grow Press Forward.

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