

Press Forward Our Impact

OCTOBER 2025

Press
Forward >>

A NEW STORY FOR LOCAL NEWS

pressforward.news



A Letter from the Director

In times that test us, I find myself looking for bright lights—reminders of resilience, courage, and hope. Lately, I've seen many.

I have seen them in the local reporters who cover everyday issues - housing affordability, immigration, education - with persistence and integrity, despite harassment, threats, and the economic headwinds facing their industry.

I have seen them in the people who opened their wallets to support their public media stations after federal funding cuts—choosing, in a moment of uncertainty, to invest in the truth. And I have seen them in funders across the nation who have joined us in this effort. Whether their focus is healthcare, higher education, or other pressing issues, they understand that strong local news is the thread that ties it all together, and that without it, real change cannot take root.

Everywhere I travel, people don't need convincing that local news matters. They already know it. And our latest national survey proves it:

- 93% of Americans want independent local news in their communities
- 74% trust their local media
- 66% rely on local news to make everyday decisions

The opportunity is to ensure these trusted outlets have the strength to meet that demand with depth, nuance, and consistency. That's why more than 110 funders have already come together through Press Forward, united by a shared mission to write a new story for local news.

OUR STRONGEST ASSET: THE NETWORK

Our greatest strength is this growing network – funders who are committed, passionate and deeply invested in the future of their communities. Since launch, our coalition has grown five-fold, collectively investing **\$400 million** in local news. And perhaps most importantly, our funders are intent on making a difference: Close to 70 percent of our members have increased their local news funding since joining Press Forward.

Press Forward has become a space where funders coordinate their giving and collaborate for greater impact in the field of local news. Earlier this year, for example, a group of funders came together to strategically advance state-level public policy that improves access to local news in a way that is not possible at the federal level now. Another group exchanged strategies for increasing its giving to support reporters increasingly under attack for their work on such issues as immigration, reproductive rights and affordable housing. And this summer, Press Forward has become a space to work with partners on how best to support and invest in the future of public media.

Thriving local news can only happen long-term if it has support on the ground. That's why we've launched 41 Press Forward chapters in 31 states, reaching communities as diverse as Wyoming, Appalachia and Maine. We hope they become a vital part of the support system that sustains local news.

Image of Dale R. Anglin by Kamron Khan.

INVESTING IN A FUTURE THAT ENDURES

Trying moments underscore why strong local news ecosystems are vital to the future of our field. Informed communities don't rely on a single outlet. They count on a network of newsrooms, civic groups, platforms and community catalysts who help people make informed choices and participate in public life.

That's why our approach focuses on investing in the essential infrastructure that communities and newsrooms need to navigate times of disruption and to emerge stronger.

That means increasing resources — public and private — for local news outlets and the organizations that support them. It means aligning philanthropic efforts around shared challenges and investing collectively to address them. It means creating local champions, building the scaffolding to support them and ensuring that infrastructure endures over time.

Over the past few months, our network has taken stock, evaluated progress and refined a roadmap for our next two years. In this report, you'll find a high-level look at our strategy. We hope you'll take a moment to explore this report and the incredible and innovative work our members are doing, which led to [national recognition this spring by Fast Company](#).

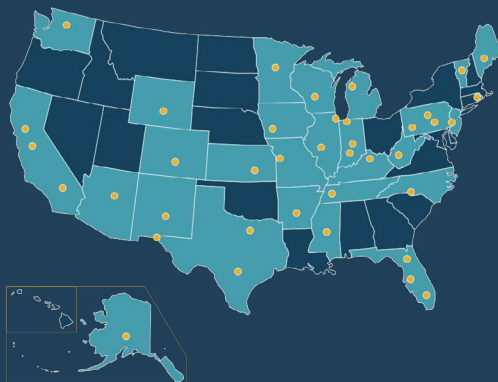
While the threats to local news are ever-present, they don't erase the progress the field has made. It does mean that working together at such a critical time is even more important. We each have a role to play in building on this progress, together.

Dale R. Anglin
Director, Press Forward

BY THE NUMBERS

\$400,000,000

\$400 million-plus invested in local news



41 Local chapters
established in
31 states



110 Funders
joined our coalition

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 5 Revitalizing the Field
- 10 Press Forward Locals
- 14 A Vision for the Press Forward Network
- 19 Our Funding Partners
- 22 Team

Press Forward »



On the cover: Interns with Voices Internship of Idaho conduct an interview. Image courtesy of the program.
On this page: Press Forward's Dale Anglin and former Knight Foundation Vice President Jim Brady at the 2025 Knight Media Forum.



Revitalizing the Field

When Press Forward funders join our coalition, they sign on to advance four strategic priorities through their aligned, pooled or local investments. With a total of \$400 million invested to date via these pathways, here's a look at our collective impact across Press Forward's four priority areas.

Copper River Record image. Caption: Copper River Native Association Ahtna language teacher Carol Cozzen and Copper River Record Editor Allison Sayer with some elementary Ahtna worksheets.

1. Revitalizing the Field: Closing Local Coverage Gaps

Across the country, in rural towns and major cities, Press Forward's network is investing directly in local news outlets to address long-standing inequities in journalism coverage and practice. A few examples of the funding's impact:

El Tecolote

El Tecolote, a bilingual newsroom serving immigrant and working-class Latinos, has been publishing a series of investigations revealing how San Francisco is displacing RV residents of primarily Latino families without offering safe or affordable housing alternatives. The reporting shows how the crackdown began and why it has continued to backfire.

Copper River Record

In rural Alaska, the Copper River Record covers 3,000 people across 20,000 square miles, reporting on topics from local elections to subsistence hunting. Recently, it began incorporating the Native Ahtna language into its pages. Plans include adding audio recordings in Ahtna, a vocabulary page reflecting what kids are learning in an Ahtna immersion program and integrating Ahtna into weather graphics. "As far as I know, they are the first and only graphics with Ahtna words in a newspaper," said editor Allison Sayer.

Baltimore Beat

The Beat honors the tradition of the Black press and the spirit of alt-weekly journalism, with reporting that focuses on community and prioritizes thoughtful engagement with readers. Recently, it won Baltimore Magazine's "Best Outreach" award for creating "Beat Boxes" — places to distribute newspapers and share resources.

People have left items such as bottled water, hand warmers and snacks in the boxes, and each of the 52 boxes includes Narcan and fentanyl test strips. One Beat employee recently used Narcan from a box to revive someone overdosing.



Top: A Baltimore Beat Beat Box; image courtesy of the Baltimore Beat

Middle: A workshop at the Lexington Market produced by the Baltimore Beat in partnership with the Baltimore Museum of Art. Photo by Myles Michelin.

Bottom: Mariana Duran takes notes in her journal for a report about RV displacement in San Francisco. Photo: Pablo Unzueta for El Tecolote/CatchLight Local

2. Revitalizing the Field: Sustaining Trusted News Sources

Newsrooms of all sizes and formats achieve sustainability when they have adequate revenue and operational capacity to create journalistic impact in the communities they serve. Here are a few examples of Press Forward's network's efforts to create stronger and more resilient newsrooms across the U.S.:

Immigrant News Coalition

Immigrant-serving publications often teeter on the edge of financial viability, which has resulted in more than 100 ethnic news operations shuttering since 2020, according to Northwestern's Local News Initiative. To help strengthen the sector, several successful news organizations – including New York's Documented, Minnesota's Sahan Journal and California's El Tímpano – are coming together to help outlets like them, forming a peer-to-peer collaborative where existing proven revenue strategies are rigorously refined. The Immigrant News Coalition will create and share blueprints and case studies, providing a replicable framework to strengthen immigrant-serving journalism.

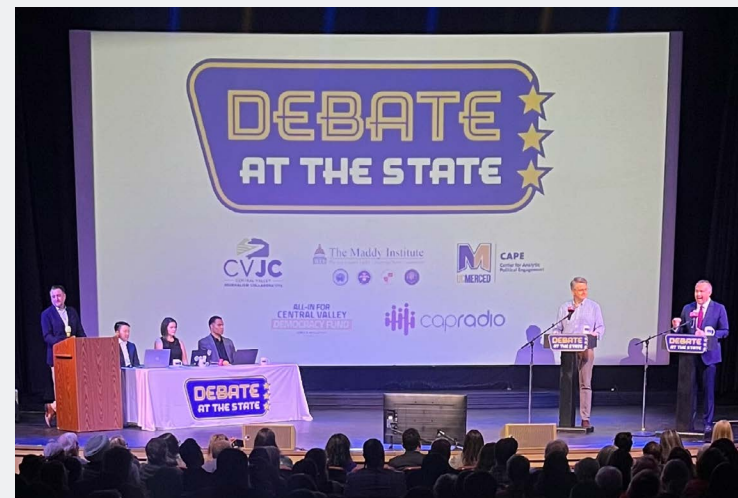
Collaboration in California's Central Valley

As the James B. McClatchy Foundation prepares to sunset in 2030, it is investing in a backbone for local journalism in the Central Valley that will endure. By launching the Central Valley Journalism Collaborative and the Press Forward Central Valley Chapter, the Foundation is seeding long-term, sustainable infrastructure for local news. These efforts are supporting community-based and independently owned hyperlocal newsrooms that reflect a multiracial, multilingual, civically engaged Central Valley.

Press Forward Central Valley is committed to centering community needs and lifting up the full range of voices that tell their stories, newsrooms, public media, grassroots storytellers, and nontraditional outlets. The chapter listens first, then convenes funders and partners to resource the field and build strategies around the most urgent priorities identified by the media ecosystem.

This work is also taking root across California, with regional chapters in the Inland Empire, Silicon Valley, and beyond, linking hyperlocal and regional efforts to a coordinated statewide and national movement. As part of this effort, the chapter is convening and building up journalism funders for the Central Valley, ensuring that the region's voices help shape not just local but national priorities. [Learn more](#)

Top: The Central Valley Journalism Collaborative co-produced a candidate forum, "Debate at the State" in Modesto last fall.
Bottom: Members of the Immigrant News Coalition.
Courtesy of the coalition.



3. Revitalizing the Field: Providing the Infrastructure Local News Needs

Funding alone isn't enough to ensure newsrooms' sustainability. They also need infrastructure that makes launching and sustaining them easier. Funders are investing in infrastructure in several ways, and Press Forward's Pooled Fund dedicated \$22.7 million across 22 grants to this area.

Legal resources, safety and mental health

As journalists come under increasing attack online and in person, they also have an ingrained culture of getting the work done and getting the story out – often without considering their own safety or mental health. While many of these legal and health services were once provided by large media companies, today's smaller newsrooms often don't have access.

That's why Press Forward invested in three important programs to support journalist safety and mental health with its Open Call on Infrastructure.

- The [International Women's Media Foundation](#) (IWMF) will expand its [Newsroom Safety Across America](#) program to serve thousands of journalists and establish a culture of safety in newsrooms.
- The Global Center for Journalism and Trauma will train 45 mental health clinicians to help journalists cope with stress, trauma and burnout.
- [Vita Activa](#) will provide hundreds of hours of counseling, along with virtual training and peer support groups to help create trusted spaces for journalists, especially journalists of color and under-resourced professionals.

[Learn more](#) about how these efforts care for journalists.

Knight Center for the Future of News at Arizona State University

The new [Knight Center for the Future of News at Arizona State University](#) will strengthen the infrastructure of the field by focusing on helping local news outlets build resilient business models while also increasing community trust.

With support from Knight Foundation, the center will host a sustainability lab to test revenue models while experimenting with new reporting and storytelling formats.



"The landscape of safety challenges has intensified since we documented the threats journalists faced in the lead-up to the 2024 elections... This year, the requests have expanded to focus on the safety and well being of journalists covering polarizing topics in their communities such as affordable housing, reproductive rights, environmental dangers and protecting vulnerable sources."

—Elisa Lees Munoz, executive director, IWMF

IWMF: A training for IWMF's Newsroom Safety Across American program. Image courtesy of IWMF.

4. Revitalizing the Field: Advancing Policy that Expands Access to Local News

While Congress has rescinded funding for public media at the national level, states like New York, California and Illinois are stepping up. Each state has recently passed legislation to bolster local news, collectively unlocking tens of millions of dollars for community-based journalism in the years ahead.

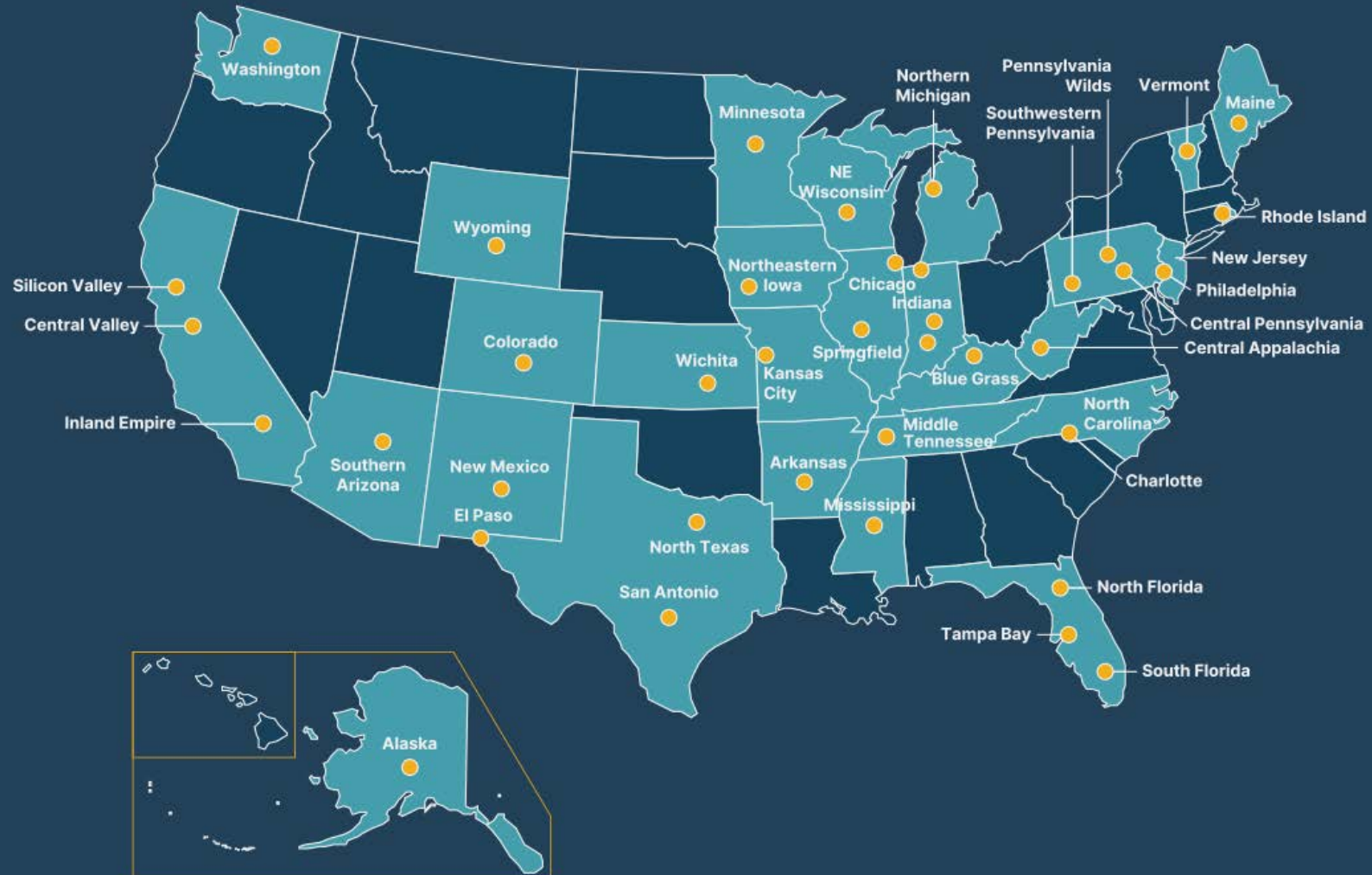
Building on that momentum, a group of Press Forward funders acted earlier this year to catalyze similar change in five additional states. Through Press Forward's Pooled Fund, they committed \$3.45 million to support grassroots policy initiatives ranging from tax credits for small business advertisers to new reporting fellowships. These efforts aim to build durable, locally driven coalitions that champion access to reliable, independent local news.

Emily Bradbury of the Kansas Press Association and Rashad Mahmood of the New Mexico Local News Fund talk about their public policy efforts at a workshop ahead of the Knight Media Forum. Image by Patrick Farrell.



Press Forward Locals

41 CHAPTERS IN 31 STATES



Press Forward Locals

Local news is strongest when it's rooted in and supported by the communities it serves. That's the idea behind Press Forward Locals — now 41 chapters across 31 states — where place-based funders, civic leaders and news organizations are coming together to build lasting infrastructure for local journalism.

Whether they are launching grant programs, assessing information gaps or strengthening collaboration, these chapters are laying the foundation for long-term, community-driven support.

RAISING FUNDS AND MAKING GRANTS

Press Forward Locals invest in local news in alignment with the organization's four priority areas.

In Colorado, the Press Forward chapter takes an ecosystem-wide approach to grantmaking, says Director Kimberly Spencer. That means investing not only in newsrooms, but also in the infrastructure and partnerships that help information flow where it's needed most.

"When we make grants, we're not just trying to put dollars in newsrooms. We're not even specifically trying to save newsrooms. We're trying to help Colorado get to a place where our civic information ecosystem meets the needs of our communities," said Sam Moody, associate director of the Colorado Media Project, home to Press Forward Colorado.

[Learn more about their approach.](#)

Public policy grants. Caption: Kyle Huelsman of the Colorado Media Project



INVESTING IN TRAINING AND CAPACITY

Press Forward Locals are helping newsrooms build staying power by connecting them with the tools, training and support they need to thrive.

In Wichita, the chapter links local outlets with national journalism support organizations, giving reporters access to professional development, peer networks and practical resources.

In Chicago, the chapter surveyed newsrooms to understand their operational needs — such as fundraising, advertising, and audience growth — and is now working to design shared services that can strengthen the business backbone of local journalism.

ADVOCATING FOR LOCAL NEWS

Policy and public funding play a critical role in strengthening local journalism. Press Forward chapters are helping lead the way.

In New Mexico, the local chapter housed at the New Mexico Local News Fund successfully advocated for state funding to support a college fellowship program. The result: five emerging journalists were placed in local newsrooms, expanding essential coverage and building capacity.

In California and Pennsylvania, several chapters are coming together to advocate for public policies at the state level that provide all residents with better access to local news.

Bonita Gooch, editor in chief of Wichita's The Community Voice, at a workshop with Press Forward Wichita.



Press Forward Pooled Fund: Collective Investment, Nationwide Impact

The Press Forward Pooled Fund harnesses resources for a broad range of funders to amplify their impact, channeling every dollar directly into strengthening local news. All contributions to our national Pooled Fund go directly into local newsrooms and support organizations, as Press Forward's administrative costs are covered completely by Knight Foundation and MacArthur Foundation.

In its first year, the Pooled Fund awarded \$20 million to some of the nation's smallest newsrooms, including at least one in every state. Now, contributions from the Pooled Fund are equipping these 204 grantees from our Open Call on Coverage Gaps with sustainability audits, coaching, and customized support for strengthening their newsrooms.

Because funding newsrooms alone isn't enough, this spring the Pooled Fund also invested a total of \$22.7 million in 22 grantees that are providing infrastructure and networks needed to help these and other organizations thrive.

Funding awarded through our [Open Call on Infrastructure](#) will:

- Strengthen the backbone systems — like operations and tech — [of small public media stations](#), which is increasingly important in this funding environment.
- Adapt [proven revenue models](#) from other industries outside of news
- Make it easier for newsrooms to cover disasters like the floods in Central Texas, borrowing lessons and technology from North Carolina's Hurricane Helene for a new playbook.



DJ's from KVNF, part of the Rocky Mountain Community Network.

A Vision for the Press Forward Network

In its first year, Press Forward built a broad coalition, listened closely to members and laid the groundwork with the staff and systems needed to support this ambitious effort.

In 2025, our focus has shifted to the future: a series of member focus groups have helped shape a shared vision to guide the network's next phase. This strategic roadmap is a living framework designed to adapt, guided by long-term goals and grounded in the real-time needs of the people transforming the field.

Colorado Media Project's Kimberly Spencer speaks at the Lenfest News Philanthropy Summit.



Our Approach

Press Forward funds are invested in one of three ways:

Aligned Grantmaking

Funders who prefer to give directly and independently to local news initiatives can join Press Forward's coalition by committing to make investments that align with our four strategic priorities. Press Forward hosts peer-to-peer working groups and in-person convenings to align resources to leverage impact and introduce funders to new ideas, best practices and bold leaders who are shaping the field of local news.

Pooled Fund

Funders can make their dollars go further and maximize their collective impact by contributing to a Pooled Fund housed at The Miami Foundation. The funds are invested through open calls and strategic grantmaking that advance our four pillars.

Press Forward Locals

Press Forward is putting down roots at the local level by seeding and shepherding 41 local chapters across the country. These chapters galvanize place-based funders and other community leaders to support reliable, trusted local news in their backyards.

Press Forward's Strategic Roadmap

GOAL 1: FUND

GROW AND INVEST NEW RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL NEWS AND INFORMATION BY:

- Expanding resources for local news, raising at least \$250 million more for Press Forward priorities and local investments.
- Investing 100 percent of national Pooled Fund dollars directly into local news initiatives, with a focus on newsroom sustainability.
- Continuing to grow our network of funders, who invest independently and in alignment with Press Forward's goals or through a local chapter.

GOAL 1: CATALYZE

BUILD THE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED FOR HEALTHY, RESILIENT LOCAL NEWS ECOSYSTEMS BY:

- Bringing funders together to coordinate their giving and collaborate for greater impact.
- Connecting the field so that funders, newsrooms and journalism support organizations can continue to share insights on what's working on the ground.
- Ensuring Press Forward Locals have access to the latest trends, resources, and peer support to learn and grow quickly and support local news in their backyards.

GOAL 3: ADVOCATE

PROMOTE LOCAL NEWS AND INFORMATION AS A PUBLIC GOOD AND MOBILIZE BROAD SUPPORT TO SUSTAIN IT BY:

- Raising awareness of and support for local news as a vital public resource that deserves the same support as parks and roads
- Investing in public policy efforts that expand access to local news and information.

Strengthening the Network: A Look Ahead

LENFEST NEWS PHILANTHROPY SUMMIT



Here's what's next for Press Forward

Focus on Sustainability

Press Forward joined with the Lenfest Institute to convene more than 350 journalism fundraisers for the **2025 Lenfest News Philanthropy Summit**, the first and largest event of its kind dedicated entirely to fundraising and development in local news. The gathering created space for practical learning, peer exchange and movement building. The second edition is planned for Spring 2026.

Research: How to Make the Case for Local News

In partnership with the Beekeeper Group, we conducted in-depth messaging research to better understand how different communities think about, value and support local news. The resulting toolkits — designed to help advocates and funders make the case for local news more effectively — launching this fall.

Accessing Support for Local News

To bridge the gap between newsrooms and the organizations that support them, we joined with Commoner Co. to create the Journalism Support Exchange, a searchable directory of hundreds of local news support organizations, tools and services. JSX launches this fall, making it easier for newsrooms and local chapters to connect with the help they need.

New Series: Reimagining Local News

Set to debut in late October, this series guided by journalist and author Charles Blow brings to life the people and communities writing a new story for local news. Through powerful, human-centered stories, it reveals why local news is essential to a healthy democracy, and why now is the moment to invest.

Charles Blow interviews a resident in Louisiana.



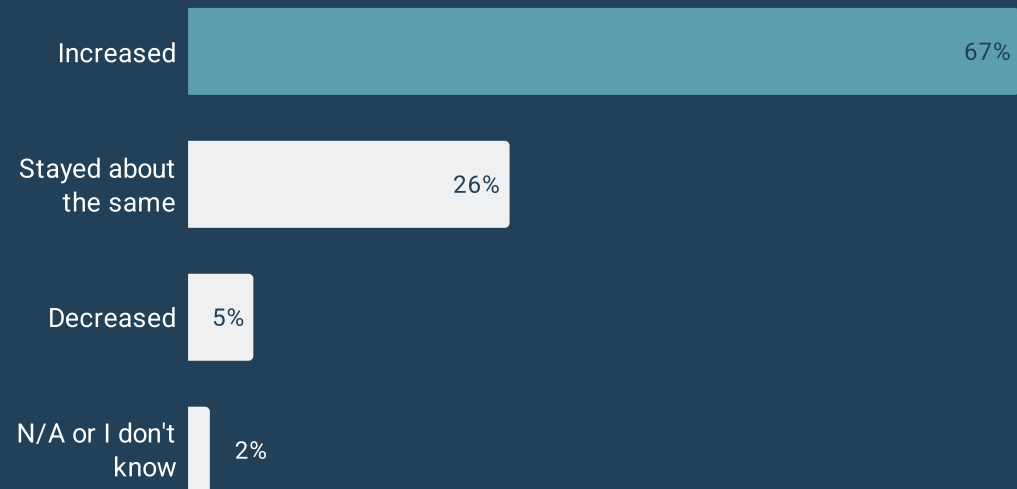
Our Funding Partners

This spring, Press Forward conducted a baseline survey to better understand our funder network. The overwhelming response indicated the wide range of starting points, but also an inspiring clarity of shared vision and purpose.

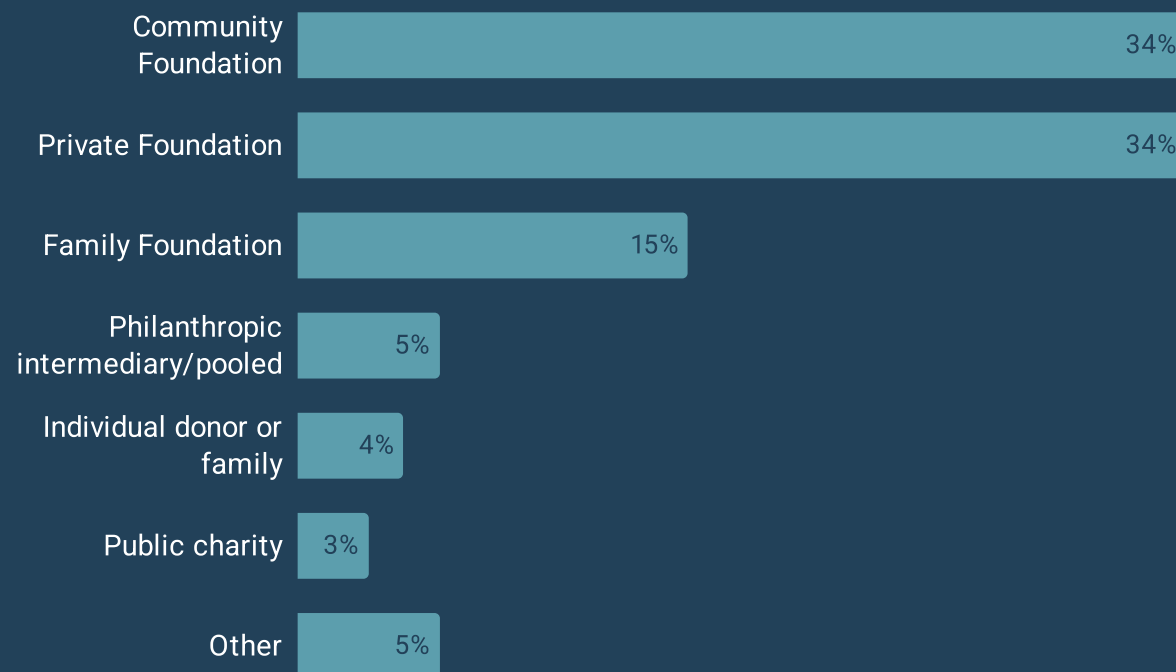
BY THE NUMBERS

Press Forward has grown its network five-fold since launching and now numbers 110 funders.

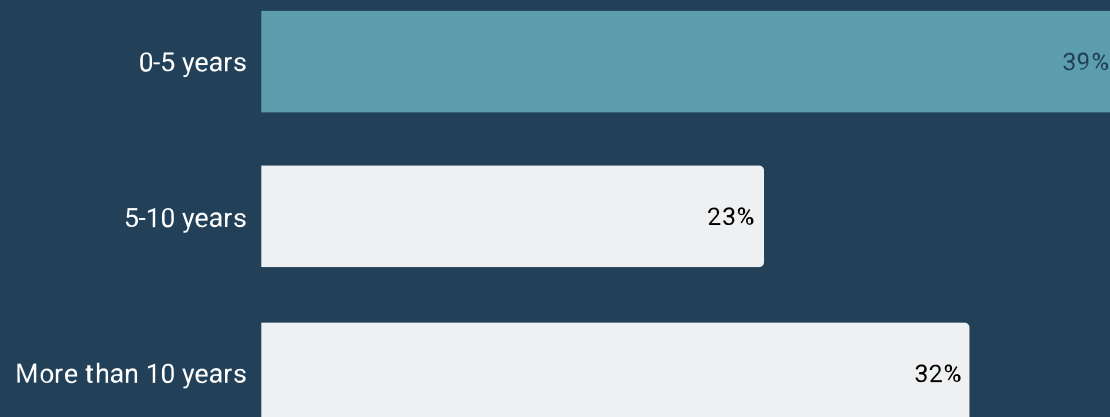
Two-thirds have increased their funding of local news since joining Press Forward.



71 percent are place-based, and 29 percent are national foundations.



Close to 40 percent are relatively new to funding in local news, joining the field of journalism philanthropy in the last five years.



Press Forward's Funder Network

Our work is only possible through the generosity of our funder network.

Alaska Center for Excellence in Journalism Fund	Community Foundation of South Puget Sound	Henry Luce Foundation	Rachelle Lopp
Alaska Community Foundation	Community Foundation of Southern Arizona	Inasmuch Foundation	Rhode Island Foundation
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation	Community Foundation of Tampa Bay	Indiana Philanthropy Alliance	Rita Allen Foundation
Annie E. Casey Foundation	Connie Ballmer	Inland Empire Community Foundation	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Appalachia Funders Network	Coral Gables Community Foundation	Inland Empire Journalism Hub	San Antonio Area Foundation
Arkansas Community Foundation	Coxe Family Fund	James B. McClatchy Foundation	Sawyers Family Fund
Arnold Ventures	CREATE Foundation	John and Gloria O'Farrell	Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies
Arthur Vining Davis Foundations	Democracy Fund	Kaiser Family Foundation	Scripps Howard Fund
Atwood Foundation	El Paso Community Foundation	Kansas Health Foundation	Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Avis Family Foundation	Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation	Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust	Skyline Foundation
Barr Foundation	Field Foundation of Illinois	Key Biscayne Community Foundation	The Archewell Foundation
The Benter Foundation	Ford Foundation	Knight Foundation	The Colorado Health Foundation
Blue Grass Community Foundation	Gates Family Foundation	Krishnan Family Foundation	The Colorado Trust
Blue Mountain Community Foundation	Gill Foundation	Legacy Foundation	The Heinz Endowments
Broward Community Foundation	Glen Nelson Center at American Public Media Group	Lenfest Institute for Journalism	The Joyce Foundation
Carnegie Corporation of New York	Glick Philanthropies	Lorber Family Foundation	The Miami Foundation
Center for Media Innovation at Point Park University	Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation	Lumina Foundation	The Pittsburgh Foundation
Centre Foundation	Greater Green Bay Community Foundation	MacArthur Foundation	The Steinman Foundation
Chicago Community Trust	The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation	Maine Community Foundation	The Steinman Institute
Colorado Media Project	Greater Tacoma Community Foundation	Mary Graham	Thornburg Foundation
Community Foundation for Mississippi	The Hahn Charitable Fund	McKnight Foundation	van Beuren Charitable Foundation
Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln	Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation	Media Growth Partners	Vermont Community Foundation
Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County	Headwaters Foundation	Minnesota Council on Foundations	Whatcom Community Foundation
Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque	Health Forward Foundation	Missoula Community Foundation	Wichita Foundation
Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee	Health Justice Partners	Nellie Mae Education Foundation	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Community Foundation of New Jersey	Heising-Simons Foundation	New Jersey Civic Information Consortium	Wyncote Foundation
Community Foundation of North Florida	Henry L. Hillman Foundation	New Mexico Local News Fund	Wyoming Community Foundation
		North Carolina Local News Lab Fund	Yakima Valley Community Foundation
		North Texas Community Foundation	Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
		Ocean Reef Community Foundation	
		Outrider Foundation	
		Point Park University	
		Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh	

THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thank you to our committed Management Committee, which oversees and advises on Press Forward's strategic direction.



Jim Brady

Former VP/Journalism, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation



Vidya Krishnamurthy

Chief Communications Officer and Senior Adviser to the President, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation



Jenny Montoya Tansey

Senior Program Officer, Just Democracy, Skyline Foundation



Silvia Rivera

Director, Local News, MacArthur Foundation



Josh Stearns

Senior Director, Public Square, Democracy Fund

TEAM

The Press Forward team brings decades of experience in philanthropy and fundraising, journalism and communications, collaborations and collective impact. We partner closely with our network of funders to leverage our combined strengths and support reliable, community-based news and information across the U.S.



Dale R. Anglin
Director



Christina Shih
Associate Director



Melissa Davis
Network Manager



Caroline Merenda
Program and Operations Manager



Graham Ringo
Grantee Engagement and Support
Manager



Sai Omkar Kandukuri
Data Scientist



Marika Lynch
Communications Lead



Dakota Dukes
Administrative Coordinator



Lindsey Linzer
Vice President of Community
Investments, The Miami
Foundation, home of Press
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