Lessons Learned from the Local News Lab

Building a more connected and collaborative news ecosystem

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The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation is a private foundation based in Morristown, New Jersey. Established in 1974, we focus on issues critical to our home state, including Arts, Education, Environment, Informed Communities and Poetry initiatives that are innovative and promote collaboration and community-driven decision making.

Dodge's Informed Communities program supports local journalism, government transparency initiatives, and creative community outreach efforts to educate and engage the public around issues of importance to New Jersey. We believe that communities thrive when news and information is a collaborative endeavor that seeks to include and represent all voices in the community, and facilitates meaningful opportunities for public participation in policy decisions that impact their lives.

This work has been made possible through generous support from the Knight Foundation and the Democracy Fund.

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. We believe that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged.

The Democracy Fund invests in organizations working to ensure that our political system is responsive to the public and able to meet the greatest challenges facing our nation.
Creating a more sustainable, connected and collaborative news ecosystem in New Jersey.
Five years ago, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation launched a new program area focused on creating a more sustainable, connected and collaborative news ecosystem in New Jersey. The goal of this work was not to save journalism, but to build a more diverse and vibrant public square that could strengthen New Jersey communities and foster more informed and engaged citizens. Inspired by the power and creativity of networks, we wanted to catalyze new kinds of journalism that put communities and collaboration at the center of their work.

With dramatic shifts in the journalism landscape, people across New Jersey were rapidly losing access to local news and information. We recognized that we needed to both help longstanding institutions transform and cultivate new models. The strength and resilience of this new civic sphere will rest on the connections and relationships we build between these experiments, institutions, people and places.

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation was an early partner in that work, helping fund the creation of the Center for Cooperative Media and the NJ News Commons at Montclair State University, which acts as a hub of support and services for journalists across the state. Knight also supported the launch of New Jersey Public Radio and NJ Spotlight, a statewide nonprofit newsroom.

In 2014, the Knight Foundation significantly deepened its commitment to New Jersey, helping Dodge establish the Local News Lab to foster creative experiments in revenue sustainability, community engagement and newsroom collaboration. The Lab works with partners in newsrooms across the state, and at universities and foundations across the country, to pilot new business strategies designed to support local news and meet community needs.
Once the Lab was created, Knight was joined by other funding partners who saw New Jersey as an important proving ground for new ideas in local news. The Democracy Fund has been a substantial partner, co-funding groundbreaking research and community engagement projects in the state. Other foundations have also contributed in important ways, and we will discuss those partnerships in more detail later.

The Local News Lab is one part of Dodge’s multi-pronged strategy to strengthen and expand newsrooms and nonprofits that use journalism and community building to foster more informed communities. In the last five years Dodge also has invested more than $3.25 million to support local news and information in New Jersey, including cutting edge experiments with community media and longstanding public and nonprofit newsrooms such as New Jersey Public Radio and New Jersey Public TV. Rather than funding specific content, however, our approach has been to build an infrastructure of lasting value – i.e. the support systems, services and networks necessary to help news organizations strengthen their businesses, explore new technology, and experiment with community engagement.

We want to change the relationship between newsrooms and communities in ways that rebuild trust, improve journalism, and develop new avenues for local news organizations to become financially and creatively robust.

As with any big experiment, we’ve seen some important wins and run up against some very real challenges. But we knew that this work was never going to be a simple upward trajectory, and so we built this entire effort around experimentation, reflection and iteration. This report captures some of the early lessons from our work.

At the micro level, for the six local for-profit newsrooms that signed on as the original cohort of partners in the Local News Lab, the year has been full of exciting discoveries and some big changes. At the macro level, things have been slower, but we’ve learned a lot about what it takes to strengthen and support local news networks, which is rooted in long-haul relationship building. Developing new skills in newsrooms and building new kinds of relationships between journalists and communities requires substantial culture change.

What follows is a snapshot of the Local News Lab’s work thus far, based on data and assessment from ORS Impact, an outside evaluation team that Knight hired to work with us, as well as interviews with our partner sites, and observations we have made along the way.
Summary of Accomplishments

• To date, all partner newsrooms have seen an increase in traffic, engagement and revenue, and have developed at least one additional revenue stream, thereby improving their financial outlook and their ability to serve their communities.

• Two partner newsrooms ran crowdfunding campaigns raising nearly $45,000 from more than 300 donors, helping to prove that crowdfunding can be a viable revenue source for local newsrooms as well as an important opportunity to deepen relationships with supporters and build feedback loops into their work.

• With partner news sites receiving more than 1000 hours of coaching and mentoring over the past 18 months, we have gained valuable insight into how to strengthen organizations through hands-on support. This knowledge is broadly applicable for local for-profit and nonprofit newsrooms as the field seeks to understand what sustainability and culture change encompasses.

• As a result of a newly-created legal guide from Rutgers University Law School which we funded, small news organizations (often unable to afford a lawyer) are better equipped to address legal questions and issues, particularly questions that are specific to New Jersey. This guide could be replicated to serve news organizations in other states with legal information that is tailored to each of those states.

• Residents are receiving coverage they either had lost or didn’t previously have as a result of new sites being launched within the New Jersey ecosystem and supported primarily through services and training hosted by the Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University. This is helping to reverse New Jersey’s sparsely populated local news landscape.

• Because of public forums hosted by Free Press and Media Mobilizing Project, community members in New Brunswick and Atlantic City had their voices heard by local authorities and journalists about issues they care about, helped generate new story ideas for local journalists, and met other people in their communities they might not have known. The forums are helping to lay the foundation for communities to trust and support their local news outlets.

• Moreover, pilots of both Hearken and the Listening Post in New Jersey are expanding the public’s ability to speak up about the challenges and concerns they have, which, in turn, helps local journalism be more relevant, responsive and valuable to people’s lives.

• Through the Center for Investigative Reporting’s “Dirty Little Secrets” project focusing on the state’s toxic legacy, the New Jersey public benefits from expanded and comprehensive investigative reporting on an underreported topic. This first-of-its-kind large-scale collaboration includes New Jersey Public Radio/WNYC, WHYY, NJTV, NJ Spot-
light, Jersey Shore Hurricane News, WBGO, New Brunswick Today and the Rutgers Department of Journalism and Media Studies. The Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State is helping CIR facilitate the project.

- At the same time, New America Media’s effort to bolster ethnic media networks throughout the state is beginning to strengthen their economic viability and enable cross-cultural editorial collaboration. This groundwork will lead to more inclusive local news and increased cultural awareness throughout New Jersey.

- The Local News Lab staff have documented lessons and experiments, shared potential models, created evergreen resources and highlighted opportunities and obstacles to benefit New Jersey as well local newsrooms across the country through more than 100 blog posts, numerous presentations and interviews, and a weekly newsletter which currently goes out to nearly 2000 people.
Experimenting with New Business Models

Journalism sustainability is about much more than just revenue numbers and traffic statistics.
Chapter 2

Experimenting with New Business Models

“One year in, all six news sites are reporting upticks in key metrics and are experimenting with new business models. Most sites have increased their average monthly revenue compared to six months ago. All six sites have developed at least one new revenue stream. […] Nearly all sites also noted increased traffic and/or increased engagement when asked about notable trends in their traffic data one year in.”

ORS Impact one-year report to the Knight Foundation

The Role of Mentoring and Coaching

In May 2014 the Duke Reporters Lab released a report on the lack of digital innovation in local TV, radio and print newsrooms. They found that while time, budgets and people were often cited as holding back adoption of digital tools, the root causes were often a mix of culture and infrastructure. In the end, they wrote, “Legacy news organizations remain focused on legacy news. With limited resources, the first goal is to fill airtime or newsprint or stock the website. The goat must be fed, and the easiest feed is the diet it’s been fed for years.”

In our work with local digital-first news organizations we found similar struggles. While these emerging online hyperlocal news organizations were born on the web, they struggle with finding the time to invest in creative experiments with business models, community engagement and digital tools that could help them become more sustainable over the long haul.
One of the most valuable resources we have provided these sites is extra capacity in the form of hands-on coaching and mentoring. We hired Josh Stearns as a director of journalism and sustainability to work with the six sites on developing new approaches to revenue, outreach and technology. He works hand-in-hand with Molly de Aguiar, Dodge’s program director for Informed Communities, who leads the grantmaking and community engagement efforts which we will discuss in greater detail below.

This sustainability director position served many functions:

- **Business Coach** – Having a person dedicated to assessing the strengths of the newsrooms and the needs of the communities to help develop and test new revenue streams helped give sites the space and information they needed to diversify their business model. Regular meetings forced sites to keep this work on the front burner – something they all reported as very valuable. We found that active coaching – checking assumptions and nudging people towards goals – was important to keep innovation and experimentation on the front burner.

- **R&D Director** – Researching proven tools and strategies to solve challenges the sites were having and helping pilot those innovations was a core part of this work.

- **Platform Advocate** – The director often acted as a liaison between local news sites and tech companies to advocate for the needs of local journalists and help solve problems that arise in their use of Facebook, Twitter and other platforms. The Director helped negotiate on the site’s behalf with crowdfunding platforms, payment processors and analytics companies.

- **Sounding Board** – So many people working in local news are doing so solo or in very small teams. Having someone to bounce ideas off of, get a second opinion, or just talk through a tense community issue was important. Sometimes it was as simple as having a shoulder to lean on during really tough moments when it felt like journalists were nearing burn-out.

- **News Filter** – Many local journalists don’t have time to stay up to date on new research and writing at places like Nieman Lab, Poynter, Columbia Journalism Review and many other places. As such they don’t get the benefit of all the good learning out there in the field. Having someone sort through the noise and highlight specific articles with concrete lessons for local news was useful. Similarly, they can’t afford to attend most conferences so their voices are left out of, and they miss out on, those debates.

- **Extra Set of Hands** – Sometimes the director had to jump in on a project and help with newsroom tasks like designing an ad sales kit, writing pitch language for a crowdfunding campaign, or helping fix a web-
site plug-in. Early on in the project these sorts of immediate, hands-on support helped build trust between project staff and partner sites.

- **Connector** – Because the director was working across all of the sites, and was connected to the larger national discussion, he was able to help facilitate conversations between people trying similar strategies or with similar challenges (locally and nationally).

- **Marketer for Local News** – The director became an evangelist for our local sites, pushing their stories out and pitching their work to media reporters at NiemanLab, Poynter, Politico Media, Mediashift and more. The director also documented what was working and what wasn’t and wrote often about the sites, as well as used examples from their work in presentations.

In many of our one-year interviews with the partner sites they said that the one-on-one attention and coaching was an invaluable part of this work, helping them move forward big changes in their business.

Through this work we came to understand sustainability as much more than just a matter of revenue and traffic statistics. Sustainability in local news is also fundamentally about the health and wellbeing of local journalists, many of whom are working nearly around the clock to cover their community. One site decided to scale back their participation in the program after the first six months because of a number of acquisitions and staff transitions that demanded their time and resources.

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**Experimentation Grants**

We offered each site a small $5,000 grant to experiment with new revenue streams. Before receiving the grant, they worked with the sustainability director to build a budget around the revenue experiments they wanted to try. We were amazed by how different each site approached these funds and how resourceful they were with the $5,000. Here is a snapshot of what sites were able to do with those dollars:

- **Apps** - Brick City Live created a minimum viable product for a local news app and tested a loyalty card program which was hugely successful. More than 500 people signed up for the pilot program and spilled over onto a waitlist; local businesses clamored to be a part of the pilot. Using the initial revenue from that pilot, the newsroom invested in a mobile app-based version of the loyalty program which is set to launch shortly.

![Brick City Live’s loyalty app “Brick City Bucks”](image-url)
Distribution - New Brunswick Today bought newspaper boxes to help distribute its monthly bi-lingual newspaper. The boxes cut $300 off its monthly distribution costs, expanded its circulation, and raised awareness of its brand in the city. The site plans to sell ads on the boxes as a bundle for print and web advertisers.

Video - Morristown Green and New Brunswick Today invested in video equipment and production costs. One site is monetizing video through ads and views, the other is selling videos of local events and offering video recording services that subsidize the reporting.

Social Media - Jersey Shore Hurricane News invested in staff time to expand its social media footprint, specifically on Instagram. It grew its Instagram account to 10,000 followers in roughly one year and attracted the attention of local businesses and a marketing company which has turned into a $20,000 partnership.

Print - The Lo Down and New Brunswick Today tested new versions of their print products, expanding beyond newspapers and magazines into local guides for students and residents.

Events - Jersey Shore Hurricane News, New Brunswick Today and the Lo Down tested events using a portion of their experimentation grant and report wanting to do more events.

Crowdfunding - New Brunswick Today and the Lo Down used portions of the grant to develop and launch crowdfunding campaigns (more on that below).

Staff - A number of the sites invested a portion of the money on people. For some, this meant bringing on someone to help with daily reporting so the main staff could focus more on the business side. For others it meant investing in professional development around business skills or sales. Sites reported that being able to pay staff helped legitimize their work in the eyes of advertisers and their community.

Across the board the sites reported that the $5,000 allowed them to invest in expanding the products and services that they could monetize with advertisers or local residents.

Crowdfunding

Two of our partner sites undertook crowdfunding campaigns on the Beacon platform. These were experiments both for the sites who had never done crowdfunding before and for Beacon which hadn’t worked much with local news organizations and wasn’t sure how successful crowdfunding would be at the hyperlocal scale.

Both sites met their goals – one raised $15,000 and one raised $27,000 – and we provided $5,000 matching grants to each. The campaigns were not easy but the benefits went well beyond the dollars raised. (We’ve documented the details and strategies of both campaigns extensively in earlier blog posts.)
Through this process we learned a number of really important lessons:

- **Hyperlocals Can Crowdfund** – The most basic lesson from these campaigns (and successful local crowdfunding efforts at the Tucson Sentinel and Charlottesville Tomorrow) are that local communities are willing to step up and donate to hyperlocal crowdfunding campaigns whether they are for profit or nonprofit. Beacon noted some surprise with how passionate local people are about their local outlets and believes there are ways to continue to build on that passion.

- **Crowdfunding Is About the Crowd and the Funding** – Both of the sites were happy to have the dollars from the campaign, but more than that, they were taken aback by the great feedback they got from their communities. These were as much about “friendraising” as fundraising. As a natural progression of this experiment, we are exploring how crowdfunding can be a launch-pad for membership programs.

- **Crowdfunding as Storytelling** – Most journalists are not good at talking about themselves and their work. They don’t want to be the story. But crowdfunding forced these sites to tell their story and make the case for why their work was important and what impact it has on the community. It meant creating marketing materials which they continue to use and build on and finding new language to help invite people into the work.

- **Crowdfunding Can Help Launch an Events Strategy** – Both sites had also wanted to develop an events strategy, but it was hard to prioritize or know how to get started. Their crowdfunding campaigns gave them a perfect springboard, and a built-in audience with which to test out ideas. Both newsrooms held an event at the end of their campaign to thank contributors and are planning future events now.

The one-off nature of crowdfunding means it will never be, by itself, a strategy for sustainability, but we believe that we’ve shown it can be an important tactic to help give a newsroom seed funding and build community support. More work needs to be done to develop best practices to turn crowdfunding donors into ongoing supporters and members (see [Radiotopia’s recent effort](https://radiotopia.org/)).
Advertising

At the local level there is still a lot of potential for news sites to creatively help connect audiences and local businesses. For the foreseeable future, advertising will continue be an important part of the local media business model – but no site should try to make this its only revenue stream.

Sales Academy

Local news sites face a series of challenges in terms of creating sustainable ad-sales strategies. The journalists we worked with asked for more support and resources to build out their sales capacity. In response, we funded Montclair State University’s Center for Cooperative Media to develop and host a sales academy. The two-day training, followed by eight weeks of additional coaching proved very popular and incredibly useful. Many participants have reworked their sales strategy and are putting more time and energy into the business side of their organization. This may serve to be a new model for sales training for local news.

However, the key for many local sites is also to hire a sales person. Research by Michele McLellan suggests that sites with dedicated sales staff are more sustainable. The hurdle of hiring a sales person is one of the thorniest and persistent challenges for local news sites. Our sites struggled with how to find the right sales person and to bring them on with limited resources. To that end we also held two webinars on finding and recruiting sales people.

Foundations as Advertisers

Foundations often support their grantees’ galas by buying ads in the program book; we realized that a similar way to support our partner newsrooms was to buy ads to promote the Dodge Foundation’s national poetry festival. The ads supported the journalism we believe in, while also helping to promote and support another program area at our foundation. We believe this could be a valuable strategy for other community, regional and national foundations around the country to support journalism while advancing their own programmatic goals. Community foundations can help raise the visibility of their grantees, such as food banks and other social service organizations during the holiday season, supporting the outreach and publicity goals of those grantees while also helping strengthen the financial sustainability of local news. This is a win-win situation.
In the Federal Communications Commission’s report on the information needs of communities Steve Waldman argued that some portion of “existing government advertising spending should be targeted more toward local media.” According to the report the government spent roughly $1 billion on advertising in 2005. There may be no comparable statistic for what foundations pay for advertising and marketing, but if even a small portion of foundations dollars were redirected to support local grantees through local media it would be helpful to their grantees and to the local media.

At the end of year one, none of our partner sites could be called sustainable based solely on these investments and developments. But all of these new efforts are pointing in some hopeful new directions, and we expect to see them develop and expand. What this year has shown us is that through fairly targeted strategic investments, you can help begin to transform local newsroom business models. Getting to full sustainability takes time, however, because it involves more than just finding and maintaining new revenue streams. Sustainability also requires a culture shift that reorients newsrooms around service to their community.
Community Engagement

Sustainability for local news is inextricably linked with meaningful community engagement.
Community Engagement

As news organizations explore alternative revenue streams — from donations and events to services and memberships, we cannot ignore that each of these models depends on developing a community of people with deep affinity for the work journalists do. Sustainability for local news is, in fact, inextricably linked with meaningful community engagement that builds relationships and renews trust with the public which, in turn, leads to securing investment from individuals, advertisers and philanthropy.

Journalism has to do a better job at listening to what communities want and need, asking what problems they are trying to solve, and designing its work to meet more of those needs. This means reimagining journalism as a service not a product. This kind of community-driven reporting does not diminish professional journalists’ role or the importance of their craft, it actually enlarges it. It also results in journalism that is more relevant and consequential to people’s lives.

Demonstration Projects

Decades of newsroom culture run counter to the idea of participatory journalism. As we look to help newsrooms open up to their communities, we have to focus not just on developing new skills but also on shifting culture. And this leads us to an interesting question we’ve been asking ourselves: how do you get people excited about something they don’t understand or have never seen?

This is where we see an invaluable role for philanthropy – to fund demonstration projects that help journalists and the public start to see the possi-
ilities and rewards of more collaborative, service-oriented journalism that leads to news organizations becoming vibrant community hubs.

We are approaching this challenge by looking for the best creative sparks – the most innovative and impactful community driven projects around the country – and bringing them to New Jersey to demonstrate the potential of these new reporting methods. It took us much of the first year to design these demonstration projects, aligning organizational strengths with community needs as well as lining up a multi-faceted funding collaboration around this work. In addition to Dodge and Knight, the Rita Allen Foundation and the Wyncote Foundation joined us in funding pieces of this work.

In many ways, we are in the early stages of this work – as we have noted, relationship and trust building take time - but already we found that there were three keys to encouraging newsrooms to adopt and test these new reporting models:

- **First, we had to inspire them.** Hearing from people currently involved in community engagement projects helped get our partner sites get excited, imagining how they could adapt these strategies.

- **Second, we had to show that it worked.** Small sites – even those that are willing to take risks – are much more likely to adopt something that is proven. They can’t afford to invest in something that will demand a lot of time and resources without a sense for the pay-off.

- **Third, we incentivized them by helping offset the costs of bringing on community engagement staff for two years.** By the end of year two, our hope is that the engagement strategies will have yielded enough new revenue opportunities (e.g. crowdsourcing, increased advertising, events, memberships) and sufficiently broadened and deepened community ties that the news organizations will be able to, and will want, to support those staff roles themselves.

**We have launched two demonstration projects in NJ:**

- **Hearken** – Hearken is a platform and a process designed to help newsrooms listen to communities and tap into their curiosity to shape stories that are immediately relevant and useful to local people. Three New Jersey newsrooms launched Hearken projects: Brick City Live ("Curious Brick City"), New Brunswick Today ("NB Today Listens") and NJTV ("Ask Away") with funding support from both the Wyncote Foundation and the Rita Allen Foundation in addition to Dodge and Knight. These newsrooms are some of the first in the country to adopt this platform, and it is also the first time Hearken has been used by a for-profit local newsroom, a digital only local newsroom and as a collaboration between three newsrooms. In addition, New Brunswick Today has implemented Hearken in both English and Spanish.
Hearken is also being used by the Center for Investigative Reporting in New Jersey as part of the collaborative “Dirty Little Secrets” project (which is described in more detail later).

- **The Listening Post** – The Listening Post “uses cell phones, public signs, and roving recording devices to capture and share voices, information, and opinions.” The project, first started in New Orleans, describes its goal as creating and expanding conversations around important local issues.” Jersey Shore Hurricane News has just launched a pilot of the Listening Post to complement its social media-driven local reporting. Internews, the organization which oversees the project in New Orleans, will also be monitoring the effort and creating a toolkit for other newsrooms to set up their own Listening Posts.

The Hearken process
Building Community Around the News

Demonstration projects are one way we’re exposing news organizations to creative ways of rethinking their work. However, changing the relationship between newsrooms and communities should not be an effort that is driven by news organizations only. It is important to us to approach this issue from the viewpoint of both journalists and the communities they serve. Therefore, we are also investing in community organizing initiatives which provide opportunities for in-depth dialogue and media training to empower people and give them the tools to engage their newsrooms. We talk about this as creating community literacy for newsrooms and news literacy for communities.

The Dodge Foundation has partnered with two organizations, Free Press and Media Mobilizing Project, to facilitate new and stronger relationships between news organizations and community members by bringing them together in town hall style forums and fostering dialogue and exploration of local issues:

- **Free Press** – Free Press’ “News Voices New Jersey” project is using community organizing techniques and creative community events to bring local residents together around issues that matter to them, and then exploring how journalism can play a role. So far, they have held **two events** with more than 200 people in attendance. Evaluations and feedback on the events were very positive from both community members and journalists. Already, in just the first six months of this work we are witnessing the impact of this work and see great potential to replicate it in other areas. This work is being funded over two years in partnership with the Democracy Fund.

- **Media Mobilizing Project** – MMP’s “Neighborhoods to Newsrooms” project is empowering organizations and individuals by providing media training and giving voice to community members on issues they care about, while also building better relationships with traditional newsrooms and hyperlocal press. They are currently working with Rutgers’ “Journalism for Democracy” project in New Brunswick which brings together student journalists and community groups around social justice issues; they are also working hand-in-hand with Free Press at their events.

The investments in Hearken and the Listening Post as well as the work of Free Press and Media Mobilizing Project are meant to signal the importance we place on community-led, participatory journalism as key to the sustainability of local news, beyond newsroom diversifying their revenue streams.
Our survey of projects like these happening across the country coupled with results we’re seeing in New Jersey affirm for us that people will invest in the local news, when it is clear that the local news is investing in them. However, news organizations will have to have patience, perseverance, and faith that communities will come to value and sustain their local news outlets if given the opportunity to have their voices heard, and their issues addressed in meaningful ways. As we have said before, building and deepening relationships takes time even for the most adept newsrooms.
Local news will be stronger working together than it is working in isolation.
Building an Ecosystem

New Networks

A key part of the model we have been pursuing in New Jersey for the past five years is the idea that local news will be stronger working together than it is working in isolation. To that end, we continue to test strategies to help create a more connected, collaborative and inclusive media ecosystem where all the participants have avenues to work together and share resources.

This means building new kinds of networks and strengthening old networks to foster collaboration, sustainability and engagement.

- **Cohort of Local Newsrooms** - At its most basic, the cohort of newsrooms that are part of the Local News Lab are a network in and of themselves. They regularly share what they are learning, advise each other, and look for ways to collaborate. We’ve seen a few examples of sites replicating each other’s revenue strategies and engagement efforts. Our hope is that this kind of sharing and peer-to-peer learning experiences can spread to other organizations in the state. However, while there is an incredible generosity amongst sites across the state, this kind of sharing doesn’t happen automatically. It benefits from some facilitation, structure and creating opportunities for sharing.

- **The Center for Cooperative Media** – The Center for Cooperative Media and its NJ News Commons serves as a central hub for training and collaboration across the state. Over the past several years, we have seen membership in the NJ News Commons grow and they have served as important trust builders, service providers and event hosts. Particularly in the past year, they have also become important
disseminators for the lessons we are learning with the partner sites. We’ve held a number of trainings with the Center including analytics, podcasts, events, ad sales and more. The Center also hosted a national conference on community engagement, “Engage Local” which included many of our sites and partners. The Center has become an “enabling structure,” helping coordinate and support other networks and collaborations.

- **New America Media** – [New America Media](https://www.newamericamedia.org) is the nation’s largest network of ethnic and foreign language media. They are working with us and the Center for Cooperative Media to help connect the ecosystem and build relationships with foreign language media sources in New Jersey. We believe that ethnic media outlets have lessons to teach other journalists in the state about engagement and service to community, and we think that new digital media outlets could share expertise with online tools and strategies with ethnic media outlets. There are other collaborative reporting possibilities that we are excited to explore as well, but all of that must be built on a strong foundation of trust. To that end, New America Media is holding in-person meetings and gatherings across the state.

- **Center for Investigative Reporting** - The Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR) is leading a large-scale collaborative investigative reporting project in New Jersey. The “Dirty Little Secrets” series is investigating New Jersey’s toxic legacy with New Jersey Public Radio/WNYC, WHYY, NJTV, NJ Spotlight, Jersey Shore Hurricane News, WBGO, New Brunswick Today and the Rutgers Department of Journalism and Media Studies. The project is coordinated by The Center for Investigative Reporting with help from the Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State. CIR will also be collaborating with other arts and environmental organizations across the state. As with the cohort of five sites, this large-scale collaboration benefits immensely from facilitation which is provided by both CIR and the Center for Cooperative Media / NJ News Commons.
We have learned a lot about building journalism networks at the local level. And we have grappled with some very real challenges. Different kinds of networks and collaborations will serve different kinds of sites. In its first few years the Center for Cooperative Media and NJ News Commons has emphasized serving small local newsrooms and has not provided as much value for larger newsrooms. However, the CIR and Hearken collaborations are engaging larger newsrooms in meaningful ways.

**Shared Services**

Our **ecosystem approach** in New Jersey is rooted in the idea that as local news changes in shape and capacity, it needs new kinds of support. Therefore, we are also testing whether we can create shared services for the whole ecosystem that have historically only been easily accessible and built into well-established newsrooms.

We know that shared services at professional organizations can work. Places like the [Institute for Nonprofit News](https://institutefornonprofitnews.org) and the [Association for Alternative Newsmedia](https://www.associationfornewsmedia.org) have created important offerings – like pooled insurance, technology support and ad networks – that serve their entire membership of small news organizations at scale. We don’t yet know if that can be duplicated in a geography like New Jersey.

In year one, we tested two of these shared services: technology and legal. We hope to test 1-2 other shared services, like marketing and events.

- **Technology** - Local news sites reported that they wanted more access to web development and tech support, so we found a local firm that **could give sites unlimited access** to basic tech support for a small monthly fee. We realized pretty quickly that this was an idea that looked good on paper, but in practice it didn’t meet the real-life needs of our local news sites. Accordingly, we adjusted our strategy and began exploring other ways of getting small newsrooms access to tech and design resources.

- **Legal** – We are working with Ellen Goodman at Rutgers Law to create an online, growing list of legal questions and answers for journalists in New Jersey. Prof. Goodman is holding a summit on NJ legal issues for journalists in the state later this spring. However, local journalists need more than a reference guide to legal issues. They also need direct support. To respond to this need, we are working to create a network of pro-bono or low-cost media lawyers to support local sites.
Understanding the uneven distribution of news and information.
Throughout our efforts over the past five years we have invested in informal information gathering and formal research to help us chart the landscape of news in New Jersey. Getting a lay of the land has been important for guiding our grantmaking and giving us a sense for what communities need and want. In the last year, we’ve specifically constructed this research in ways that are meant to directly serve local news organizations by gathering critical community information and user feedback that they couldn’t otherwise invest in.

**Mapping Local Media** – Prof. Phil Napoli at Rutgers University studied news sources in three New Jersey towns and found that “richer towns have more local news sources, creating more original content and posting more of it to social media, than do poorer communities.”

**Focus Groups** – Prof. Napoli and his team also conducted six focus groups (two in each city: Newark, New Brunswick, Morristown) to better understand people’s news habits and what they wanted and needed from local news. We then used that feedback to design revenue strategies with the local newsrooms. Prof. Napoli and his team are writing up their process for these focus groups to create a guide for other newsrooms who want to conduct similar efforts in their community.

**Best Practices in New Revenue Models** – CUNY’s Graduate School of Journalism worked with a series of researchers to study best practices in membership models, print and digital revenue, and more. They produced a legal guide for news entrepreneurs and hosted a day-long event on new membership models for news. We supported aspects of this work with staff time.
Other University Partnerships

Across the country, people are taking a fresh look at the role of universities in the journalism landscape and as critical anchor institutions for helping meet community information needs.

As part of our journalism and sustainability work we have partnered with six departments across four universities on projects that involve students, faculty, staff and newsrooms. Many of those projects have been discussed earlier in this document.

A lot of attention has been focused on journalism schools as producers of original reporting and their potential to help fill the gaps in local coverage facing many communities around college campuses. However, just as important is the role of universities in helping build the infrastructure for more sustainable journalism.

Campuses can be:

- **Trainers** — Leveraging their resources, skills, knowledge and technology colleges can train current journalists in best practices.

- **Advertisers** — Local newsrooms should tap into various budgets across college campuses for sponsorship and ad dollars. (For more on this see my blog post here)

- **Conveners** — Campuses have great meeting spaces and technology making them terrific hosts for local events. They can also help draw in experts and scholars on a given issue from around the nation.

- **Practitioners** — The teaching hospital model for journalism education involves students directly in covering local communities alone or in partnership with local outlets.

- **Consultants** — Universities are full of experts, and not only in subject areas where they have departments, but also in terms of event planners, marketing, technology and more.

- **R&D Laboratories** — Schools can be terrific laboratories for research and development. They can help with mapping and research or create space for cutting edge experiments and technology development.

At their best, these experiments between local newsrooms and universities are designed to create positive feedback loops. Research informs trainings which inform experiments and learning in local newsrooms which feed back into meaningful real-world research.

Universities are not always perfect partners, but by working closely with staff and faculty in a range of departments we have been able to test important ideas and experiments.
Rethinking Philanthropy

Envisioning a more agile philanthropy that balances long term investments with iteration and impact.
This project has not only been an experiment with local newsrooms, it has also allowed us to explore new roles for philanthropy, and we have learned a lot about how foundations, particularly community and place-based foundations, can support local news. Over the past five years we have begun to rethink the barriers to flexible, agile philanthropy, the power of prototyping, smaller experimentation and risk taking, and the importance of being opportunistic.

Key Takeaways

- **Funding Partnerships Strengthen Local News** - Our work has been made possible through enormous support, partnership and information sharing from a number of other foundations (Knight, Democracy Fund, Rita Allen, Wyncote, and McCormick, Open Society and Gates Foundation to name a few). These relationships have not only helped bring much needed resources to local journalists but have also helped guide our strategy and ensure that what we learn here can spread to other foundations and grantees.

- **Funding Infrastructure Not Content** - We fervently believe that communities and news organizations working together can transform local journalism, and that philanthropy’s most valuable role is to nurture networks, and provide a blend of operating support with experimental dollars. Funding content/beats is not a sustainable approach for news organizations or foundations – philanthropy can’t and won’t pay for journalist salaries indefinitely. Furthermore, funding content exposes both news organizations and foundations to criticism that foundations are
deliberately influencing coverage. Instead, philanthropy should try to fund structures and systems that help support a broad array of journalism enterprises that strengthen the overall local news and information ecosystem.

• **The Thin Line Between For Profit and Nonprofit in Local News** – While Dodge has provided substantial funding to large public and nonprofit newsrooms serving New Jersey, we also focus much of our attention on the sustainability of very small for-profit hyperlocal newsrooms. We believe local journalism can be a sustainable business, but that philanthropy can play an invaluable role in providing the runway that these “mom and pop” neighborhood newsrooms need to reach a critical mass of support from the community and stand on their own two feet. These small newsrooms – mission-driven and community-centered - face very similar issues to nonprofits, and are not in it to get rich or return money to investors.

• **Foundations Can Fund For-Profit News** – The IRS allows philanthropic foundations to provide grants to for-profit entities that align with the charitable mission of the foundation. More local foundations should consider the way small grants to small newsrooms can help local media adapt to the digital age and develop more sustainable revenue models in order to better serve the community. Philanthropy should understand that an investment in local news is an investment in the whole community, with benefits for a foundation’s entire portfolio of grantees.

• **Philanthropy Needs to Be More Patient** – At its heart, this is culture change work and relationship-driven work, which take time and a deep investment in human capital. This work is circuitous and complicated. This is especially true when working with small newsrooms where health issues, community issues and financial issues can unpredictably slow down or derail progress. If we want to ensure that the work is community-grown, not funder driven, it needs to be tied to the infrastructure and institutions of the community to be sustainable. We still have much to learn about the essential ingredients for a strong and vibrant local news ecosystem in the digital age, and we have to acknowledge that the recipe might keep changing.

• **Philanthropy Can Provide Much More Than Money** – At the Dodge Foundation we have a long history of providing in-depth training and technical assistance to our grantees. Through our journalism sustainability work we have expanded on that idea by providing ongoing coaching, workshops and conferences, and convenings that help facilitate new relationships for our partner sites within communities across New Jersey. By leveraging all the skills and resources of the founda-
tion – and connecting grantees across issue areas – we expand the value of the dollars we provide.

- **Too Much Structure Misses Important Opportunities** – Funding innovation in an industry that is undergoing transformation and supporting ever-evolving civic organizations surfaces how ill-suited philanthropy is to capitalize on time-sensitive opportunities. Typically, the grantmaking process can last for months, with applicants required to submit documentation that takes weeks to complete. Encouraged by the Knight Foundation to take risks and fund experimentation, we focused on lowering the bar of entry by requiring minimal documentation, maintaining an openness to funding mission-driven for-profit ventures, and committing to quick decision-making. Funding decisions that took months to make now takes weeks or sometimes even just a few days.

- **Philanthropy Is Too Risk Averse** – Sometimes making big change means making big bets, and too much of philanthropy is not willing to take those risks. This limits both the kinds of people and the kinds of ideas we seek. Through our Knight partnership, we strive to welcome ideas that might not work, but that could teach us important lessons, and we tried to structure grants with opportunities to test, learn, revise and test more.

- **Don’t Discount the Power of Small Grants** – We continue to be amazed by what entrepreneurial people can do with small grants, particularly when given the encouragement to take risks and test new ideas. Different kinds of ideas require different levels of investments – not every grant needs to be a transformative moonshot to make a real impact in our communities. Small grants to cash-strapped organizations can feel like a windfall and provide the support to take their work to a new level.

- **Redefine Scale** – We often hear people in philanthropy looking for projects that can work at scale. This tends to privilege bigger, more established organizations with the staff and resources to replicate projects. We found great value in working with much smaller news organizations, and helping them adapt to the unique context of their community. What we want to do is scale the learning. We know with certainty that there is no one-size-fits-all solution or model in this ever-changing
journalism landscape, but we also know that there are distinct attributes of successful local news organizations and some clearly successful strategies for providing philanthropic support to them. Through our writing, presenting and one-on-one advising we’ve been trying to share what is replicable and help people adapt it to their local context. In this way, we are trying to support journalism at a human scale, not an industrial scale, while also sharing what we are learning as broadly as possible.

- **Start-up vs. Bridge Funding** – We work with news sites that vary in age from one to seven years and see two very distinct needs in terms of funding. Some sites needed start-up funding to get off the ground and get a strong start. Others needed bridge funding to help them grow from start-up to sustainability, to transform some part of their operations to ensure a strong future. These represent very different challenges for local news organizations and philanthropy can help them both with funding and also with strategy.

- **Grants That Buy Something Long Term** – Lisa Williams, formerly of the Institute for Nonprofit News, smartly urges news organizations to think of using grants to build their long-term capacity. She puts it this way: “What can a grant from a foundation buy your organization that will help you simultaneously build your organization and reduce your reliance on philanthropic funding?” We tried to build that idea into our grantmaking, helping the organizations we are working with invest in products, programs and people that will ultimately pay for themselves.

- **We Need More Foundations Funding This Work** – Across the state and country we need to cultivate new partners and encourage more donors and foundations to support community-driven journalism. Particularly for community and place-based foundations, local news and information is a key component of healthy, thriving communities, and its absence is a key indicator of failing communities. So while many foundations don’t think of themselves as journalism funders, and while journalism historically has not been a charitable endeavor, it’s time for foundations to start valuing and supporting local news as a vital community anchor.
What Is Next?

The future of journalism won’t look like its past.
Conclusion

The future of local journalism is not a clear, linear path from uncertainty to sustainability. We’ve become fond of talking less about giving people a roadmap with one path forward, and more about equipping them with a compass so that they can navigate the future where ever it may lead. Orienting newsrooms to a new era of constant change, of iteration and participation, demands more than just giving money or advice. It requires creative approaches, new alliances, and patience.

We are trying to change the relationship between newsrooms and communities in ways that strengthen the sustainability of local news. Encouraging digital, business and community innovation in newsrooms takes enormous amounts of time and energy. There are no silver bullets, but there are lots of lessons that can be adapted to other newsrooms and customized for other contexts. The goal of this document is to capture what we believe are those pieces of replicable knowledge that other journalists and foundations can build upon.

While journalism collaboration has been on the rise, nowhere else has network building amongst journalists and news organizations been such an intentional strategy as in New Jersey. Our work is proving out the idea that in a time of dramatic change and limited resources local newsrooms can do more together than they can apart. As we enter the next year of experiments in community engagement and sustainability we expect to discover new possibilities between communities and newsrooms and have a lot more to share.
Appendix

Grants made with Knight and Dodge funds in support of news and information in New Jersey.
Appendix

Please note:

Appendix A

- This table is intended to reflect grants that have been made and contracts with vendors, not administrative expenses. As such, it does not include funds spent on the Project Director salary and benefits, travel, and other miscellaneous administrative expenses. Additionally, the grant is not yet complete, thus the $2 million has not yet been fully expended.

- The Knight grants are experimental / project-based grants; they are not general operating support grants.

- Appendix A represent grants made between June 2014 and December 2015.

Appendix B

- In contrast to the Knight grants, the Dodge grants are largely (though not exclusively) general operating support grants, not experimental grants.

- The table reflects grants made during roughly the same time period as the Knight grants (January 2014 – December 2015).

- Combined, the Dodge and Knight grants (approximately $2.4 million total over the past two years) have been designed to provide steady operating support alongside experimental dollars for a wide variety of partners in the New Jersey news ecosystem.

Following are listings of the grants that have been made by Dodge staff with Knight funds (Appendix A) as well as grants that have been made by Dodge staff with Dodge funds (Appendix B).
## Appendix A: Grants Made With Knight Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNIGHT GRANT LISTINGS</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL PARTNER SITES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brick City Live</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>For experimentation with new revenue streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$271.43</td>
<td>To promote the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Poetry Festival by advertising with Brick City Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner Media</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>For experimentation with new revenue streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>To promote the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Poetry Festival by advertising with Corner Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jersey Shore Hurricane News</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>For experimentation with new revenue streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morristown Green</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>For experimentation with new revenue streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>To promote the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Poetry Festival by advertising with Morristown Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick Today</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>For experimentation with new revenue streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>To support a crowdfunding campaign on the Beacon platform with a challenge grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>To promote the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Poetry Festival by advertising with New Brunswick Today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lo-Down</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>For experimentation with new revenue streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>To support a crowdfunding campaign on the Beacon platform with a challenge grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$623</td>
<td>To promote the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Poetry Festival by advertising with The Lo-Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$43,294</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix A: Grants Made With Knight Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knight Grant Listings</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Press</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>For the &quot;News Voices New Jersey&quot; initiative (2 year grant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Mobilizing Project</td>
<td>$130,000</td>
<td>For the &quot;Neighborhoods to Newsrooms&quot; initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internews</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>To pilot The Listening Post in partnership with Jersey Shore Hurricane News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jersey Shore Hurricane News</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>For a community engagement manager to lead The Listening Post pilot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Investigative Reporting</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>For creative community engagement opportunities as part of the &quot;Dirty Little Secrets&quot; collaborative investigative reporting project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New America Media</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>To build relationships with ethnic media in New Jersey to support their editorial and economic viability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montclair State University</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>To work in partnership with New America Media engaging and supporting ethnic media in New Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearken</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>For the implementation of two pilots of Hearken (Brick City Live and New Brunswick Today) with coordinating help from the Center for Cooperative Media and in partnership with the Wyncote Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHYY</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>To pilot &quot;It's a Shore Thing,&quot; using a New Jersey shore-focused comic strip to build community in shore communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$600,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix A: Grants Made With Knight Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNIGHT GRANT LISTINGS</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRAINING / SERVICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montclair State University</td>
<td>$23,500</td>
<td>For support of an intensive Sales Academy training and follow-up coaching to boost sales skills for local publishers and advertising salespeople</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody Kramer</td>
<td>$2,700</td>
<td>For support of Google Analytics training for local publishers as well as individualized coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99 Robots</td>
<td>$825</td>
<td>To support a shared IT backshop for the Local News Lab’s six hyperlocal partner sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutgers School of Law – Camden</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>For a legal guide for local New Jersey publishers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeposts</td>
<td>$17,000</td>
<td>To build a WordPress plug-in and provide LifePosts training to local New Jersey publishers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProPublica</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>To support FOIA training through &quot;ProPublica Live: In Conversation with Jason Leopold&quot; in partnership with the Rutgers University Journalism and Media Studies Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of the Press Foundation</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>To support the &quot;Transparency for Police Fund&quot; and FOIA lawsuit costs for New Jersey journalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$60,025</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESEARCH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutgers Journalism &amp; Media Studies</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>For the &quot;New Measures&quot; research project which assesses journalistic content, journalism audiences, and journalistic infrastructure in New Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montclair State University</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>For a comprehensive database of New Jersey-based news sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$115,000</td>
<td></td>
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### Appendix B: Grants Made With Dodge Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DODGE FOUNDATION GRANTS</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>For general operating support</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>For general operating support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Investigative Reporting</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>For support of collaborative investigative project featuring creative public engagement</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>For support of a collaborative investigative project featuring creative public engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Campaign</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>For a year-long intensive citizen journalism bootcamp and learning cohort</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>For continued support of the &quot;City Storytellers&quot; citizen journalism bootcamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey Public Radio</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>For general operating support</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>For general operating support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey Spotlight</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>For general operating support</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>To support a strategic planning process and implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PatersonPress.com</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>For continued support of PatersonPress.com’s coverage of local issues</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>For continued support of PatersonPress.com’s coverage of local issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProPublica</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>For continued general support of ProPublica’s investigative journalism in the public interest with special applicability to lessons for New Jersey</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>For continued general support of ProPublica’s investigative journalism in the public interest with special applicability to lessons for New Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Media NJ (NJTV)</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>To support New Jersey-focused arts and culture coverage</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>To support a pilot of the Hearken platform in partnership with the Rita Allen Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutgers University Journalism and Media Studies Department</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>To support the &quot;Journalism for Democracy&quot; project training students in community engagement skills</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>For continued support of the &quot;Journalism for Democracy&quot; project training students in community engagement skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFMU</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>For support of the Audience Engine, a suite of open source publishing, fundraising and community engagement tools</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>For continued development and deployment of the Audience Engine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHYY</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>To grow WHYY’s multimedia coverage of southern New Jersey on NewsWorks.org and WHYY</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>For continued support of WHYY’s multimedia coverage of southern New Jersey on NewsWorks.org and WHYY-FM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$785,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$795,000</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The authors wish to thank Chris Daggett, President and CEO, and Meghan Jambor, Communications Manager, at the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

We are grateful for the journalists at our partner sites whose commitment to their communities, and willingness to test new ideas, inspires us every day.