

Application Guidelines for Call for Applications 2020-2021

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Objectives and expected results for the Local Journalism Initiative

The Local Journalism Initiative (LJI) supports the creation of original civic journalism that covers the diverse needs of underserved communities across Canada. Funding is available to eligible Canadian media organizations to hire journalists or pay freelance journalists to produce civic journalism for underserved communities. The content produced will be made available to news media organizations through a Creative Commons license so that Canadians can be better informed.

To protect the independence of the press, 7 not-for-profit organizations representing different segments of the news industry will administer the Initiative. These organizations will give funding to Canadian media organizations to address the need for local civic journalism in underserved communities.

Objectives and expected results for News Media Canada's Local Journalism Initiative program

News Media Canada's Local Journalism Initiative program is open to Canadian English, French and Indigenous print and online news media organizations. In 2019-2021, News Media Canada is funding LJI reporters on contracts with terms ending no later than March 31, 2021. The current application process is open to English news media in British Columbia and Ontario, French news media in Quebec, and Indigenous news media across Canada.

Application deadline

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

When an application deadline falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, it is extended to the following working day.

Who can apply

The current application process is open to English news media in British Columbia and Ontario, French news media in Quebec, and Indigenous news media across Canada. Publishing firms producing English, French or Indigenous daily newspapers, community newspapers, digital news publications and news websites can apply.

Eligibility

To be eligible, you must meet all eligibility criteria for both the publishing firm and your publication until March 31, 2021.

News Media Canada is responsible for determining the eligibility of the publication firm and the publication. News Media Canada's Local Journalism Initiative program is open to Canadian English, French, and Indigenous print and online news media organizations.

To be eligible for funding, an applicant must be:

- a press agency;
- a private news organization; or,
- a non-profit news organization.

Private non-community broadcasters and the CBC/Radio-Canada are not eligible.

Eligible publishing firms

Your publishing firm must verify that it:

- is majority owned and controlled by Canadians or otherwise meet the requirements of Section 19 of the Income Tax Act;
- is engaged in coverage of democratic bodies/institutions and civic function journalism as core principles;
- is edited, designed, assembled and published in Canada and directed primarily at Canadian audiences in Canada;
- has completed at least one uninterrupted 12-month publishing cycle.

Eligible publications

Your publication must:

- be published by an eligible publishing firm;
- be majority owned and controlled by Canadians;
- be either an English, French or Indigenous printed daily or community newspaper, digital news publication or news website;
- have completed at least one uninterrupted 12-month publishing cycle at the application deadline, and continue to be published until at least March 31, 2021;
- be edited, designed, assembled and published in Canada.

Ineligible publications

The following publications are ineligible under the Local Journalism Initiative:

- newsletters;
- pop-up journalism organizations;
- publications produced by or for an organization that primarily reports on the activities or promotes the interests of the organization;
- publications produced by or for an organization providing goods or services in which the main goal of the publication is to promote the sales of the goods or services;
- publications produced under contract by a non-Canadian organization on behalf of a Canadian client;
- publications produced under contract by a Canadian organization for a non-Canadian client;
- publications produced by or for an organization that promotes the organization's main business, when it is not publication publishing;
- professional association publications;
- publications produced by or for a government, a Crown Corporation or a government agency;
- publications whose editorial content is primarily reproduced or repeated from current or previous issues of the same publication or other publications;
- loose-leaf publications;
- publications with editorial content that is made up of more than 50% of the following, singly or in combination: listings, catalogues, magalogues, directories, guides, financial reports, schedules, calendars, timetables, comic books, cartoons, puzzles, games and horoscopes; and

- publications that contain offensive content in the opinion of News Media Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Limits of government assistance

The Local Journalism Initiative can fund up to \$60,000 per LJI reporter per 12-month period.

The total financial assistance received from the Local Journalism Initiative cannot exceed 100% of any publisher's total expenditures for the salary, mandatory employment-related costs, and equipment purchase or lease for the LJI reporter.

How to apply

Read these Application Guidelines in their entirety before completing your application.

When completing the application form, you must report on the publishing activities that occurred during the publishing firm's most recently completed twelve (12) month financial year.

You must meet all eligibility requirements and submit a complete application package to be considered for funding. A complete application package includes the Local Journalism Initiative Application Form and the following supporting documents:

- Articles of Incorporation (for a first time applicant or incorporated in the year, if applicable);
- Financial statements from the most recently completed financial year (if audited financial statements are available, please submit);
- For print publications: One copy of a regular issue from each of the four quarters from the last 12 months (total of 4 regular issues);
- For print publications: Printer's invoices for the 4 regular issues being submitted (printer's invoices must clearly show the number of copies printed); and,
- For publications whose digital publication or website has a paywall: Website account information (username and password) to be used by the Local Journalism Initiative for verification purposes.

Additional information and documents, such as circulation audit reports, website traffic audit reports, brand reports, media kit or additional issues may be required to determine the eligibility of a publication and to help the judging panel understand your publication better.

Open-Ended Questions

The LJI application form includes a number of open-ended questions which give you the opportunity to tell us about your publication and your vision for your participation in the Local Journalism Initiative. The information that you provide in your answers is key to the decision-making process. **Be clear and concise with your responses.**

PART C – PUBLICATION GENERAL INFORMATION

Describe your publication(s). What is your reach and role in your community?

Include details about the following:

- Demographics of your audience;

- Involvement in and interaction with your community.

PART F – IDENTIFICATION OF UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY OR COMMUNITIES

Title of Proposal

Examples:

- Yorkton and area civic issues reporter
- Nova Scotia healthcare reporter

Type of Coverage you intend to provide: Explain how the area you want to cover is a news desert or area of news poverty

Include details about the following:

- Your reason for selecting the targeted community;
- Presence of civic institutions in the targeted community;
- Population of and demographic information about the targeted community.

Why is your publication well suited to fill this gap?

Include details about the following:

- Proximity of the targeted community to the current market served by the applicant publication.

What civic journalism is your publication doing now?

Include details about the following:

- Current civic issues of concern to your community that you have been covering;
- Civic institutions that you currently cover;
- Recent investigative journalism of a civic nature that you published—and impact on the community, if any.

Describe what the LJI reporter would allow you to do that you are not doing now.

LJI funding can only be used to hire a reporter or freelancer to produce new and original civic journalism content. It cannot be used toward community news, columns or other types of journalism.

Include details about the following:

- Describe the type of civic journalistic content that the LJI reporter will provide that you are not currently providing;
- Your plans to hire, train and supervise the LJI reporter.

Performance Metrics:

Performance metrics or indicators will be used by you and the LJI program to monitor your LJI reporter's output and your publication's participation in the LJI.

Volume of stories: Describe the expected volume of stories and types of stories to be generated by your LJ reporter.

It is expected that a full-time LJ reporter would produce, on average, 5 to 7 stories per week consisting of a combination of standard news stories and long-form features, OR a minimum of 8 standard news stories per week. Output expectations from freelance or part-time reporters will be similar but proportional to hours worked.

Include details about the following:

- The expected minimum number of civic journalism articles the LJ reporter will be expected to submit per week at a regular frequency.

Story topics: List civic issues, civic institutions and/or socio-economic issues to be covered.

- List any specific civic journalism topics that the LJ reporter will cover.

Additional metrics: List any other performance targets you propose for your participation in the LJ.

Include details about the following:

- What you hope to achieve through your participation in the Local Journalism Initiative, i.e., your key objectives;
- Your plans to monitor the performance of the LJ reporter;
- How you plan to ensure quality of the content and adherence to basic journalistic standards and CP style and to verify that it qualifies as civic journalism covering the targeted community;
- How you plan to deliver LJ stories to the targeted community and monitor their consumption and impact.

Calculation of funding request

An applicant may request funding towards the cost of providing a Job for one LJ reporter for a period starting no earlier than April 1, 2020, and ending no later than March 31, 2021.

In the application form, the applicant shall calculate the funding request based on an annual salary for a full-time hire, or hourly wage for a part-time or freelance hire, as well as the length of the employment period. An applicant can also include the eligible expenses described below. Total funding requested shall not exceed \$60,000.

When determining the funding amounts to approved applicants, the judging panel will consider the applicant's calculation of the funding request, as well as typical reporter salary ranges across the country.

Eligible expenses

Financial support can be spent on the employment of the LJ reporter, including:

- salary or wages;
- mandatory employment-related costs (MERCs – see definition);

- equipment purchase or lease for the use of the LJI reporter to produce civic journalism content (up to 5% of total funding amount).

Financial support must be spent for expenses that occur during the activity period of the funding agreement. In general, activity periods in funding agreements will end on a specified date no later than March 31, 2021. Consult your funding agreement for your specific end date. You may be required to return any part of the financial support not spent by the end of that period.

Application process

- Complete, sign and date the Local Journalism Initiative Application Form;
- Attach all the required supporting documents; and
- Submit your application in only one format—email.

Email submissions

Email your complete application package to lji@newsmediacanada.ca.

Your application must be dated no later than the published deadline to be considered.

How applications are evaluated

An independent panel of industry experts will review applications from news organizations, select recipients, and decide funding allocations. The panel will consider typical reporter salary ranges across the country when determining the amounts granted to approved applicants.

All applicants will be contacted and advised of the panel's decisions.

Approved applicants will enter into a written agreement with News Media Canada detailing the terms and conditions of their participation in the Local Journalism Initiative.

Evaluation criteria

Your application will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Eligibility of the publication;
- Description of the underserved community and the publication's proposal to provide civic journalism coverage and to monitor production of civic journalism.

Applicants will be expected to justify the need for news coverage in the targeted community, providing information about the targeted community, their proposal to provide civic journalism coverage, and how they would measure the success of their proposal.

Application processing time

We will acknowledge receipt of your application within two weeks of receiving your application in our office.

Funding decisions

Please note that decisions regarding eligibility and funding amounts are final.

News Media Canada will prepare a funding agreement to be executed with each approved applicant selected by the judging panel. The funding agreement will specify the amount approved by the panel and outline the program objectives, monitoring strategies, payment schedules, reporting requirements, and overall approach to ensure accountability in the use of funds. The funding agreement will specify the contractual obligations of approved applicants as the employer of the LJI reporter.

How funding is provided

News Media Canada will determine if funding will be disbursed as a grant or as a contribution.

A grant is a payment issued to a recipient based on pre-established eligibility criteria. You may be required to submit a report and/or participate in the evaluation of results.

A contribution is a conditional payment issued for a specific purpose, as outlined in a funding agreement. The agreement is signed by us and your organization and specifies the terms and conditions to receive payment. At the end of the funding agreement, you must submit a final report.

Funding conditions

Additional conditions may apply and, if applicable, will be included in your funding agreement.

Should the status of your publishing firm or publication change, you must immediately inform News Media Canada if one or more of the following changes occurs:

- Name of publishing firm;
- Title of publication;
- Publication ceases publishing or changes to digital format;
- Insolvency - Assignment in bankruptcy; and
- Sale of publication or publishing firm.

Should shares or assets of your publication or publishing firm be sold, merged or by any other means transferred, resulting in a change of control of the specific firm or of the specific publication, the following applies:

News Media Canada must be advised before the transaction is finalized, to determine whether the publication and new owner remain eligible.

If applicable, it is the entire responsibility of the parties to agree on the value of the assets to be sold, which includes any financial type of support received from News Media Canada.

The current owner must send a copy of the sale contract to News Media Canada. The contract must specify the intention of both parties vis-à-vis the financial support.

The publishing firms must sign an Assignment and Assumption Agreement, and the new owner must submit proof that it is Canadian-owned and controlled. Otherwise, it will cease to be eligible to the funding. Contact News Media Canada to obtain an Assignment and Assumption Agreement.

All or part of the financial support will have to be reimbursed, if you cease to be eligible during any part of 2019-2021.

Prior to the release of a payment through a funding agreement, you must pay any outstanding amount to the Receiver General. If you fail to comply with the obligations related to prior funding, including repayment requirements, your future applications for funding may be rejected.

Official languages requirements

We are committed to taking positive measures to enhance the vitality of official language communities in minority situations and to promote the use of English and French in Canadian society. If you receive funding, you agree to comply with the official languages requirements set out in your application and in your funding agreement.

Acknowledgement of financial assistance

If you receive funding, you must publically acknowledge – in English or in French – the financial support received from the Government of Canada in all communications materials and promotional activities. Additional requirements may be included in your funding agreement. For additional information, please refer to our [Guide on the public acknowledgement of financial support](#).

Audits of recipients and evaluation of the Program

We reserve the right to audit your accounts and records to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of your funding agreement. We also conduct periodic Program evaluations, during which you may be required to present documentation.

You must keep any records, documents, or other information that may be required to perform the audit or the evaluation for five years. Demonstrated failure to maintain such records may result in the requirement to repay amounts previously received.

Contact us

For further information, please contact us at lji@newsmediacanada.ca.

Agents are available to answer your questions Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EDT (Eastern daylight time).

Glossary

Advertising

Includes paid advertising, contra or in-kind advertisements, native advertising and advertorials. Does not include charitable, public service, house advertisements, the masthead, or other non-revenue pages.

Advertorial content

Content of a periodical that promotes or presents the interests, opinions, services or products of an advertiser in a similar style, format and layout as the editorial content. Advertorial content is considered to be advertising.

Articles of incorporation

A legal document filed with a provincial or territorial government, or the federal government, which sets out a corporation's purpose and regulations.

Brand Report

A brand report issued by a circulation audit bureau that reports on key audience metrics for a publication during a specific period for each platform or channel used, such as print publication, website, and social media.

Business number

A Business Number is a unique 9-digit number assigned by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). A sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, trust or other organization must enter their Business number on the application form in "Publishing Firm Information" section. [Register your business on the CRA \(Canada Revenue Agency\) website.](#)

Canadian editorial content

Editorial content (text, photographs, graphics, and illustrations) created or translated by a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada within the meaning of the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#). Translated editorial content by a citizen or a permanent resident of Canada within the meaning of this Act will be considered Canadian editorial content if the editorial content is translated into one of the two official languages. Translation does not modify the nature of the editorial content.

Canadian ownership and control

To be eligible, a publishing firm or publication must be majority owned and controlled by a Canadian.

For the Canada Publication Fund, "Canadian" means:

- a. a Canadian citizen;
- b. a permanent resident within the meaning of the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#);
- c. a Canadian corporation; a partnership, trust or joint venture in which a Canadian or permanent resident or any combination of Canadians and/or permanent residents beneficially owns and controls, directly or indirectly, interests representing in value at least 51% of the total value of the assets of the partnership, trust or joint venture, as the case may

- be. The president or other presiding officer, and more than half of the directors or other similar officers are also Canadians or permanent residents;
- d. a not-for-profit organization in which at least 51% of its members and directors are Canadians or permanent residents.

If at any time one or more persons who are not Canadian have any direct or indirect influence through a trust, an agreement, an arrangement or otherwise that, if exercised, would lead to a control in fact of the publishing firm, the firm will no longer be recognized as Canadian-owned.

"Canadian corporation" is one that meets the following criteria:

- a. a corporation that is incorporated under the laws of Canada, a province or a territory;
- b. a corporation whose principal place of business is in Canada;
- c. a corporation whose president or other presiding officer, and more than half of the directors or other similar officers are Canadian citizens or permanent residents within the meaning of the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#);
- d. a corporation, in the case of a corporation with share capital, of which Canadians beneficially own and control, other than by way of shares held only as security, directly or indirectly, in the aggregate at least 51% of all the issued and outstanding voting shares representing more than half of the votes; and
- e. a corporation, in the case of a corporation without share capital, of which Canadians beneficially own and control, directly or indirectly, interests representing in value at least 51% of the total value of the assets.

Circulation report

A circulation report issued by a circulation audit bureau that reports on the volume of circulation by source, circulation type by breakout, frequency, locations of distribution and selling price for a magazine or newspaper during a specific period.

Civic journalism

Civic journalism covers the activities of the country's civic institutions (for example, courthouses, city halls, band councils, school boards, Parliament or provincial legislatures) or subjects of public importance to society.

Community newspaper

A print and non-bound publication that primarily circulates local or regional news and information on a geographically defined territory, published under a common name at regular intervals, and no more than three times a week. See "Newspaper" and "Non-Daily Newspaper."

Creative Commons licence

A Creative Commons (CC) licence is one of several public copyright licences that enable the free distribution of an otherwise copyrighted "work." A CC licence is used when an author wants to give other people the right to share, use, and build upon a work that he or she (that author) has created. CC provides an author flexibility (for example, he or she might choose to allow only non-commercial uses of a given work) and protects the people who use or redistribute an author's work from concerns of copyright infringement as long as they abide by the conditions that are specified in the licence by which the author distributes the work.

Daily newspaper

A print and non-bound publication that primarily circulates local or regional news and information on a geographically defined territory or on the basis of common interests (e.g.: farm, ethnocultural, minority official language, religious), published under a common name at regular intervals, four or more times a week. See “Newspaper.”

Digital publication

A digital publication is defined as primarily text, photographic, and illustrated editorial content delivered through a website, download or email, and that is published on a regularly scheduled basis under a common title and governed by an editorial function (editor).

Editorial content

The space in a publication, excluding advertising and non-revenue pages, that consists of text, photographs, graphics and illustrations. For additional information, see the definition of Canadian editorial content.

Editorial function/edited in Canada

The commissioning of editorial material and artwork, directing writers, illustrators and photographers regarding the final form of the material; laying out, copyediting; proofreading; and otherwise preparing the content for publication; must be done in Canada.

Ethnocultural publication

A publication that primarily serves or is primarily concerned with a commonly recognized specific cultural or racially distinct community or specific linguistic group using other than Canada's official languages.

Final report

A final report is submitted at the end of your project based on the requirements defined in the funding agreement.

Financial year

Refers to the publishing firm's twelve-month financial year.

Fiscal year (of the Government)

Refers to the federal government fiscal year, which starts on April 1 of a given year and ends on March 31 of the following year.

Indigenous publication

A publication that is primarily targeted to and concerned with serving First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)

An internationally agreed upon standard number that uniquely identifies a publication. It is assigned by the ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) Network.

LGBTQ2 (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and two-spirited) publication

A publication that primarily serves or is primarily concerned with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirited communities.

Mandatory Employment-Related Costs (MERCs)

Employers are required by law to pay:

- Employment Insurance premiums, Canada or Quebec Pension Plan contributions;
- Vacation pay;
- Workers' Compensation premiums or equivalent liability insurance (if applicable);
- Health Services Fund, Quebec parental insurance premiums, and Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail in Quebec;
- Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax in Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy in Manitoba; and,
- Employer Health Tax where applicable.

Payroll deductions tables can be found on the [CRA](#) website. Check with the appropriate provincial or territorial authorities to ensure that you have the most updated rate information.

You are eligible for the reimbursement of MERCs, provided that the total funding amount requested does not exceed \$60,000 including salary, MERCs and equipment purchase or lease.

Media Kit

A media kit contains information about the publication including but not limited to advertisement formats and specifications, advertising rates, circulation and readership statistics, and demographic information about the audience.

News Website

A news website provides regular and ongoing journalistic coverage about news and current affairs that is published directly on the website. Editorial content may be accessible at no charge or for a fee.

Newsletter

A publication, issued periodically, typically by a business, institution, or other organization, that presents information and news to members, customers, or employees with a specific interest in the organization or subject.

A newsletter attributes include the following but may not be limited to:

- No cover page – articles start immediately
- Unbound
- Fewer than 20 pages
- No table of contents
- No list of authors

- No full masthead
- No regular editorial columns or letter to the editor
- Part of a continued series.

Newsletters are not eligible for funding under the Local Journalism Initiative.

Newspaper

A print publication scoring six or more points on the following scale is a newspaper.

Specifications	Points
1. Broadsheet format, tabloid format or outsized (larger than 8-1/2 x 11 inches)	2
2. Unbound	3
3. Printed on any type of newsprint	1
4. Identified as a newspaper	1
5. Cover subdivided (articles, boxed photos)	1
6. Advertising on front cover	1
7. Divided into detachable regular sections, such as news, analysis, entertainment, sports	1
Total	/10

Non-daily newspaper

A print and non-bound publication that primarily circulates local or regional news and information on a geographically defined territory or on the basis of common interests (e.g.: farm, ethnocultural, minority official language, religious), published under a common name at regular intervals, and no more than three times a week. See “Newspaper” and “Community Newspaper.”

Offensive content

Publications or projects that, in our opinion, contain or promote any of the following:

- material that is hate propaganda, obscene or child pornography, or any other illegal material, as defined in the [Criminal Code](#);
- pornography or other material having significant sexual content unless it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding educational or other similar purpose;
- material that contains excessive or gratuitous violence;
- material that is denigrating to an identifiable group; or
- any other similarly offensive material.

Publications that contain offensive content, in our opinion, are not eligible for funding under the Local Journalism Initiative.

Official language minority publication

A publication that is published in English or French, in a region of Canada where the language and content of the publication primarily serves and is concerned with an official language minority community (a French-language community outside of Quebec or an English-language community in Quebec).

Original content

Editorial content created for the Canadian market that has not previously been published elsewhere in Canada or abroad, including websites and other Canadian or foreign publications.

Professional association publication

A professional association publication meets all the following conditions:

- is directly owned by an association;
- membership in the association is necessary to maintain a professional status which is recognized by a federal or provincial statute; and
- membership in the association includes paying professional dues which are deductible under subparagraph 8(1)(i) (i) of the Income Tax Act.

Professional association publications are not eligible for funding under the Local Journalism Initiative.

Publishing cycle

The number of issues of a publication, pre-determined by the publishing firm, that are published during the 12-month financial year.

Religious publication

A publication that is primarily religious in purpose and content.

Scholarly journal

A magazine, aimed at specialists, which presents results of research in a specific field for disseminating knowledge.

Special issue

An insert or a combination of two issues is not considered as a special issue. A special issue:

- is published within the regular publishing cycle;
- is an additional issue, sent separately, that focuses on a specific theme or topic;
- has a title and International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) common to the host publication; and,
- has its cost included in the subscription cost.

Underserved community

Communities are considered underserved if they are:

- **News deserts:** Communities where citizens do not have access to journalistic information about community issues and institutions because there are no daily or community newspapers and other media (for example, community radio or television). Also, if there are other public or private broadcasters, they do not produce local news.
- **Areas of “news poverty”:** Communities where there is limited access to journalistic content about community issues and institutions through a daily or community newspaper or public or private broadcaster. Available sources of local news — whether a newspaper, a community

radio station or other media — demonstrate significant gaps in coverage due to a lack of capacity.

Website Traffic Audit Report

A website traffic audit report from a web auditing tool such as Google Analytics (free), Web Trends, or issued by a circulation audit bureau that reports on the volume of website traffic using industry standard metrics, such as page impressions, unique browsers, user sessions, unique browser frequency, user session duration and page duration, during a specific period.

Date modified:

2020-06-29