

Follow the Money:

New funding sources for news

Maria Archangelo, Chief Revenue Officer, Chalkbeat

Todd Franko, Director of Local Sustainability and Development, Report for America

Bruce Putterman, Publisher and CEO, Connecticut Mirror

Agenda

- Intros
- Who is getting funded for news?
- What are the options for funding?
- Some examples of funded work
- Report for America
- American Journalism Project
- Q & A

Maria Archangelo has more than 30 years of experience in for-profit news as a reporter, editor and publisher.

She moved to nonprofit news in 2016 and joined education news nonprofit Chalkbeat in 2018. There she worked with CEO Elizabeth Green on formation of the American Journalism Project and Chalkbeat's 2025 [Strategic Plan](#) to expand to 18 bureaus in 5 years.

Since its founding in 2013, Chalkbeat has become one of the largest nonprofit news orgs in the country, serving 7 communities and a national audience.



Todd Franko is a Buffalo native who has worked in journalism for 30 years in NY, Nebraska, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana.

In 2019, he was editor of The Vindicator in Youngstown, Ohio, which, in its 150th year of operation, closed down, laying off 200 workers and 40 journalists.

He started at Report for America in September and still lives still in Youngstown with his wife and 3 sons.



Bruce Putterman joined The Connecticut Mirror as Publisher and CEO in April of 2017. He is responsible for the strategic direction of the organization, revenue generation, product innovation, reader engagement, and all business operations.

Before joining CT Mirror, Bruce owned and operated a consulting practice for 16 years, providing strategic planning and marketing services to nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, public agencies, private equity firms, and other for-profit clients.

His interest in journalism dates back to his college years when he worked in commercial radio and TV news.



The word "Chalkbeat" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. It is enclosed within a rectangular border that has a rough, hand-drawn appearance, resembling a chalk outline. The border is a vibrant teal or cyan color. The entire logo is centered on a dark gray background.

Chalkbeat

Chalkbeat has taken the model that works for sports, food, and weather, and applied it to education



7

Bureaus
(and growing)

500k

Monthly readers

60

Employees

25k

Stories
exclusively
focused on
education

\$12 million

Our 2019-20
budget

By reporting on a single topic, we've tapped into local philanthropy previously unavailable to journalism

We've converted hundreds of foundations into journalism funders



TheJoyceFoundation



83%

Of our funders were first-time donors to local news

72%

Of our philanthropic gifts renewed in 2018

207 foundations

Have awarded grants to Chalkbeat

\$76,426

Is the mean annual grant amount

Money for news

Smart news organizations have been partnering with philanthropy to pay for certain kinds of coverage or resources.

The New York Times

The Philadelphia Inquirer

philly.com



**EDUCATION
LAB**

richlandsource

Richland Source

SOLUTIONS
JOURNALISM
NETWORK

TELLING THE WHOLE STORY



Rigorous reporting on effective
responses to social problems

Healing Hope series

It started with a question: Why are so many babies dying in Richland County?

Impact

Three-part series on infant mortality

Solutions! Baby boxes

Community baby shower- 500 people came and 100 baby boxes were distributed



Some tips for working with funders

- When approaching funders, inquire about their goals.
- Make the boundaries clear. Chief among those would be that funders do not have input in the stories published and aren't used as privileged sources in the reporting. When meeting with potential funders or submitting a proposal, these boundaries should be stated and agreed upon at the beginning.
- Newsrooms shouldn't be immune from the money talk.

Tips adapted from personal experience and

<https://thewholestory.solutionsjournalism.org/lessons-from-our-revenue-summit-in-mansfield-638a7c22cb84>

Myth: You have to be a nonprofit news org to get funding from philanthropy

- [Solutions Journalism Network](#)

Stories can be character-driven, but focus in-depth on a response to a problem and how the response works in meaningful detail

Focus on effectiveness, not good intentions, presenting available evidence of results

Discuss the limitations of the approach

Seek to provide insight that others can use

- Lenfest Institute for Journalism

There is power (and money) in collaboration



Challenges of, and solutions to, prisoner re-entry in Philadelphia. Nov. 2016 through March 2018.

Supported by SJN, Knight, Temple U



Collaborative reporting on economic mobility

American Journalism Project

Founded in 2019 by Chalkbeat
CEO Elizabeth Green and
Texas Tribune co-founder
John Thornton.

Venture philanthropy fund to
support civic news organizations

Raised \$50 million to support
news orgs to become sustainable
by supporting the business side
and innovation.

CT Mirror and American Journalism Project

Background

- First published: January 2010
- Covering public policy, politics, and government in Connecticut.
- CT's only statewide reader opinion page.
- Nine full-time staff.
- CT's only full-time Washington-based reporter dedicated to CT.
- \$1.1 million budget.
- 12 largest daily newspapers in CT purchase CT Mirror content.
- 7 million pageviews per year.

American Journalism Project

- \$46 million for business-building capacity.
- Rigorous application process.
- 11 grantees in first cycle.
- \$8.5 million in funding; \$830K for CT Mirror.
- Why CT Mirror?

AJP Funding + CT Mirror Vision

- Investment:
 - Major gifts
 - Grants writer
 - Manager of Membership and Audience Development
 - Admin support
 - Corporate / Advertising sales consultant
- Vision – daily habit for people interested in news with impact
 - More beats, more distribution, more compelling storytelling
 - More diverse audience, more parts of the state

Report for America



Samantha Max, Report for America Corps Member in Macon, GA

REPORT FOR AMERICA

A dramatic, new approach to restoring trust in journalism – grounded in **public service**, focused on **local communities**

Goal: 1,000 reporters on the ground by 2023

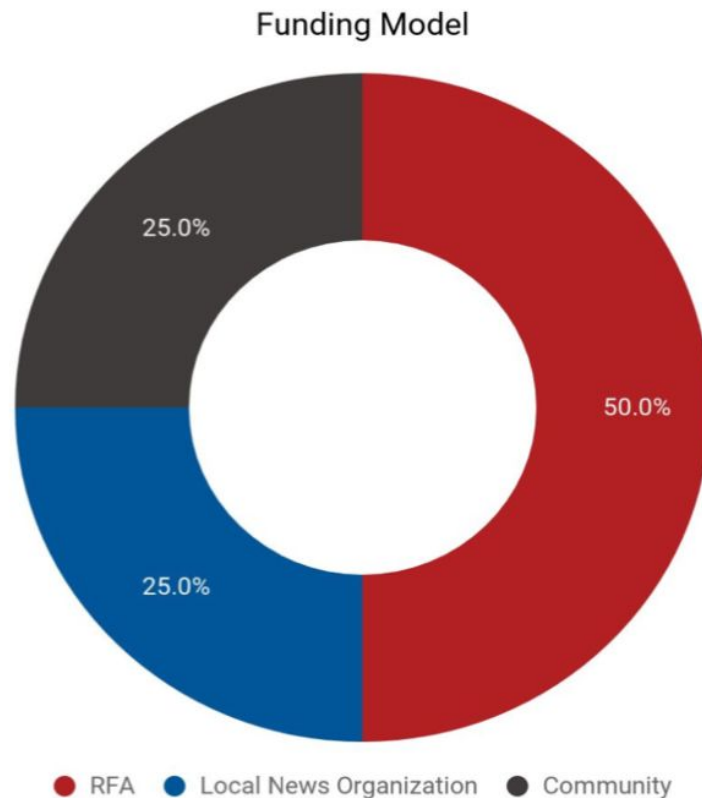
2019 Report for America Newsrooms



UNIQUE FINANCIAL MODEL

For a \$40,000 one-year position

- \$20,000 from the national RFA fund
- \$10,000 from the news organization
- \$10,000 raised locally



Resources

[Chalkbeat Strategic Plan](#)

[American Journalism Project](#)

[Report for America](#)

[Lenfest Institute for Journalism](#)

[Center for Cooperative Media, Montclair State University](#)

[Granite State News Collaborative](#)



**Journalism
Fellowship
Grant
Scholarship
Award**

**Training
Innovation
Funding
Foundation
Initiative**

Pick up this NENPA funding resource guide before you leave this session!

Thank you!

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