

Funding Journalism, **Strengthening** **Communities**

Five case studies of philanthropic support
for community-serving journalism in Canada

INSPIRIT FOUNDATION
June 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Canadian philanthropy has not traditionally viewed journalism as a funding priority. However, over the past decade, a small but growing number of foundations have started supporting journalism. Today, there is a nascent but increasing awareness among Canadian funders that our news and information systems are critical to the wellbeing of our communities, planet, and democracy. Journalism plays a vital role in shaping the narratives around issues affecting us all – from climate action and health to decent work and social justice.

Our media landscape is in perpetual evolution. Technological and social media platforms continue to upend people's information habits. Legacy media and news startups are experimenting with new revenue streams, and there is growing interest in nonprofit news models. Digital transformations invite more diverse voices and approaches in journalism, but also amplify rampant online misinformation, contributing to lower levels of trust in the media.

The rules governing Canada's charitable sector are shifting, as are the regulations and policy discussions underpinning journalism. Most notably, in 2019 the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) introduced new tax measures for designated qualified Canadian journalism organizations (QCJO). These included the creation of registered journalism organizations (RJO) as a new type of qualified donee, a tax-exempt entity that can issue donation receipts and receive funding from registered charities. As well, in 2022, Canada's Income Tax Act was amended to allow 'non-qualified donees' to receive funding from registered charities and foundations. As of May 2023, the CRA's draft guidance on this matter is under review.

At the intersection of these and other changes is an opportunity for journalism and philanthropy to consider how to work together to advance the public interest and contribute to civic dialogue. The strength and credibility of any such pursuit depends on a shared understanding of the 'why,' and the highest levels of transparency and editorial independence – the conditions that have allowed journalists to hold power to account across time.

To collaborate effectively, journalism and philanthropy need to develop trust and identify mutual goals that do not infringe on editorial independence. This is complicated by the fact that these sectors do not necessarily share the same language, culture, or networks. For example, there is often confusion among funders about the definition of journalism and conflation with communications work more broadly. To address all this, funders and news outlets can build on best practices developed by peers in other parts of the world, notably in the United States.

This year, Inspirit will co-develop resources that explore journalism philanthropy in Canada. We will share practical tools that are based on our experience over the past five years working with our philanthropic peers and journalism partners. These resources and tools are part of an ongoing inquiry we hope will contribute to and inform conversations between funders, journalists, and media organizations so they can successfully work together.

➤ FIVE CASE STUDIES

Supporting Stronger Communities

Stories and narratives help us make sense of events and issues in our communities. When we have access to trusted and accurate news and information, we can better connect to one another, our communities, and institutions. Although there is limited research on the effects of journalism on democratic health and civic engagement in Canada, studies [across the world](#) point to the vital role of journalism in supporting healthier communities and democracies.

Independent publications across Canada use the power of journalism at the service of communities. Yet, Canadian outlets and foundations often look abroad for inspiring examples of journalism philanthropy. The case studies in this report shine the spotlight on five journalism initiatives that have received funding from Inspirit and other Canadian foundations.

They are examples of how independent media across the country:

- **Innovate** to meet citizens' information needs;
- **build** relationships and trust with audiences who have often been excluded or misrepresented by the media;
- **shift** industry culture and leadership by shaping newsrooms as diverse as the regions they cover and prioritizing the wellbeing of communities and journalists alike;
- and **lean into** collaborations with journalism peers and community actors, increasing the reach and quality of their reporting.

Through this resource, we want to celebrate the contributions of newsrooms putting communities first. We hope these examples will contribute to ongoing conversations around how support for journalism can help advance a more vibrant, sustainable, and equitable future for all.

CASE STUDY

THE LOCAL

How *The Local* turns complex policy issues into compelling community-led narratives

The Local is an independent online magazine exploring urban health and social issues in Toronto. The cornerstones of its journalism are data, depth, and humanity. Its reporting dives into systemic challenges around race and other equity issues as they relate to health and intersecting topics.



The Local is an independent
online magazine exploring
urban health and social
issues in Toronto.



**+ NEWSROOM
SNAPSHOT**
Independent news outlet

LOCATION / SCOPE
Toronto, Ontario / Local
(Greater Toronto Area)

FOUNDED
2019

CORPORATION TYPE
The Local is a Registered
Journalism Organization
and a qualified donee

PUBLICATION
Quarterly (4-5 times per year)
with inter-issue articles; online;
available for free to all readers

TEAM
Four core staff; multiple
freelance contributors
(journalists, photographers,
and illustrators)

KEY FUNDERS
Atkinson Foundation,
Inspirit Foundation, Metcalf
Foundation, Toronto
Foundation, United Way of
Greater Toronto, YMCA of
Greater Toronto, Vohra Miller
Foundation, Wellesley Institute

> ORIGIN STORY

The Local was seeded as a hyper-local storytelling project at the University Health Network (UHN) OpenLab in 2017. The project proposed longform journalism to communicate the stories behind health statistics and unpack concepts like ‘social determinants of health,’ bringing community voices to policy discussions. After attracting keen interest within and beyond the health sector, *The Local* spun-off as an independent nonprofit news organization in 2019. It received Registered Journalism Organization status in 2022.

> WORK AND IMPACT

The Local punches well above its weight.

Through a uniquely Toronto lens, its team invites readers to explore perspectives and corners of the city that fall between the cracks of the city’s mainstream news cycle. *The Local*’s public service journalism helps Torontonians make informed choices and hold authorities accountable. For example, one in five voters in the Toronto 2022 municipal elections is estimated to have used *The Local*’s **Candidate Tracker**. This was the only public tool that presented fact-checked information about every single candidate for mayor, councilor, and school trustee. Its team also uncovered a story about French school board trustee candidates who did not speak French, which led to the school board election being voided and rescheduled.

During the pandemic, its award-winning journalism in the Peel Region catalyzed government action to address issues of vaccine equity in underserved communities and earned *The Local* a 2022 World Press Freedom Award. As a journalist, “you usually hope to make an impact, but it is not as easily measurable,” said Nicholas Hune-Brown, senior editor. Witnessing immediate policy change is rewarding, but rare. However, “to see people respond online and in-person, share how their minds might’ve been changed, or say they hadn’t seen their experiences reflected to them in media” speaks to the multiple layers of impact journalism can have, he added.

To serve Toronto well requires a team who mirrors the city’s diversity and listens to community members before reporting. Building a fair and friendly newsroom is also key. “If we’re going to build new publications, they need to be created in a different way than the old ones,” stressed Hune-Brown. *The Local* annually surveys and publicly reports on its newsroom and contributor demographics, which so far largely surpass industry averages in diversity. It is also onto the fourth edition of its Local Journalism Fellowship program, through which its editorial team has trained 12 emerging journalists from communities underrepresented in Canadian media.

➤ WHAT'S NEXT FOR *THE LOCAL*?

In 2023, *The Local* will continue publishing quarterly issues with in-depth features, investigations, essays, and analysis. It also aims to ramp up its inter-issue publications to respond to their audience's interests in a timely manner. The Local's team will continue developing partnerships with complementary publications to grow the joint reach and impact of this work. Past partners include *The Narwhal* and the *Toronto Star*. As *The Local* continues to demonstrate the impact of its coverage, another priority is to grow and diversify its revenue through philanthropic funding, reader support, and industry grants.

➤ HOW DID INSPIRIT FOUNDATION FUND *THE LOCAL*?

- + Total: \$90,000 over three years (2021-2023) / operating funds
- + Funding mechanism: grant agreement
 - The first part of the funding was granted through a charitable fiduciary. A new grant agreement was drafted after *The Local* became a qualified donee in 2022.

🌐 LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR WORK:

» *The Local*'s website: www.thelocal.to/

» [Why Did We Create The Local?](#). UHN OpenLab

» Story: [The Mysterious French School Trustee Candidates Who Don't Speak French](#). Emma Buchanan, *The Local*. 19 October 2022.

» Story: [How York Memorial Students Got Blamed for the TDSB's Mistakes](#). Inori Roy. *The Local*. 8 December 2022.

» Story: ["You Can't Stop the Spread of the Virus if You Don't Stop it in Peel"](#). Fatima Syed. *The Local*. 22 April 2021. (2022 World Press Freedom Award Recipient)

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THE LOCAL >

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in LinkedIn



CASE STUDY

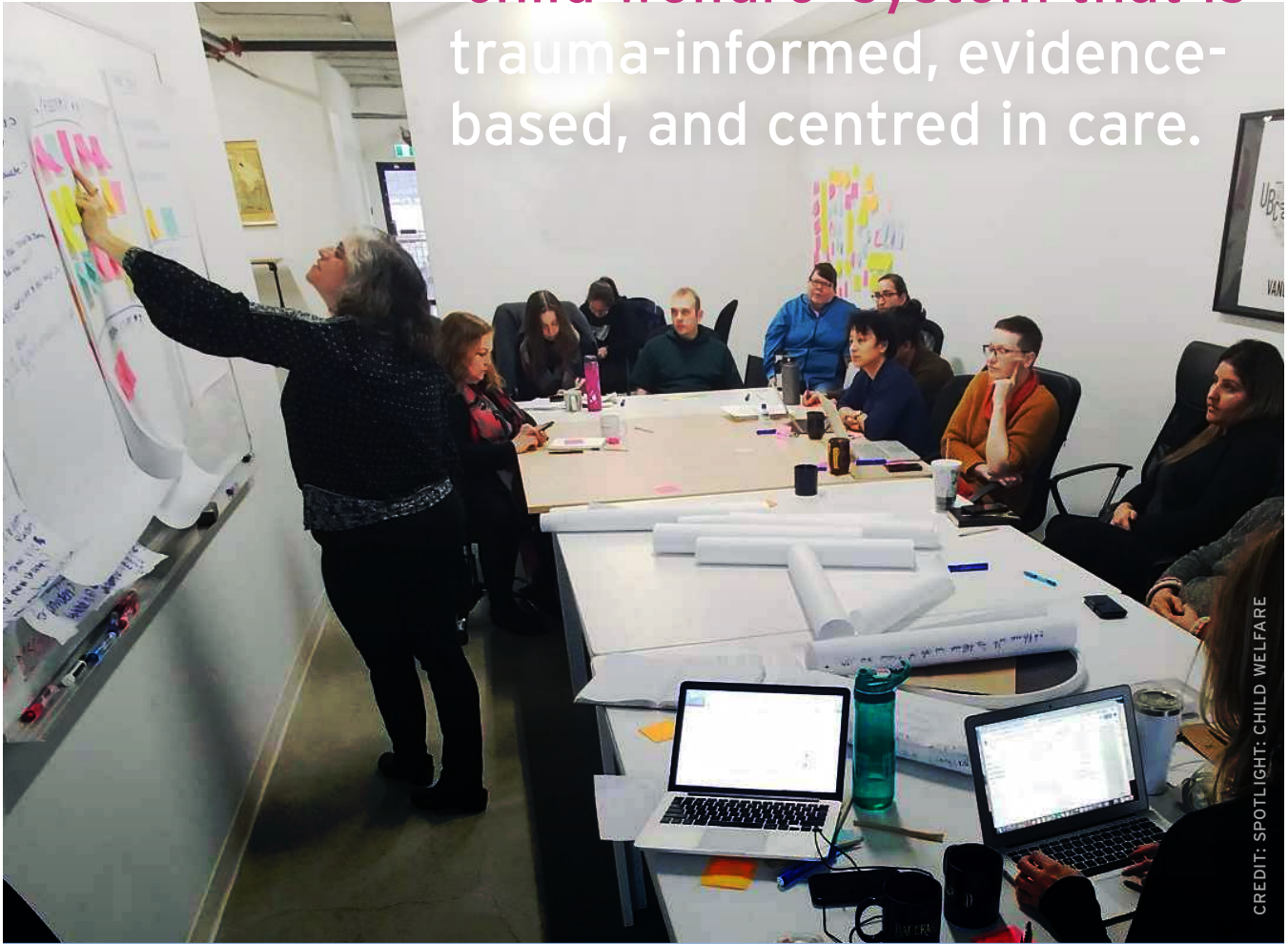
SPOTLIGHT: CHILD WELFARE

How *Spotlight: Child Welfare* brings journalists and those with first-hand experience of a system together to tell more authentic stories

Spotlight: Child Welfare is a collaborative journalism project that aims to improve media coverage of the ‘child welfare’ system. It brings together journalists, advocates, and people with lived experience of the system to promote coverage that is trauma-informed, evidence-based, and centred in care.



Spotlight: Child Welfare promotes coverage of the 'child welfare' system that is trauma-informed, evidence- based, and centred in care.



CREDIT: SPOTLIGHT: CHILD WELFARE

+ PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Online project housed at *The Tyee* (an independent news outlet)

LOCATION / SCOPE

Vancouver, B.C.;
Expanding to Manitoba
in 2023 / regional

FOUNDED

2018

CORPORATION TYPE

Housed at *The Tyee*,
a nonprofit organization
registered in B.C.

PUBLICATION

Determined by partner media
organizations

TEAM

Currently led by a part-time
project manager with the
support of an advisory board.
In 2023, it will engage youth
leads in each location as well
as multiple contributors

KEY FUNDERS

Inspirit Foundation, Kwantlen
Polytechnic University,
Vancouver Foundation

➤ ORIGIN STORY

The ‘child welfare’ system disproportionately targets Indigenous and racialized families. After hearing multiple youths speak about their negative interactions with reporters and the inaccurate media portrayals of their lived experiences, B.C.-based newsroom *The Discourse* was called to help journalists do better. Following an initial workshop series with youth, social workers, and journalists from multiple newsrooms, the publication conducted a pilot in 2018-2019. A second phase will launch in 2023, now housed at independent newsroom *The Tyee*.

➤ WORK AND IMPACT

The Spotlight: Child Welfare pilot brought together dozens of youths from ‘care,’ parents, and others connected to the child welfare system to collaborate with freelance and staff journalists from outlets including *APTN*, *Black Press*, *National Observer*, *Star Vancouver*, and *Vancouver Courier*. Together, they scoped the project, created reporting resources, developed story ideas, and analyzed the data gathered. Participating journalists then produced 13 original stories which were republished by media partners across B.C.

Spotlight creates meaningful opportunities for youth and parents to share their stories. Crucially, it invites their perspectives on how to develop nuanced and high-quality journalism that does not fall prey to ‘trauma-porn’ or exceptionalist narratives. The project encourages journalists to ask young people and parents how they can be of service and how their approach can be improved, instead of only reaching out to them as sources when a story breaks. For Brielle Morgan, a journalist and the project’s manager, this makes all the difference. “Journalist by journalist, we can shift standard practices and inform culture change in newsrooms.”

The project aims to support community members and journalists, grow the general public’s understanding of the child welfare system, promote the sharing of solutions across jurisdictions, and inform policy change. Ultimately, *Spotlight: Child Welfare* is about achieving better outcomes for youth and their families.

Anna McKenzie, an Opaskwayak Cree journalist and advisor to the project, believes that the model “could pave the way for other under-reported areas – to bring those with lived experiences together with those [who] tell the stories.”

➤ WHAT'S NEXT FOR SPOTLIGHT: CHILD WELFARE?

It is an exciting time ahead for the project. 2023 will see *Spotlight* expand into multiple cities, starting with Winnipeg. Fundraising is a priority and philanthropy has a key role to play. As Morgan said, “Newsrooms are increasingly starved for resources and don’t have the budget to slow down and do in-depth work, let alone work that pays community members to be part of the process.” Journalism and philanthropy can collaborate to help change dominant narratives around society’s most pressing issues and achieve better outcomes for community members.

➤ HOW DID INSPIRIT FOUNDATION FUND SPOTLIGHT: CHILD WELFARE?

- + Total: \$50,000 over one year (2023) / project grant
- + Funding mechanism: service contract with *The Tyee*

🌐 LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR WORK:

» *Spotlight: Child Welfare*’s website: www.spotlightchildwelfare.com/about

» **Best Practices: child welfare journalism. Working with lived experience.**
Dylan Cohen for *Spotlight*

» Video: **A guide for journalists when reporting on child welfare.**
Dylan Cohen for *Spotlight*

» Story: **B.C. government is failing vulnerable kids and families, according to its own audits.** *The Discourse*. 29 April 2019.

» Story: **What If We Gave Struggling Families as Much Support as Foster Parents?.**
The Tyee. 6 June 2019.

CASE STUDY

LA CONVERSE

How *La Converse* deepens its reporting by earning trust and listening to communities

La Converse is a Francophone digital media outlet that serves and covers communities traditionally excluded, underrepresented, or othered by Québec and Canadian media, both in news stories and in newsrooms. Its approach is based on dialogue, listening, and accountability to the community.



CREDIT: LA CONVERSE

La Converse's approach is based on dialogue, listening, and accountability to the community.



CREDIT: LA CONVERSE

+ NEWSROOM SNAPSHOT
Independent news outlet

LOCATION / SCOPE
Montréal, QC /
Regional (Québec)

FOUNDED
2020

CORPORATION TYPE
La Converse is a nonprofit organization registered in Québec

PUBLICATION
Weekly, online, available for free to all readers

TEAM
Seven core staff and multiple contributors (journalists, photographers, and illustrators)

KEY FUNDERS
Catapulte Canada, Google News Equity Fund, Inspirit Foundation, LION Publishers, Meta Journalism Project, Trottier Foundation

➤ ORIGIN STORY

La Converse was launched as a four-week pop-up project in May 2020, against the odds of a whirlwind of pandemic-fueled outlet closures. The goal? To ensure a nuanced and dignified portrayal of people at the heart of news stories, especially those from Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities. As audience interest grew, *La Converse* incorporated as an independent nonprofit news organization.

➤ WORK AND IMPACT

As one of the only independent French-language media outlets founded and led by a woman of colour in Québec, *La Converse* is a first-of-its kind. Its reporting is community-powered and purposefully digs into perspectives that are often absent from mainstream media in the province.

La Converse pierces through stereotypes. Its editorial line is shaped by the curiosity and insights of the communities they cover.

Its team listens to audiences closely, asking questions like “What does the ‘hood’ mean to you, and who represents it?” This question, initially asked in a vox pop interview, led to its Hood Heroes series, which shines a spotlight on people from underserved Montreal neighborhoods leading inspiring lives and projects. The series works to actively counter the negative stereotypes associated with these ‘hoods.’

Working with reporters from all walks of life is key. For founder Lela Savić, “when a journalist covers a community they belong to, or with whom they’ve built trust, their reporting can give power back to groups who have previously been misrepresented or disrespected by media.” For many communities, it is rare to see themselves mirrored in the journalists covering their stories. As a Romani journalist who is often the only Roma in the room, and who grew up seeing her people misrepresented by the media, Savić knows this firsthand.

Savić dreams of a next generation of journalists who more accurately reflect Québec’s diversity. The training program **École Converse** is a first step toward this. With its first edition in 2021, a second edition in person in 2022, and a third edition in 2023, *École Converse* has become fundamental to the outlet’s journalistic model. In 2022, *La Converse* also launched a newsroom fellowship for young journalists from backgrounds underrepresented in the industry.

➤ **WHAT'S NEXT FOR LA CONVERSE?**

This year, *La Converse* will continue publishing stories and aims to strengthen its team and revenue model. It will also launch *Converse Studio*, an in-house podcast recording studio to serve the needs of creators from diverse backgrounds, bring in revenue, and offer employment to aspiring journalists.

➤ **HOW DID INSPIRIT FOUNDATION FUND LA CONVERSE?**

- + Total: \$365,000:
 - \$20,000 over one year (2020) / project grant
 - \$75,000 over one year (2021) / operating funds
 - \$270,000 over three years (2022-2024) / operating funds
- + Funding mechanism: Grant agreement with a fiscal sponsor; agency agreement

🌐 **LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR WORK:**

» *La Converse* website: www.laconverse.com

» **Why listening and learning is a crucial part of reporting.**

Lela Savic for Indiegaf. 28 September 2020.

» Story: **Qu'est-ce que le hood ?**. Fatima Bah and Ramy Berkani.

La Converse. 27 August 2022.

» Story: **Entre la jungle et le système : la santé mentale des demandeurs**

d'asile du chemin Roxham. Djazia Bousnina. *La Converse*. 24 March 2023.

**FOLLOW
LA CONVERSE** ➤

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f Facebook
🐦 Twitter

📷 Instagram
in LinkedIn

CASE STUDY

SHARING OUR STORIES

How *The Eastern Door* uses journalism as a tool for Indigenous language and cultural revitalization

Sharing our Stories is a weekly series of stories told by Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) Elders in English and the Kanien'kéha language. It is rooted in the movement to Tsi Skarihwaiénthon, to replant the traditional Kanien'kéha language, culture, and history in the community of Kahnawake and surrounding areas.



CREDIT: SIMONA ROSENFELD

Sharing our Stories is rooted in the movement to Tsi Skarihwaiénthon, to replant the traditional Kanien'kéha language, culture, and history



CREDIT: SIMONA ROSENFELD

+ NEWSROOM SNAPSHOT

Project housed at *The Eastern Door* (an independent news outlet)

LOCATION / SCOPE
Kahnawake, QC / Local (Kahnawake)

FOUNDED
2022

CORPORATION TYPE

Housed at *The Eastern Door*, a sole proprietorship registered in Québec

PUBLICATION

Weekly; print and online; available for free to all readers

TEAM

Currently led by a project coordinator with participation from two *Eastern Door* staff and a team of freelance external translators

KEY FUNDERS

Canadian Heritage (Indigenous Languages Act, Local Journalism Initiative), Inspirit Foundation

➤ ORIGIN STORY

Sharing our Stories was a yearslong dream for the team at *The Eastern Door*, a community paper covering the Kanien'kehá:ka Territory of Kahnawake since 1992. The series began in August 2022 as an effort to promote language revitalization and document oral history and traditional knowledge. With fewer than 3,500 fluent speakers of Kanien'kéha around the world, the mission became increasingly urgent. Dozens of Elders and knowledge keepers enthusiastically came forward to participate in the project.

➤ WORK AND IMPACT

Stories are key to collective learning and healing in communities.

The diversity of experiences represented in *Sharing our Stories* makes Steve Bonspiel, editor and publisher at *The Eastern Door*, proud. “Elders are putting themselves out there and trusting us with deeply personal stories,” he said. The first-person stories cover tales of ‘the old days’ and moments of political significance such as the Oka Crisis in 1990, reflections on humor, grief, gender roles in the community, and more.

Sharing our Stories can be bittersweet. After all, it is a “cry for help” to protect a language that is threatened by the impacts of colonialism, shared Bonspiel, who is still learning the language himself. “On the surface, we are gathering stories, but this is also a teaching tool for those learning Kanien'kéha,” he added.

The project develops at the pace set by storytellers and a small group of Kanien'kéha interpreters led by Sahawisó:ko' Arquette. Journalists engage elders and first language speakers along the way.

The Eastern Door is community powered. Most of its work to date, including *Sharing our Stories*, has been funded through support from Kahnawake residents and neighboring communities in the form of donations, advertising, and raffle sales. The pandemic pushed the newsroom to fundraise beyond its community. It was a steep learning curve that eventually resulted in some federal funding. Inspirit Foundation was its first foundation partner.

Bonspiel hopes to see simpler pathways for community outlets seeking philanthropic support. Many newsrooms are having positive impacts in communities, “but would never know how to look for funding,” he said.

Two other First Nations communities have reached out to *The Eastern Door* to start similar initiatives in their own localities.

➤ **WHAT'S NEXT FOR *SHARING OUR STORIES*?**

Sharing our Stories will incorporate as a nonprofit organization in 2023, a decision that will unlock new sources of funding and support its storytelling and growth. The priority is to give each story the care it deserves and to make this work accessible to everyone interested in learning Kanien'kéha. This might include developing a book, an art exhibit, and teaching materials such as audio recordings. An expansion to Kanehsatà:ke (Kanesatake), a neighboring Kanien'kehá:ka community is also in the works.

➤ **HOW DID INSPIRIT FOUNDATION FUND *LA CONVERSE*?**

- + Total: \$50,000 over one year (2022-2023) / project grant
- + Funding mechanism: service contract with *The Eastern Door*

🌐 **LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR WORK:**

» *The Eastern Door's* website: <https://easterndoor.com/>

» Facebook: [Sharing Our Stories page](#)

» Story: [Stories that strengthen Kanien'kéha](#).
Simona Rosenfield for *The Eastern Door*. 3 November 2022.

CASE STUDY

IndigiNews

How *IndigiNews* cares for communities and storytellers by centring Indigenous cultural values

IndigiNews is an independent, Indigenous-led publication that serves communities in ‘British Columbia,’ syilx Okanagan territory, the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Tsleil Waututh and Squamish Nations (‘Metro Vancouver’), and ‘Vancouver Island.’ Its journalism is driven by Indigenous communities’ needs and centres Indigenous cultural values and teachings.



IndigiNews' journalism is driven by Indigenous communities' needs and centres Indigenous cultural values and teachings.



CREDIT: ANNA MCKENZIE



**NEWSROOM
SNAPSHOT**

Online independent news outlet, a part of [Discourse Community Publishing](#)

LOCATION / SCOPE

Mostly in British Columbia / regional

FOUNDED

2020

CORPORATION TYPE

Discourse Community Publishing is a registered business

PUBLICATION

Weekly (two to five times per week), available for free to all readers

TEAM

Four core staff and multiple freelance contributors (journalists, photographers, illustrators)

KEY FUNDERS

Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Inspirit Foundation, Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources, McConnell Foundation

➤ ORIGIN STORY

IndigiNews began as a partnership between The Discourse, an independent news outlet, and the *Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN)*, the world's first national Indigenous broadcaster. This collaboration proposed a new model for independent, Indigenous-centred journalism that would contribute to the broader sustainability of the Indigenous media landscape and help advance Indigenous representation in newsrooms.

➤ WORK AND IMPACT

Indigenous voices and teachings are honoured in all *IndigiNews* does, from reporting approaches to editorial choices and organizational policies. *IndigiNews* uplifts positive stories about Indigenous communities, which are often left out of traditional media. At times, it also challenges mainstream journalistic expectations, and prioritizes respect and care for storytellers.

Reporting “as human beings first and journalists second” is *IndigiNews*' status quo.

In May 2021, dozens of news outlets flew into Tk'emlups te Secwepemc territory to break the story about the discovery of the graves of 215 Indigenous children at former Kamloops Indian Residential School. *IndigiNews* chose to pause its reporting to respect the grief of survivors, communities, and its team. This difficult decision was well received by communities. “They were so thankful that we weren't just swooping in,” said journalist Cara McKenna.

But while trauma-informed journalism might hold back in some ways, it does not shy away from holding institutions to account. Among *IndigiNews*' investigations are stories about birth alerts, reproductive rights, and water conservation.

“We don't aim to be radical, but just existing in the world of journalism — the way we are, the way we write and the way we see the world— is kind of a radical act,” shared *IndigiNews* publisher Eden Fineday.

In the past, *IndigiNews* offered a widely attended “Decolonize the Media” open workshop. It also launched the *IndigiNews* Mentorship Program in 2023, which has offered journalism training and on-the-ground reporting experience to three Indigenous writers. The goal is to help counter the barriers to entry faced by Indigenous storytellers in the journalism industry.

IndigiNews is trailblazing Indigenous-centred practices in the journalism field. “Five or 10 years ago, non-Indigenous people wouldn't have known what to do with *IndigiNews*,” said McKenna. “We're in a place where people are ready to hear stories in the way that we tell them.”

➤ WHAT'S NEXT FOR *INDIGINEWS*?

IndigiNews will continue building trust-based relationships with funders to strengthen and scale its work. Unrestricted operational support from philanthropic organizations is key. "It makes a lot of sense [for outlets like *IndigiNews*] to work with philanthropy as we are all working in the public interest," noted McKenna. A recent example is a grant from the Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, which allowed the team to start a deep dive into water conservation stories.

IndigiNews' 2023 goals include increasing its investigative reporting, furthering collaborations with other values-aligned outlets, and expanding their coverage in areas where they already operate — such as Williams Lake and Fraser Valley — and eventually beyond.

➤ HOW DID INSPIRIT FOUNDATION FUND *INDIGINEWS*?

- + Total: \$325,000:
 - \$25,000 over one year (2020) / project grant
 - \$300,000 over three years (2022-2025) / operating funds
- + Funding mechanism: grant agreement with a fiscal sponsor; service contract with Discourse Community Publishing (*IndigiNews* parent company)

🌐 LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR WORK:

» *IndigiNews*' website: <https://indiginews.com>

» [Decolonizing the Media with *IndigiNews*](#). Vancouver Public Library. 31 March 2022.

» [Looking back at 2022: A year in stories](#). *IndigiNews*

» Story: [shísháhl announces 40 residential 'school' graves, as chief pleads: 'do not normalize this.'](#) Cara McKenna. 20 April 2023.

» Story: [Land back: syilx people reclaim sacred salmon fishing site](#). Aaron Hemens. 17 April 2023.

FOLLOW
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in LinkedIn



Tools & Resources

Interested in learning more?

Below are some tools and resources:

➤ CANADIAN JOURNALISM LANDSCAPE:

[Canada Revenue Agency's 2019 measures to support Canadian journalism](#): This guide from the federal government includes an overview of Registered Journalism Organizations, a type of qualified donee. The list of RJOs to date is available [here](#).

[The Shattered Mirror: News, Democracy and Trust in the Digital Age](#): This 2017 report by the Public Policy Forum examined the state of the news media in Canada and made recommendations to ensure strong, diverse, independent and trustworthy news media. A number of these were taken up by different stakeholders including the federal government.

[The Shattered Mirror: 5 Years On: Platforms, Innovation and Local News](#): This 2022 report builds on the original Shattered Mirror report. It focuses on the federal Local Journalism Initiative as well as policy conversations around the regulation of global platforms such as Meta (Facebook) and Google.

[Local News Research Project](#): Hosted at Toronto Metropolitan University, this project combines content analysis and digital mapping to explore issues related to local news in Canada.

[The untold story of Canada's journalism startups](#): This 2022 article gives an overview of Canada's changing media landscape, focusing on emergent digital news startups and how they are reshaping what journalism looks like in the country (Alfred Hermida and Mary Lynn Young for The Conversation).

[CAJ Diversity Survey](#): this yearly survey by the Canadian Association of Journalists measures the level of diversity in newsrooms across Canada.

➤ TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO START FUNDING MEDIA AND JOURNALISM:

[Journalism and Media Grant Making: Five Things You Need to Know and Five Ways to Get Started](#): This 2018 guide is a tool for funders interested in media and journalism grantmaking. (Media Impact Funders with Knight Foundation and Wyncote Foundation – all based in the United States)

[How Local Foundations Can Support Local News](#): This article provides an overview of how place-based foundations can support stronger local news. (Mark Glaser for the Knight Foundation)

[An Introduction to Funding Journalism and Media](#): Originally developed for European funders, this report explores key issues, debates and approaches in funding journalism and media. (Ariadne)

[The Journalism Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Wheel](#): This interactive tool is designed to help funders inform their journalism grantmaking through the lens of equity, diversity and inclusion. It outlines potential funding alternatives and includes specific examples. (Democracy Fund)

[IA Impact Tracker](#): This platform is designed to help news organizations, funders, and other stakeholders understand the impact of journalism by defining, measuring, and tracking real world change. (Impact Architects)

[How Can Philanthropy and Journalism Work Even Better Together?](#) Lisa Gibbs at The Associated Press reflects on the importance of trust, transparency, and diligence in relationships between funders and journalism organizations. (The Center for Effective Philanthropy)

➤ LEARN ABOUT OTHER EXAMPLES OF JOURNALISM PHILANTHROPY IN CANADA:

[Winnipeg Foundation partners with the Winnipeg Free Press and The Narwhal:](#)

A partnership to support better climate coverage in Manitoba.

[Framing the Philanthropic Relationship with News Media Companies: The Atkinson Foundation and Toronto Star Experience:](#) This report outlines the principles and initial learnings of a collaboration on a “work and wealth” beat to improve the coverage of labour issues.

[Investment Readiness Case Study: Indiegraf:](#) Founded in Canada, Indiegraf pools technology, capital, audience and revenue resources to accelerate the growth of journalist-entrepreneurs and build a more equitable news ecosystem. It received funding from the McConnell Foundation in 2022.

[Journalists for Human Rights \(JHR\) Misinformation Project:](#) Funded by the McConnell, Trottier, and Rossy Family Foundations, this project provides journalists and journalism students with digital investigation and media literacy training in online misinformation.

➤ ORGANIZATIONS TO WATCH:

[Media Impact Funders Journalism Funders Network \(US/Global\):](#) A network of media funders committed to the effective use and support of media in the public interest. They convene funder, produce resources, and offer peer-learning opportunities.

[Canadian Association of Journalists:](#) CAJ has provided advocacy and professional development resources for Canadian journalists since 1978.

[J-Source:](#) A collaboration of Canadian post-secondary journalism programs that promote national discussion about journalism and journalism education.

[Borealis Philanthropy’s Racial Equity in Journalism Fund \(US-based\):](#) This fund is dedicated to building up the capacity and sustainability of news outlet and journalism organizations led by people of color. They have disbursed \$10 million to over 40 organizations.

[The Pivot Fund \(US-based\):](#) The Pivot Fund is a US-based venture philanthropy organization dedicated to investing \$500 million into independent BIPOC-led community news.

[Institute for Nonprofit News \(US-based\):](#) A nonprofit news network that supports more than 400 members through education and business services to promote public service journalism.

Do you have questions or insights about philanthropic funding for journalism in Canada?

Are you interested in collaborating?

Please reach out and stay tuned for upcoming resources.



Inspirit is a public foundation based in Toronto, Canada that supports arts and media to advance an inclusive and pluralist Canada.

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