



The Colorado Health Foundation™

## Media Funding



**Addressing Racial Justice through Strategic  
Mass Media Investing and Partnerships**

At the Colorado Health Foundation (CHF), we're committed to advancing racial justice and equity across Colorado. One of the ways we do this is through investing in the mass media ecosystem. Since 2018, we've worked to foster a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable media landscape that reflects and serves Colorado's diverse communities. Our focus is on reshaping journalism and media in ways that support healthier, more informed communities while addressing systemic inequities in the media.

In 2021, CHF adopted the **Centering Race Framework**, which guides our organization's strategies for racial justice as a pathway to health equity. A critical lever within this framework is our focus on shifting public discourse. Media plays a powerful role in shaping how people think, what stories they hear, and how social narratives develop. Our mass media investing strategy is designed to ensure that journalism and media outlets in Colorado contribute to a more equitable society, with inclusive reporting that reflects the diversity of our communities.

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## Why Invest In Mass Media?

Mass media influences public discourse and shapes societal narratives across various platforms—news outlets, film, television, radio, podcasts, social media, and more. The media landscape is currently in flux, with newsrooms struggling with sustainable revenue models and lacking diversity. This often leads to coverage gaps, particularly in underserved communities.

**By investing in media, CHF aims to:**

- Strengthen local newsrooms and their trust with communities

- Address inequities in media coverage and newsroom practices
- Build newsroom capacities for more equitable journalism
- Create sustainable partnerships that foster diverse and inclusive storytelling
- Shift social narratives to support more equitable policies and public perceptions

## Our Strategic Goals For Mass Media Investing

### 1. **Strengthen Local Newsrooms with Community Trust**

We're investing in local news organizations that are trusted within their communities, particularly those serving underrepresented groups. By supporting journalism that resonates with and reflects the lived experiences of diverse communities, we help create a more inclusive narrative landscape.

### 2. **Close Longstanding Inequities in Journalism**

To address racial and socioeconomic disparities in both workforce representation and media coverage, we're directing resources to newsrooms committed to improving diversity. This includes funding initiatives that improve coverage in underserved areas and news deserts.

### 3. **Build Capacity of Newsrooms**

We're focused on scaling the skills and resources needed for newsrooms to produce more equitable journalism. This includes training programs, diversity initiatives, and increasing their ability to engage effectively with

their communities.

#### 4. **Create Sustainable Partnerships**

By developing relationships with national and local media funders, as well as Colorado-based media outlets, we're building a network that supports long-term collaboration and innovation in journalism. This includes working with organizations across the state to amplify diverse voices.

#### 5. **Shift Social Narratives for Inclusive Public Discourse**

Our investments seek to empower local media to reshape narratives in ways that foster inclusive, equitable public discourse. We encourage storytelling that highlights marginalized perspectives and challenges dominant societal narratives.

## Key Achievements And Opportunities

Since 2018, CHF has partnered with several organizations to advance these goals:

- **Colorado Media Project (CMP)**: We're current funders of CMP to support its efforts to diversify local and regional media in Colorado and infuse a deeper equity orientation in the media landscape. CMP is also now the home of Press Forward Colorado, which we're a partner on
- **KFF Health News**: We've supported health equity reporting across Colorado, with a focus on underreported communities and expanding collaborations with ethnic media outlets

- **The Voices Initiative:** A grant to CMP and Free Press has helped organize communities of color to transform the landscape for local journalism
- **KSUT Public Radio & Rocky Mountain PBS:** These partnerships amplify **Native and Indigenous community perspectives** through community-driven projects and media storytelling
- **I Am More Than TV Campaign with PBS12:** We support a statewide TV campaign that delves into how our personal stories impact our culture and connect with our mental health and overall well-being

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Looking ahead, we'll continue to explore opportunities to support narrative power and shift public discourse through media, particularly around health equity, affordable housing and economic opportunity. To find out more about our strategic investments and partnerships aimed at shifting public discourse toward a more equitable future, please contact Taryn Fort: [tfort@coloradohealth.org](mailto:tfort@coloradohealth.org).