

New Jersey Civic Information Consortium secures \$3M in public funding



September 19, 2024 – The New Jersey Civic Information Consortium is pleased to announce that \$3 million has been allocated in the State’s FY25 budget, effective July 1, 2024. Majority Leader Greenwald, Senator Vin Gopal, and the New Jersey Legislature increased the funding from Governor Murphy’s initial \$2M recommendation to a full \$3M. This renewed support will empower the Consortium to amplify its efforts, helping grantees expand their impactful work and reach even more communities across the state.

The Consortium is an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that funds initiatives to benefit the state’s civic life and meet the evolving information needs of New Jersey’s communities. A first-in-the-nation project, the Consortium builds on the foundation laid by public media in the United States, and reimagines how public funding can be used to address the growing problems of news deserts and misinformation and support more informed communities.

When communities have access to reliable news and information, they are better equipped to make decisions that impact their lives and the lives of those around them. In a time when misinformation and disinformation can easily spread, the role of local news has never been more vital.

“The Consortium’s work is essential in preserving the integrity of local news and promoting civic engagement,” said Senator Vin Gopal. “This renewed funding demonstrates our continued commitment to supporting the more informed and empowered communities.”

Trusted local journalism fosters transparency, accountability, and civic participation, ensuring that residents are well-informed and connected. It is through this lens that the Consortium views its mission: to provide financial resources to support and grow trustworthy, community-based news and information sources throughout New Jersey.

“We’re underscoring our dedication to nurturing local journalism and community engagement,” said Assembly Majority Leader Louis Greenwald. “This support ensures that vital media outlets, including those in South Jersey, can continue to inform and empower our communities.

Since its inception in 2018, the Consortium has invested more than \$7.5M into local news in NJ, with a focus on grants funding innovative projects that address the diverse needs of NJ communities. From investigative journalism to hyperlocal news coverage, the Consortium's grantees are working tirelessly to bridge information gaps and build more informed and engaged communities. The Consortium also provides training programs and back-office services to its grantee network.

"Securing this renewed investment is a clear indication of the value that our state's leaders place on the work the Consortium and our grantees are doing," said Chris Daggett, Board Chair and Interim Executive Director of the Consortium. "Local news is the backbone of democracy, and this funding empowers us to strengthen and amplify the voices of our communities, ensuring that everyone has the information they need to engage meaningfully in civic life."

As the Consortium looks to the future, the renewed funding will support a wide range of initiatives that are setting a national standard for fostering vibrant, informed, and engaged communities. Local news and civic information is not a partisan issue—it's about ensuring that everyone has the facts they need to participate fully in democracy. By investing in the Consortium, New Jersey is not only supporting the present landscape of local journalism but also paving the way for a more resilient and innovative media ecosystem.

For more information about the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium and its ongoing projects and grantees, please visit www.njcivicinfo.org.

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