



## **Open Call Announcement: New Jersey Press Forward, South Jersey Initiative**

### **Addressing News Deserts in South Jersey**

Press Forward New Jersey, a partnership between the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium and the Community Foundation of New Jersey, is excited to announce its first open call aimed at addressing marginalized and news desert communities in South Jersey.

Camden, Gloucester, Burlington, Cumberland, Salem, Ocean, Atlantic, and Cape May counties face significant information gaps due to limited local media coverage. These gaps undermine civic engagement, restrict access to valuable resources, and allow misinformation to spread unchecked.

To address this, Press Forward New Jersey is partnering with the Community Foundation of South Jersey to seek proposals for innovative solutions to strengthen local news and information ecosystems. This open call is made possible with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

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### **Funding objectives**

This initiative aims to enhance the capacity of local news creating organizations serving marginalized and news desert communities in South Jersey by:

- Supporting the development and sustainability of community-rooted news organizations.
- Providing resources to improve infrastructure, personnel, revenue strategies, and technology.
- Ensuring communities have access to reliable, fact-based news and information to foster civic engagement and informed decision-making.

## Who Should Apply

We are looking for organizations that:

- Currently operate or aspire to launch community-focused newsrooms in underserved South Jersey communities in the counties of Camden, Gloucester, Burlington, Cumberland, Salem, Ocean, Atlantic, and Cape May.
- Are committed to serving diverse populations, including historically marginalized and low-wealth communities.
- Have innovative or proven ideas and practices to create or expand trusted sources of local news and information.

## Funding details

The initiative will provide grants to support local news and information providers in South Jersey. Most grants will range from \$50,000 to \$75,000, with exceptional cases allowing requests of up to \$100,000.

## Timeline

- **February 12, 2025:** Application opens.
- **March 21, 2025:** Application window closes.
- **April 2025:** Grantees are selected and announced.
- **May 2025-May 2026:** First year of grantee support and evaluation.

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