



Media Contact:
Madison McCool
Communications Manager
madi@njcivicinfo.org

December 22, 2025

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Jersey Civic Information Consortium announces new round of grants, surpassing \$12 million in total statewide investment

The New Jersey Civic Information Consortium (NJCIC) today announced a new round of grant awards supporting community-centered local news across the state. With this latest round of funding **totalling \$1,274,046**, the Consortium's total investment in New Jersey's civic information ecosystem now exceeds **\$12 million**.

This grant cycle includes renewal grants, new grants, and supplemental "bump-up" awards supporting nonprofit newsrooms, community-based media organizations, investigative outlets, and journalism training programs serving communities across New Jersey.

"Reaching more than \$12 million in total investment is a major milestone for the Consortium," said Lisa Sahulka, Executive Director of the Consortium. "These grants reflect our commitment to ensuring that every New Jerseyan—regardless of zip code, language, or background—has access to trustworthy, relevant information about the issues that shape their daily lives. We are very proud that we are able to leverage NJ State dollars with private funders and partnerships to expand the reach of our grant making."

To highlight the scope and reach of this work, the Consortium also launched a new interactive [grantee map](#), offering a visual snapshot of how NJCIC's investment in civic information is reaching communities across New Jersey. The map highlights the geographic diversity and statewide reach of the Consortium's more than \$12 million in grantmaking to date.

Renewals:

- [Black In Jersey \(Statewide\)](#) – **\$60,000**: Black In Jersey is a Trenton-based digital storytelling and media organization that amplifies Black voices across New Jersey through community-centered reporting and documentary-style storytelling. This grant supports organizational sustainability and leadership development.
- [Clinton Hill Community Action \(Essex County\)](#) – **\$75,000**: Clinton Hill Community Action's Journalism Department empowers Newark residents through storytelling, media production, and civic engagement. Funding supports the organization's digital newsletter, *The Clinton Hill Record*, which elevates community voices and shares locally rooted reporting.
- [Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University \(Statewide\)](#):
 - [Research & Development: \\$94,045.88](#) — This funding supports a full-time position at the Center for Cooperative Media focused on researching New Jersey's media ecosystem and evaluating the impact of Consortium-funded journalism.
 - [The News Commons Spanish Translation Service: \\$50,000](#) — The News Commons Spanish Translation Service expands access to critical statewide news for Spanish-speaking communities across New Jersey.
- [Public Square Amplified \(Essex County\)](#) – **\$100,000**: Public Square Amplified is a community-centered newsroom that uses journalism as a civic tool while training the next generation of journalists. This grant supports Public Square Amplified's Citizen Journalists program.
- [Ridge View Echo \(Warren County\)](#) – **\$100,000**: Ridge View Echo is a nonprofit online newsroom serving rural and small-town communities in Warren County and surrounding areas. Funding supports local accountability reporting, community engagement, and long-term sustainability for community-based journalism.
- [The Jersey Vindicator \(Statewide\)](#) – **\$100,000**: The Jersey Vindicator is a statewide nonprofit investigative newsroom focused on accountability, explanatory, and solutions journalism. This grant supports expanded investigative reporting capacity and increased statewide access to public-interest journalism.
- [Radio Jornalera NJ \(Statewide\)](#) – **\$100,000**: Radio Jornalera NJ is an independent, community-based media outlet serving immigrant and working-class communities. Funding supports bilingual programming, community reporting, and capacity building to amplify immigrant voices across New Jersey.

- [NJ Spotlight News \(Statewide\)](#) – **\$100,000**: This grant supports a full-time Washington, D.C.–based correspondent covering federal policy, agencies, and New Jersey’s congressional delegation, ensuring New Jersey residents have access to timely and relevant national reporting.
- [South Jersey Emerging Journalists Project \(South Jersey\)](#) – **\$50,000**: The South Jersey Emerging Journalist Project provides training, fellowships, and professional development for Black journalists across South Jersey. Funding supports leadership capacity and journalist fellowships that strengthens pathways into journalism careers.

New Grants

- [MercerMe \(Mercer County\)](#) – **\$75,000**: MercerMe is an independent, community-supported digital newsroom serving Hopewell Valley. This grant supports organizational growth and sustainability, helping to ensure continued access to free, reliable local news for the Mercer County community.
- [NJ Monitor \(Statewide\)](#) – **\$210,000**: This grant supports a dedicated health care reporter at the New Jersey Monitor, strengthening coverage of health policy, public health, and the health care system across the state. *This funding supports up to three years and is funded in part by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.*
- [Village Green \(Essex County\)](#) – **\$40,000**: Village Green provides daily local news coverage for Maplewood, South Orange, and surrounding communities. Funding supports student newsroom internships that expand coverage while creating paid, mentored opportunities for emerging journalists.

Bump-Up Grants

The Consortium awarded six bump-up grants:

- [Central Desi \(Mercer County\)](#) – **\$20,000**: Central Desi serves as the premier news outlet for South Asian communities across New Jersey. With this grant, Central Desi will continue to deliver reliable, culturally informed journalism serving a diverse audience in multiple South Asian languages and ensuring representation for immigrant and diaspora voices.
- [Chalkbeat Newark \(Essex County\)](#) – **\$20,000**: Chalkbeat Newark is a national nonprofit newsroom with a local presence, focused on education equity and policy. This funding underwrites in-depth education reporting that holds school systems accountable and equips families, educators, and policymakers with

well-researched stories on Newark's classrooms, school financing, and student outcomes.

- [Front Runner New Jersey \(South Jersey\)](#) – **\$20,000**: Front Runner New Jersey is a digital news platform dedicated to covering Black and Latino communities throughout South Jersey. This grant supports original reporting that amplifies underheard people, perspectives, and events across South Jersey.
- [Slice of Culture \(Hudson County\)](#) – **\$20,000**: Slice of Culture, hosted at Saint Peters University, is a Gen Z led newsroom rooted in Hudson County. The grant will support locally focused civic reporting by youth journalists who produce multimedia stories, podcasts, and distributed newsletters addressing culture, community, and civic life in Jersey City.
- [The Jersey Bee \(Essex County\)](#) – **\$20,000**: The Jersey Bee is a hyperlocal nonprofit newsroom producing accessible, community-driven journalism across New Jersey's diverse BIPOC and working-class neighborhoods. Funding supports expanded reporting capacity and deeper community engagement through pop-up reporting events, town halls, and English to Spanish translated content.
- [Trenton Journal \(Mercer\)](#) – **\$20,000**: The Trenton Journal is an independent nonprofit dedicated to original accountability reporting in New Jersey's capital. This grant supports expanded newsroom staffing, audience engagement , and sustainability efforts.

To learn more about the Consortium's work and to apply for a grant, visit njcivicinfo.org.
To explore the reach of the Consortium's grantmaking, visit njcivicinfo.org/map.