

## LJI 2025 - 2027 PROGRAM GUIDELINES



Community  
Radio Fund  
of Canada



News Media Canada  
Médias d'Info Canada

## **About the Local Journalism Initiative**

The LJI supports the creation of original civic journalism that covers the diverse needs of **underserved communities** across Canada, including the needs of **underrepresented groups**.

Communities are considered underserved if they are:

### **News deserts**

Communities where citizens do not have access to journalistic information about community issues and institutions because there are no daily or community newspapers and other media (for example, community radio or television). Also, if there are other public or private broadcasters, they do not produce local news.

### **Areas of “news poverty”**

Communities where there is limited access to journalistic content about community issues and institutions through a daily newspaper, online news service, or public or private broadcaster. Available sources of local news — whether a newspaper, a community radio station or other media — demonstrate significant gaps in coverage due to a lack of capacity

Funding is available to eligible Canadian media organizations to hire journalists or pay freelance journalists to produce **civic journalism** for **underserved communities**.

The content produced is made available to media organizations through a [Creative Commons license](#) so that Canadians can be better informed. In addition to a media organization’s publication, the journalistic content will be made available via an LJI **distribution portal**.

### **The core objectives of the Local Journalism Initiative are to:**

- support the creation of original civic journalistic content for underserved communities;
- promote employment and coverage that reflects Canadian diversity; and
- provide support in a manner that preserves the independence of the press.

[To access the French version of the guidelines, click here.](#)

[Pour accéder à la version francophone des lignes directrices, cliquez ici.](#)

## **Program Administration**

To protect the independence of the press, three (3) not-for-profit organizations deliver the Initiative, jointly representing the different segments of the news industry. A single not-for-profit organization delivers the **Changing Narratives Fund** stream.

These organizations provide funding to Canadian media organizations to address the need for local civic journalism in underserved communities.

### **Community Media Coalition, represented by the Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC)**

News industry segments supported:

- Ethnic media: newspapers, online news services, community radio and community television stations
- English-language community radio stations outside of Québec
- English-language community television stations
- French-language community television stations outside of Québec
- Indigenous community radio stations and community television stations

*Please note: The Community Media Coalition, represented by the CRFC, is the sole organization administering the Changing Narratives Fund.*

For more information, visit the [Community Radio Fund of Canada](#) website.

### **Consortium of Official Language Minority Community Media**

News industry segments supported:

- Official language minority community newspapers and online news services
- Official language minority community radio stations
- French-language community radio stations in Québec
- French-language community television stations in Québec

For more information, visit the [Consortium of Official Language Minority Community Media](#) website.

### **News Media Canada**

News industry segments supported:

- English-language newspapers and online news services
- French-language newspapers and online news services
- Indigenous newspapers and online news services

For more information, visit the [News Media Canada](#) website.

This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada.

Canada 

### **About the Community Media Coalition**

The Community Media Coalition (CMC) includes representatives from the news industry segments that are supported by the CRFC as part of the Local Journalism Initiative.

### **About the Community Radio Fund of Canada**

The Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC) advocates for the community media sector and secures and contributes resources to further the sector's evolution, sustainability, and impact.

For more information, contact:

Francella Fiallos, Program Officer  
[lji-ijl@crfc-fcrc.ca](mailto:lji-ijl@crfc-fcrc.ca) | 613-552-3634

### **About News Media Canada**

News Media Canada (NMC) is the national association representing print and digital news media across Canada. News Media Canada advocates in public policy for daily and community media outlets and contributes to the ongoing evolution of the news media industry by raising awareness and promoting the benefits of news media across all platforms.

For more information, contact:

[lji@newsmediacanada.ca](mailto:lji@newsmediacanada.ca)

## **\*New for 2025-2027\***

In order to specifically address existing gaps in coverage and challenges for diverse journalists, the Department of Canadian Heritage has introduced **two new funding opportunities within the LJI**:

1. **Changing Narratives Fund (CNF)**: This stream offers funding to media organizations seeking to hire **journalists** who self-identify as **Indigenous, Black, racialized, ethnoreligious minority, 2SLGBTQIA+, and/or a person with disabilities**.

To learn more about the **Changing Narratives Fund** and application requirements, please [visit our website](#).

2. **Pilot Project for enhanced support under LJI**: To respond to the distinct challenges of **start-up organizations, Indigenous organizations, and rural/remote** organizations, including geographical isolation, limited opportunities, and cultural considerations, this stream offers enhanced eligible expenses, such as travel expenses, accommodation expenses, and professional development expenses, to media organizations that are located in **rural, remote, and/or Indigenous communities**. The objective is to expand the reach and accessibility of **civic journalism** by addressing gaps in **underserved communities** and ensuring that underrepresented populations see their realities reflected in coverage.

## **Eligible Applicants**

To be eligible for funding under the LJI, an organization must meet all of the following criteria:

- The organization must be a Canadian press agency, non-profit, or private-sector news organization operating in one or more of the following sectors:
  - Written press
  - Community radio
  - Community television
  - Online news service
  
- The organization must:
  - be majority owned and controlled by Canadians;
  - operate in Canada, including having content edited and designed in Canada;
  - be either a member of a recognized journalistic association and follow the code of ethics of a recognized journalistic association, or have its own code of ethics whose standards of professional conduct require adherence to the recognized processes and principles of the journalism profession, including fairness, independence, and rigour in reporting news and handling sources.

**Indigenous organizations** are eligible if they operate an Indigenous news outlet in Canada and produce news content that includes matters of general interest, including coverage of matters relating to the rights of Indigenous peoples, the right of self-government, and/or treaty rights.

### **Who CANNOT apply?**

- Private non-community broadcasters
- CBC/Radio-Canada

## **Eligible Activities**

Organizations that receive funding will hire **journalists** to produce **civic journalism** for **underserved communities**. Journalists employed through the LJI can be full-time, part-time, or freelance. Journalistic content produced through the LJI must be made available to all media organizations and/or the public simultaneously and at no cost (e.g., through a **Creative Commons** license).

Funded organizations shall not use the funding to support the production of:

- content that does not pertain to current events or local issues;
- illegal content (e.g. hate propaganda);
- opinions;
- advertising;
- content that is demonstrably false or misleading; or
- investigative content to inform a lobbying and/or advocacy strategy with levels of government (federal, provincial, territorial, or municipal).

To ensure that funds support incremental content creation, funded organizations must attest that employment created through the LJI would not have otherwise been created without financial support.

## **Funding Information**

### **Eligible Expenses**

#### **Which expenses are covered by the Local Journalism Initiative?**

The funding for this program covers the following expenses:

##### **1. Journalist Salaries**

- Remuneration paid for journalistic work performed
- All **Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs)**, such as EI and CPP contributions, vacation pay, workers' compensation, and any other employer deductions
- Up to \$60,000 per full-time journalist position annualized\*

*Please Note: The LJI program will **not** fund the salary of an existing **journalist position** at your organization. However, requests can be made to **increase the number of hours worked** by an existing journalist position.*

##### **2. Equipment**

- The purchase or lease of equipment required for LJI-funded journalists to produce journalistic content
- Equipment purchased remains the property of the media organization at the end of the LJI agreement
- Includes **accessibility-related expenses** for **journalists** who self-identify as Deaf, having disabilities, and/or living with mental illness.
- Up to 5% of total approved funding\*

*\*Please note that special requests for **increased funding could be considered** depending on the need and the availability of funds, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis.*

### **Pilot Project**

**Rural, remote, Indigenous, and start-up organizations** may be eligible to receive enhanced eligible expenses, such as:

- **Support for Indigenous self-determination:** Eligible expenses related to translation, editorial guidance, mentoring, consultation, and initiatives promoting the preservation and use of Indigenous languages. Activities must support Indigenous self-determination in journalism by ensuring content is accessible, culturally respectful, and aligned with community needs and practices. **Only available to Indigenous media organizations.**

- **Travel and accommodation:** To facilitate reporting from **rural, remote**, or hard-to-reach areas, eligible costs include travel and accommodation related to the production or dissemination of content, especially in **rural, remote**, or **underserved** areas. **Reimbursement of these expenses shall not exceed the rates specified in the [Government of Canada Travel Directive](#).**
- **Mentoring and professional development:** Eligible expenses related to training, mentorship, and professional development that advance equity, inclusion, and capacity-building for journalists and editorial staff directly engaged in the LJI.
- **Operational costs:** Eligible costs include expenditures enabling operational or technological improvements that enhance the dissemination of content and foster greater community engagement, such as:
  - digital transformation and technology investments;
  - use or development of digital platforms;
  - outreach and community engagement;
  - temporary infrastructure or tools that strengthen local access to journalism.

*The CRFC and NMC will be contacting media organizations that have been approved for LJI funding and are eligible to receive enhanced eligible expenses to provide more information about the Pilot Project.*

**All other expenses are not eligible under the Local Journalism Initiative.**

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## **Important Dates and Deadlines**

November 28, 2025 - Applications Open

December 19, 2025 - Applications Close

December 19, 2025 – January 15, 2026- Assessment and  
Selection Process

January 16, 2026 - Notification of results

*\*This timeline is subject to change.*

*Depending on the availability of funds, a second application round  
may be opened.*

## **Application Requirements**

**Applications are submitted through the online application portal.**

To apply via the application portal, you must create an account.

To access the portal, please click on this link: <https://mycrfc-monfrcr.smapply.io/prog/lji-ijl/>

**To be considered for assessment, applicants must complete and submit the following forms and documents in the portal before the application deadline.**

### **1. Media Organization Profile**

- Key details about the applicant organization

### **2. Application Form**

- Key information about the community the applicant intends to cover, as well as specific gaps in local news
- The applicant must address how participation in the LJI can address news gaps, and key metrics for measuring success and impact
- A proposal for a **journalist position**, including proposed content, measures to uphold journalistic ethics, and execution of program activities
- Budget: Salary and Equipment request and request rationale

### **3. Mandatory Support Documents**

- Articles of incorporation
- Financial statements (most recently completed year)
- For print publications:
  - Digital replica of one regular issue from each of the four quarters in the last 12 months;
  - Printer's invoices showing the quantity printed for the 4 issues being submitted.

If you are unable to provide one or more mandatory documents, please contact the CRFC or News Media Canada as soon as possible.

**The CRFC and News Media Canada acknowledge receipt, by email, of any funding applications successfully submitted through the online platform.**

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## **Supporting Materials**

Although not required, all applicants have the option to submit additional supporting materials, such as letters of support, circulation or audience measurement reports, brand reports, and/or

website traffic audit reports, to further elaborate on details in the application. Applicants are not negatively impacted if additional supporting materials are not included in their submission.

## **Self-Identification form**

### **Purpose and Use**

LJI journalists have the option to complete a Self-Identification form voluntarily. The Self-Identification form is an optional supporting document that can be submitted as part of the LJI application process. It is not required to submit a completed Self-Identification form to be considered for LJI funding.

The form serves two functions:

1. Statistical reporting on the achievement of program priorities
2. Access to additional funding opportunities based on the identity of the journalist

For every question on the Self-Identification form, journalists have the option to select 'Prefer not to answer.' However, to be considered for additional funding opportunities, journalists must respond to the relevant self-identification questions.

### **Additional funding opportunities through the Local Journalism Initiative**

→ Accessibility-related expenses are eligible to support journalists who self-identify as Deaf or as living with disabilities or mental illness. This includes permanent, temporary, or episodic conditions—visible or invisible—that create barriers to full participation. Eligible supports may include sign language interpretation, support workers, transcribers, guides, accessible formats, or specialized equipment and services necessary for journalistic work.

→ Measures to support Indigenous self-determination, including Indigenous-led initiatives and equitable access and services for Indigenous news organizations and journalists

### **Additional funding opportunities through the Changing Narratives Fund**

→ Professional development support may be offered to a journalist who self-identifies as a member of one of the following communities:

- Black,
- Indigenous,
- racialized,
- ethnoreligious,
- people with disabilities
- 2SLGBTQIA+ communities

The information submitted in the Self-Identification form is used solely to evaluate eligibility for these funding opportunities. The data shared with the Department of Canadian Heritage will be completely anonymized. Information submitted in the Self-Identification form will be stored according to the Administrators' Protection of Personal Information and Privacy policy.

## **Assessment and Selection Process**

The selection of media organizations is governed by a clear, fair, transparent, and open decision-making process. The process is managed through a multi-stage review that involves the Programs Team and an Independent Selection Committee.

- **Programs Team** (CRFC & NMC): Responsible for the administrative management of the process, including eligibility screening, conflict of interest (COI) management, and implementing the final funding decisions and regional adjustments.
- **Independent Selection Committee:** A group of external experts with diverse backgrounds (including representation from LJI underrepresented groups) is convened to review and score all eligible applications impartially based solely on the published criteria. All members must sign a Conflict of Interest (COI) declaration and adhere to strict confidentiality.

The assessment and selection process is divided into four sequential stages:

### **Stage 1: Eligibility Screening**

The Programs Team reviews all submitted applications (Media Organization Profile, Application Form, and Budget) against the mandatory baseline requirements:

- **Applicant Eligibility:** Verification of Canadian ownership, operation within Canada, and adherence to a journalistic code of ethics.
- **Completeness and Compliance:** Confirmation that all mandatory forms are submitted and complete. If documents are not submitted, applicants will be contacted by the Programs Team and will have one week to submit missing forms or documents.

### **Stage 2: Project Evaluation**

The Independent Selection Committee evaluates all eligible applications using the 100-point scoring system published in the **Project Evaluation Criteria (Annex 1)** section.

- Each application is scored based on the evidence provided for Relevance (40 points), Impact (40 points), and Capacity (20 points).
- Scores are finalized, and a ranked list based on the total score is produced.

### **Stage 3: Strategic Prioritization**

In order to contribute to the advancement of the LJI's objectives and to contribute to an enhanced media landscape with greater diversity, a **Strategic Bonus** score is applied to the

Project Evaluation Score by the Independent Selection Committee. This allows the committee to identify funding priorities rooted in reconciliation, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The **Strategic Bonus** of up to 10 points (**see Annex 1**) is applied based on the Strategic Priority they meet (e.g., Indigenous Media, **News Desert**, **Rural/Remote** service to targeted communities). This creates the final ranked list.

#### **Stage 4: Equitable Geographical Distribution**

The final ranked list is reviewed, and an adjustment may be made to ensure an equitable geographical distribution of funds. This adjustment may result in funding a lower-ranked application from an underrepresented region over a higher-ranked application from an overrepresented region. The final ranked list is then approved by the Independent Selection Committee.

## **Notification of Results**

The CRFC or NMC will be referred to as the 'Administrator' in the following section for clarity.

All applicants will receive an email from the Administrator regarding the results of the evaluation process. Successful applicants receive a formal Offer of Contribution. Unsuccessful applicants are notified and are provided an opportunity for a feedback session with a Program Officer.

If there is evidence to suggest that a procedural error occurred during the assessment of the application, complaints can be filed with the Administrator via the procedure outlined in the Administrator's **Appeal Policy** available on the Administrator's program webpage.

*Please Note: The Local Journalism Initiative is a competitive program with a limited funding envelope. Applying does not guarantee funding for your media organization.*

## **Recipient obligations**

Each recipient must attest that employment created through the LJI would not have otherwise been created without financial support.

### **Contribution Agreement**

The Administrator will enter into a **contribution agreement** with successful applicants that outlines the terms, responsibilities, approved activities, expected results, approved expenses, as well as reporting and accountability mechanisms of both parties. The Administrator will ensure that recipients clearly understand their responsibilities and program requirements.

The **contribution agreement** will include:

### **1. Content Expectations**

The contribution agreement will describe the specific volume, type, and format of news content proposed by the recipient to be produced by the LJI Journalist. The Administrator will monitor the volume of stories uploaded to the **national distribution platform** to ensure that the recipient is meeting their proposed quota of news content.

### **2. Payment Schedules**

Funding will be dispersed in a minimum of three payments. Depending on the project, there may be more than three payments.

- **Payment 1:** A percentage of the total allocation is issued upon written confirmation that the recipient has secured a journalist
- **Payment 2:** A percentage of the total allocation is issued upon successful completion of the Progress Report midway through the project's term
- **Payment 3:** Also referred to as a 'final' payment or 'holdback' payment, this represents up to 10% of the total allocation that is issued upon successful completion of the Final Report at the end of the project

*Please Note: The Administrator reserves the right to negotiate other payment conditions, including the distribution of payment amounts, with recipients. The **Contribution Agreement** remains the official document outlining the various terms and conditions of the financial contribution.*

### **3. Reporting Requirements**

All recipients will be required to submit progress report(s) and a final report during the term, based on a format provided by the Administrator. This will include an update of activities, a summary of progress on achieving goals, an explanation of any significant challenges or delays, and a financial summary.

### **4. Acknowledgment of Funding Program**

The recipient media organizations must acknowledge the support and funding of the Local Journalism Initiative per the Contribution Agreement.

Acknowledgement of the LJI program serves as a hallmark that this content can be republished by other media outlets.

*Any recipient in violation of the terms of a previous agreement with the Administrator will not be eligible for any new funding until they have fulfilled their outstanding obligations*

### **5. Content Distribution**

The recipient's LJI journalist's news content must be shared on a national distribution platform.

- CMC / CRFC: <https://www.frequencynews.ca/> (<https://www.frequenceinfo.ca/> en français)
- NMC: <https://lji-ijl.ca>

Content produced by journalists hired through the Local Journalism Initiative is available to be republished by Canadian media organizations through a **Creative Commons** license. Their content will also be made available to the public.

## **Annex 1: Project Evaluation Criteria and Strategic Bonus Scoring**

The following table details the three core criteria, evaluation prompts, and the maximum points available. All applicants are evaluated equally against these criteria.

The Independent Selection Committee reviews applications using the following criteria:

### **1. RELEVANCE (40 Points Maximum)**

Criteria	Evaluation Prompts	Max Points
1.1 Underserved Community Identification	Does the proposal clearly demonstrate that the target community is a News Desert or an Area of News Poverty, supported by a compelling rationale? For applicants who self-identified as belonging to rural/remote/Indigenous communities, is their proposal supported by a compelling rationale?	15
1.2 Scope of Coverage & Gaps	Does the proposal clearly outline the geographical communities and the specific gaps in existing news coverage that the project will address?	15
1.3 Target Community Service	Does the proposal demonstrate that the applicant has a clear understanding of the local news issues present in their intended coverage area?	10

### **2. IMPACT (40 Points Maximum)**

Criteria	Evaluation Prompts	Max Points
2.1 Alignment with LJI Objectives	Does the proposal demonstrate a strong alignment with LJI's core objectives: supporting civic journalism, reflecting diversity, and addressing the identified news gaps?	10
2.2 Quality of Proposed Content Plan	Does the proposal articulate a compelling and effective rationale for how the media organization is well-suited to fill the specific news gaps identified?	15
2.3 Strength of impact	Does the proposal strongly demonstrate the potential impact that could be made by regular news coverage through participation in the LJI?	15

### 3. CAPACITY (20 Points Maximum)

Criteria	Evaluation Prompts	Max Points
3.1 Oversight & Content Plan Feasibility	Has the organization made a strong case that they are fully equipped to support and oversee the journalist? Is the plan for the content expectations fair, reasonable, and impactful?	5
3.2 Journalistic Integrity & Ethics	Does the organization demonstrate that it is equipped to uphold journalistic integrity and use best practices?	10
3.3 Organizational resilience and budgeting	Does the applicant demonstrate an ability to forecast reasonable yet manageable challenges while being proactive in addressing possible issues? Is the budget realistic in supporting the journalist position(s) and equipment needs proposed by the applicant?	5

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### Strategic Bonus Scoring

Indigenous Media (Pilot Project Eligible)	10 points
News Desert <b>OR</b> Rural/Remote Area of News Poverty (serving an <b>underrepresented group</b> )	7 points
Urban Area of News Poverty (serving an underrepresented group)	5 points
Rural/Remote Area of News Poverty (General)	3 points
Urban Area of News Poverty (General)	1 point

## **Annex 2 : Glossary**

**2SLGBTQIA+ communities:** A person who identifies as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is someone who identifies as Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual people and those who use other terms related to gender and sexual diversity outside the heterosexual and cisgender norm.

**Accessibility-related expenses:** Expenses that support journalists who self-identify as deaf or as living with disabilities or mental illness. This includes permanent, temporary, or episodic conditions—visible or invisible—that create barriers to full participation. Eligible supports may include sign language interpretation, support workers, transcribers, guides, accessible formats, or specialized equipment and services necessary for journalistic work. Eligible equipment expenses shall not exceed 5% of journalist salaries funding.

**Annualized:** Adjusted or calculated so as to reflect a rate that is based on a full year.

**Black communities:** Black communities generally include diverse individuals, populations, and communities in Canada that identify as having African or Caribbean ancestry

**Civic journalism:** Civic journalism covers the activities of the country's civic institutions (for example, courthouses, city halls, band councils, school boards, federal Parliament or provincial legislatures) or subjects of public importance to society. For the purposes of the LJI, opinion columns, editorials and advertorials do not represent civic journalism.

**Contribution Agreement:** A legally-binding document that outlines the terms and conditions of financial assistance and support offered by the funder to a recipient organization.

**Creative Commons License:** A Creative Commons (CC) license is one of several public copyright licenses that enable the free distribution of an otherwise copyrighted "work." A CC license is used when an author wants to give other people the right to share, use, and build upon a work that he or she (that author) has created. CC provides an author flexibility (for example, he or she might choose to allow only non-commercial uses of a given work) and protects the people who use or redistribute an author's work from concerns of copyright infringement as long as they abide by the conditions that are specified in the license by which the author distributes the work.

There are several types of CC licenses. The organization Creative Commons offers a core suite of 6 copyright licenses. Because there is no single "Creative Commons license," it is important to identify which of the 6 licenses you are applying to your material, which of the 6 licenses has been applied to material that you intend to use, and the specific version.

Further details on how to apply a CC license can be found on the [Creative Commons organization's website](#).

**Disabled persons or Persons with disabilities:** Individuals living with one or more physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, sensory or communicational conditions or functional limitations

that, in interaction with a social, policy or environmental barrier, presently hinders their full and equal participation in society. These conditions or functional limitations – evident or not – may be permanent, temporary or episodic in nature.

**Diverse-mandated or diverse-led media organization:** A diverse news organization, within the context of the LJI, is one in which at least 30% of its board members or leadership identify as belonging to one or more underrepresented groups—such as ethnocultural communities, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, official language minority communities—and/or an organization whose primary mandate is to serve these communities.

**Employer:** Employer means the media organization receiving funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage through the Administrator to employ or engage the person described as “employee”.

**Ethnic media:** A media sector dedicated to ethnocultural community coverage reflecting diversity through multilingual communication and reaching audiences in their language of comfort.

**Ethnocultural communities:** Ethnocultural communities have a common identity, heritage ancestry or historical past, often with identifiable racial, cultural, linguistic and/or religious characteristics that set them apart from the dominant culture. This includes specific linguistic communities that primarily use languages other than Canada’s official languages.

**Ethno-religious minority:** An ethno-religious minority community (or an ethno-religious minority group) is a grouping of people who are unified by a common religious and ethnic background. This faith-based community have numbers smaller in relation to the population of other faith-based groups and who experience infringements on their Charter rights, and/or prejudice and discrimination (individual and systemic) based on racialized perceptions and misunderstandings of their faith. In Canada, these are people who identify as being affiliated with a non-Christian religion, for example, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jewish, Traditional (Indigenous) Spirituality, etc.

**Freelance Journalist:** A self-employed individual hired on a contract basis to produce content, as opposed to a permanent employee. The treatment of MERCs and benefits differs for this position type.

**Full-Time Equivalent (FTE):** The unit of measurement for hours worked at an organization that represents one single full-time employee. An employee who works full-time hours is 1 FTE. An employee who works part-time hours is a fraction of 1 FTE based on the number of hours worked.

**Indigenous:** “Indigenous peoples” is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants, this includes: First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

**Indigenous Organization:** An organization that is majority-owned and controlled by Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit, or Métis) and whose mission is focused on serving Indigenous communities.

**Initial Recipient:** Formerly known as Administrative Organization (AO). This term references one of the three not-for-profit organizations entrusted with managing the LJI program.

**Journalist:** A “journalist” is a person whose main occupation is to contribute directly, for a fee, to the collection, writing or production of information for a news or media organization, to be disseminated to the public. A journalist performs one or more of the following tasks: searches for information; reports; interviews; writes or prepares articles or analyses; takes photographs or produces broadcast or digital journalism. Journalists are typically bylined in the news piece. Official language minority communities: The official language minority communities are the English-speaking communities residing in Quebec and the Francophone communities residing outside of Quebec.

**Journalist Position:** A specific and individual role that is offered by a media organization or media outlet with unique responsibilities, qualifications, and conditions of work related to the field of journalism.

**Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs):** The employer's portion of payroll deductions and contributions (e.g., CPP, EI, WCB, EHT, vacation pay, health benefits). Applicants should factor this into the total salary request for the journalist position(s).

**National distribution platform (distribution portal):** A platform that ensures that the LJI-funded journalistic content is made available to all media organizations and the public simultaneously and at no cost via a Creative Commons license)

- CMC / CRFC: Frequency - <https://www.frequencynews.ca/>  
Fréquence - <https://www.frequenceinfo.ca/> en français)
- NMC: LJI News Centre - <https://lji-ijl.ca>

**News desert:** Communities where citizens do not have access to local news and civic journalism because there are no daily or community newspapers and other media (for example, community radio or television). Also, if they are other public or private broadcasters, they do not produce local news and civic journalism.

**News poverty:** Communities where there is limited access to local news and civic journalism through a daily newspaper or public or private broadcaster. Available sources of news — whether a newspaper, a community radio station or other media — demonstrate significant gaps in coverage due to a lack of capacity.

**Official language minority communities:** The official language minority communities are the English-speaking communities residing in Québec and the Francophone communities residing outside of Québec.

**Pilot Project:** A defined stream of funding within the LJI dedicated to undertaking initiatives that specifically respond to the distinct challenges of start-up organizations, Indigenous organizations, and rural/remote organizations.

**Racialized communities:** The term “racialized” acknowledges that race is a social construct and that racialization is a process through which groups come to be socially constructed as

racism, based on characteristics such as ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics. It can be applied to people and attributed to them as a group in ways that negatively impact their social, political, and economic life (e.g., Black, Asian).

**Rural/Remote communities:** For the purposes of the LJI, rural and remote communities are generally areas located outside of population centers, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, that includes northern, coastal, and geographically isolated regions with limited transportation infrastructure. These communities typically have populations under 10,000, low population density, and may reflect distinct linguistic, cultural, or Indigenous identities. They are also characterized by limited access to essential public services such as health care, post-secondary education, public transit, or high-speed internet.

**Start-up news organization:** For the purposes of the LJI, a start-up news organization refers to a newly established media outlet that has been in operation:

- a) for less than one year and is in the early stages of developing its audience, operations, and sustainability model, or
- b) for less than three years if funds are used to expand coverage to news deserts.

Organizations must also operate in the fields of written press, community radio, community television, online news services or similar. They must have the objective to increase local civic journalism in underserved communities. They must operate with editorial independence, adhere to recognized journalistic standards, and be incorporated or structured as a Canadian legal entity, such as a not-for-profit, registered business, or Indigenous-led initiative.

**Strategic Bonus:** A mechanism used during the assessment phase to award additional points (or funding allocation) to applications that demonstrate a high degree of alignment with specific strategic priorities, such as serving News Deserts or Indigenous communities.

**Ultimate Recipient:** To be eligible as an Ultimate Recipient under the LJI, an organization must meet all of the following criteria:

- The organization must be a Canadian non-profit or private-sector news organization operating in one or more of the following sectors:
  - Written press
  - Community radio
  - Community television
  - Online news service
  - Press agency

Note: Private non-community broadcasters and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC/Radio-Canada) are not eligible.

- The organization must:
  - Be majority owned and controlled by Canadians;
  - Operate in Canada, including having content edited and designed in Canada;
  - Be either a member of a recognized journalistic association and follow the code of ethics of a recognized journalistic association or have its own code of ethics whose standards of professional conduct require adherence to the recognized

processes and principles of the journalism profession, including fairness, independence and rigour in reporting news and handling sources.

- Indigenous organizations are eligible if they operate an Indigenous news outlet in Canada and produce news content that includes matters of general interest, including coverage of matters relating to the rights of Indigenous peoples, the right of self-government and/or treaty rights.

**Underrepresented groups:** Underrepresented groups, for the purposes of the LJI, refer to communities that have historically faced barriers to full participation and equitable representation in Canadian media: Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), ethnocultural communities, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and official language minority communities.

**Underserved communities:** Underserved communities are either news deserts or areas of news poverty where citizens do not have access or have limited access to journalistic information about community issues and institutions, respectively.

**News deserts:** Communities where citizens do not have access to local news and civic journalism because there are no daily or community newspapers and other media (for example, community radio or television). Also, if there are other public or private broadcasters, they do not produce local news and civic journalism; and

**News poverty:** Communities where there is limited access to local news and civic journalism through a daily newspaper or public or private broadcaster. Available sources of news — whether a newspaper, a community radio station or other media — demonstrate significant gaps in coverage due to a lack of capacity.