



Fonds canadien de la  
**radio communautaire**

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**Community Radio**  
Fund of Canada

# **LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE**

***2023-2024***

**PROGRAM  
GUIDELINES**

## ABOUT THE COMMUNITY RADIO FUND OF CANADA

The Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC) seeks and secures resources to fuel the production, distribution and sustainability of Canada's community audio broadcasters through dynamic funding programs.

The CRFC advocates for and supports the contribution of community audio broadcasters to the media sector in Canada, reflecting the diversity of their listeners, promoting independent, local and content, and building their capacity to connect and inform their communities.

## ABOUT THE LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

The Local Journalism Initiative (LJI) supports the creation of **original civic journalism** that covers the diverse needs of **underserved communities** across Canada.

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

The content produced will be made available to media organizations through a ***Creative Commons*** license so that Canadians can be better informed.

The Community Radio Fund of Canada is one of the not-for-profit organizations administering the Initiative. This project has been made possible by the [Government of Canada](#).

## OBJECTIVE OF THE LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

The CRFC will fund eligible campus, community and Indigenous radio stations to hire journalists to produce journalism that covers the diverse needs of underserved communities across Canada.

It is an opportunity for stations who would otherwise not have the means to hire a journalist to be able to create news content that is relevant to the communities that the station serves.

Having a paid journalist on staff with the singular goal of producing journalism will help stations have an even deeper connection with their communities. The journalist will create news content covering the municipal institutions of the community (courthouses, city halls, band councils, school boards, federal Parliament or provincial legislatures etc.) or other subjects of public importance.

This journalistic content will be made available to all Canadian media outlets for the benefit of all Canadians via the program's national distribution platform.

## NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION PLATFORM

The stories that matter to your community also matter to other Canadians. We commit to not only supporting the journalism created by this initiative, but to sharing it with the rest of the country.

The stories produced by journalists hired through the LJI program are made available to Canadian media outlets and the public at no charge via the **national distribution platform** at [Canada-Info.ca](https://Canada-Info.ca). Canadian media outlets will be able to rebroadcast and share the content created by the LJI journalists via a Creative Commons license.

## NATIONAL EDITORS

The **National Editors (NEs)** work alongside successful applicants to assist with hiring, training and overseeing the journalists hired through this initiative as needed to ensure overall success. They are the editors of [Canada-Info.ca](https://Canada-Info.ca) and provide feedback, guidance and resources to the LJI journalists through weekly editorial meetings and one on one sessions.

The journalists work alongside and communicate regularly with the NEs to ensure all of the journalistic content they create is vetted and published via the national distribution platform, [Canada-Info.ca](https://Canada-Info.ca).

## TIMELINE

### 2022

**October 18**  
Applications open

**October 18 - November 21**  
Feedback offered to stations on their proposals and draft application forms.

**November 21**  
Applications close

### 2023

**February 1**  
Final Recipients announced

**February 15**  
Contribution agreements signed  
Station Orientations begin

**April 1 2023 - March 31, 2024**  
Funding period

*\*Timeline subject to change*

## ELIGIBILITY

### Who can apply?

Eligible applicants are **not-for-profit** Canadian radio stations who hold one of the following CRTC broadcasting licenses:

- **Campus radio** (as set out in Public Notice CRTC 2010-499);
- **Community radio** (as set out in Public Notice CRTC 2010-499);
- **Indigenous Type B radio** (as set out in Public Notice CRTC 1990-89).

A station **does not** have to be a CRFC member to apply for funding.

Any recipient not meeting the terms of a previous agreement with the CRFC will not be eligible for any new funding until they have fulfilled these obligations.

Stations are able to form partnerships to share journalists for a shared region of the country. One station would put in an application on behalf of the station(s) and will be the lead contact with the CRFC and assume legal and financial responsibility for the project.

Stations that are currently funded must re-apply to be able to continue to receive funding for the following round.

### Purpose of funding

The goal is to hire a professional journalist to create regular journalistic content for an **underserved community** to cover the activities of the community's civic institutions (for example, courthouses, city halls, band councils, school boards, federal Parliament or provincial legislatures) or other subjects of public importance to society.

This program will not fund content that does not pertain to current events or local issues; illegal content (e.g., hate propaganda); opinions; advertising; content demonstrably false or misleading content nor investigative content to inform a lobbying and/or advocacy strategy with levels of government.

This program will not fund the salary of an existing journalist at your station. However, requests can be made to increase the number of hours worked by an existing journalist. Applicants will confirm that the employment made through the initiative would not have otherwise been created without financial support from the program.

## **What is an underserved community and how do you identify one?**

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 or community newspaper 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.

Your application must include a well-stated case, justifying the need for a LJJI reporter, that provides information about the community as well as the media that serve it, the reason for the need, and the specific issues of concern that the reporter would cover.

## **What amount is available?**

Up to \$55,000 per project

## **Which expenses are eligible?**

The funding for this program can only cover two expense categories:

- 1) **Journalist salary** (*including all Mandatory Employer Related Costs (MERCs)*)
- 2) **Equipment** (*up to \$2,500*)

*All other expenses related to the execution of the project will be assumed by the recipient.*

## **What is the eligible funding period?**

April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.

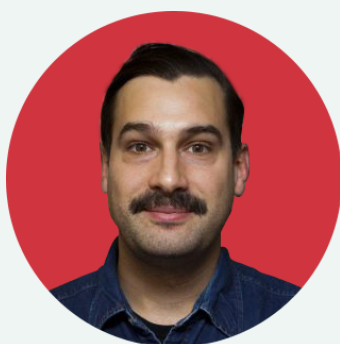
## SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

### CONTACT US

Before submitting your application, we encourage you to contact the CRFC to discuss your funding application. The CRFC can give you more information about eligibility, review your draft application with you and provide advice during the call for funding applications.

Please note that having the CRFC review your application beforehand does not guarantee funding.

#### Contact:



**Emmanuel Sayer**  
Programs Manager  
Community Radio Fund of Canada  
[emmanuel@crfc-fcrc.ca](mailto:emmanuel@crfc-fcrc.ca) / 613-321-3513

### Deadline

The CRFC will accept funding applications until **November 21, 2022 at 11:59 pm EST**. Late applications will be ineligible for funding.

When you have submitted your application, you will receive a confirmation email. If you have not received a confirmation email, your application has not been submitted.

All submitted funding applications will be subject to a thorough review by the CRFC and an independent selection committee. The CRFC may ask for clarification on your application. You will have one week to provide further information on your application.

### Number of applications

Each station may submit one application per call for funding. This includes applications done in partnership with another station.

## Tips:

- ❑ Read the program guidelines carefully.
- ❑ Start preparing your application as soon as possible.
- ❑ Create your user account or update your eligibility profile in your account before preparing your application: <https://mycrfc-monfcrc.smapply.io/>.
- ❑ Invite collaborators to contribute to, edit and/or review your application on the platform.
- ❑ Contact the [Program Officer](#) to discuss your draft application
- ❑ Collect and update all mandatory supporting documents outlined below. Make sure to have an electronic copy of the required documents.

To apply for funding, visit the CRFC's website and click on the red "Portal" button on the top left corner of the main page or head directly to the portal via this link:

<https://mycrfc-monfcrc.smapply.io/>.

## Mandatory documents

When completing your application form, you will be asked to provide the following documents:

- A copy of your letters patent, provincial or federal charter, or any incorporation document;
- A copy of your most recent valid CRTC license (NOT the Industry Canada certificate);
- Financial statements of the last fiscal year;
- Operating budget of your station for the current fiscal year

If possible:

- A copy of your Human Resource Policy and/or other document which demonstrates your commitment to employment equity
- A copy for your Harassment Policy or other document which indicates your commitment to providing a workplace that is free from harassment

*If you do not currently have a Human Resource Policy or Harassment Policy in place the CRFC will provide templates. These policies must be in place if a station is to be funded through the program.*

## ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL

### Selection criteria

Applications are judged by an independent selection committee using a scoring system based on the following criteria:

- The description of the underserved community and the demonstrated need for journalistic coverage
- The applicant's proposed journalistic coverage
- The applicant's ability to implement the project
- The project's ability to further program objectives

A portion of the funding envelope will expand support to underserved communities and underrepresented voices in the media such as Indigenous, racialized, and official language minority communities.

This is a competitive process and submitting an application does not guarantee funding for your project.

### Approval of applications

The results of the application will be sent to applicants by email.

The CRFC plans to publicly announce the list of recipients in early February 2023.

The CRFC will enter into a contribution agreement with successful applicants that outlines the terms, responsibilities, approved activities, expected results, approved expenses, as well as reporting mechanisms of both parties.

### Recipient obligations

Recipients will attend an orientation session with the CRFC and the NEs to learn more about the program's obligations and objectives.

Recipients will be required to follow hiring and human resource policies that promote employment equity and provide a workplace that is free from harassment.

During the funding period, recipients should immediately contact the CRFC in the event of any major changes to the project, as described in the contribution agreement (activities, budget, timeline, etc.).

The CRFC and the NEs will be able to offer support and provide guidance to recipients throughout the project.



## Reports

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

All recipients must submit a final report no later than 30 days following the end date indicated in the contribution agreement. The final report includes:

- A final report based on a format provided by the CRFC;
- A station budget-versus-actual report that verifies the proper accounting of related expenses;
- Proof of payments including applicable receipts.
- Any other document requested by the CRFC

If your final report is late or incomplete, your final payment may be withheld.



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## APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

### **Civic journalism :**

Civic journalism refers to the collection, investigation and dissemination of information for a public audience, undertaken by a professional journalist who follows a recognized code of ethics (e.g. from the Quebec Federation of Professional Journalists (FPJQ) or the National News Media Council (NNC)). This information may cover the activities of the country's civic institutions (e.g. courthouses, city halls, band councils, school boards, federal parliament or provincial legislatures) or subjects of public importance to society. For the purposes of the initiative, opinion columns, editorials and advertorials do not represent civic journalism.

### **CRFC members**

All campus and community radio stations holding a broadcasting license in accordance with public notice 2010-499 as well as the associations that represent them are eligible for CRFC membership. A station that is a member of the National Campus & Community Radio Association, l'Alliance des radio communautaires du Canada or l'Associations des radiodiffuseurs du Québec is considered a CRFC member. The membership year runs from September 1 to August 31.

CRFC members may submit nominations to the Board of Directors, vote in the elections and participate in our annual general meeting. Above all, by becoming a member, you can demonstrate your support to the only organization devoted to financially supporting the campus and community radio sector in Canada. <https://crtc-fcfc.ca/en/crtc/members/>

### **National Editors :**

National Editors assist stations in hiring and training journalists as necessary. They also work with the stations and the journalists hired through this initiative to upload their content to the national platform. They are also there to help coordinate and support all journalistic activities undertaken during this program.

### **National distribution platform :**

The national distribution platform can be found at <https://canada-info.ca>. This platform enables all of the news content created by LJI journalists to be shared with all Canadians. The journalist will be responsible to upload their content to the platform including a short description of the content and all other necessary information. The National Information Coordinators will be available to assist in this task.

### **Underserved community**

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 or community newspaper 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.