

CHANGING NARRATIVES FUND **LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE STREAM**

2025 - 2027 PROGRAM GUIDELINES



**Community
Radio Fund**
of Canada

About the Changing Narratives Fund

The Changing Narratives Fund (CNF) is a new initiative that will support Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, ethno-religious minorities, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ community members to share their stories, experiences, and perspectives, allowing their voices to be accurately and authentically represented in the media and culture sectors in Canada. These communities will be referred to as **CNF priority communities** within this document.

The objective of the CNF is to implement incentives and initiatives that encourage greater participation by members of these communities and organizations in the culture and media sectors. To achieve this objective, the CNF will provide support for mentorship, training and professional development opportunities for and by members of these communities at all career stages to allow an increase in involvement in various industries.

The funding allocated for the CNF will be distributed through three existing programs to better support members of these communities and organizations in the following industries:

- The Canada Media Fund: to support CNF priority communities in the television, digital media, screen industry, and cinematic production industries
- The Local Journalism Initiative (LJI): to support **CNF priority communities** in the written press, community radio, community television and online news service industries
- The Collective Initiatives Component of the Canada Periodical Fund to support diverse communities in the magazine and newspaper industries

About the Changing Narratives Fund - Local Journalism Initiative Stream

The Changing Narratives Fund (CNF) is a distinct stream under the Local Journalism Initiative (LJI) that seeks to cultivate a media landscape that authentically reflects the diversity of Canada's peoples, experiences, and cultures.

This stream will provide funding to eligible Canadian media organizations to hire Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, ethno-religious minorities, persons with disabilities, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities as journalists to produce civic journalism for **underserved communities**. These organizations will offer mentoring, training, and professional development activities to increase their participation in the media sector at all career stages.

The CNF-LJI stream supports the professional advancement of journalists from the following communities:

- Indigenous

- Black
- Racialized
- Ethno-religious minority
- Persons with disabilities
- 2SLGBTQIA+

These communities are referred to as **CNF priority communities** within this document.

The CNF-LJI stream seeks to ensure that their voices, narratives and perspectives are represented with integrity and depth. CNF-LJI journalists may be at any career stage, but emerging or early-career journalists will be prioritized.

Priority will also be given to organizations that have a clearly stated and defined mandate to serve one or more of the CNF priority communities and/or are led by individuals from those communities. These organizations will be referred to as **CNF priority organizations** within this document.

For the purpose of the CNF-LJI stream, a **CNF priority organization** is one that meets the following criteria:

- At least 30% of its board members or leadership positions are held by individuals from the CNF priority communities; and/or
- The organization has a mandate to primarily serve at least one of the **CNF priority communities**

The CNF-LJI stream 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 or public or private broadcaster. Available sources of local news — whether a newspaper, online news service, 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.

The core objectives of the Changing Narratives Fund - LJI Stream are to:

- increase the representation and active participation of journalists from underrepresented communities
- strengthen career growth and advancement opportunities through mentorship, peer learning, and professional development

[To access the francophone 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, the **Community Media Coalition, represented by the Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC)**, delivers this stream on behalf of the Department of Canadian Heritage. **The LJI-CNF program has been developed in consultation with various stakeholders across the Canadian media landscape, including professionals with media expertise and lived experience consistent with the program's objectives and the CNF priority communities.**

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
cnf-fdv@crfc-fcrc.ca | 613-552-3634

<p><u>More information about the Local Journalism Initiative can be found here:</u> https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/local-journalism-initiative.html</p>

Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for funding under the LJI-CNF stream, 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** may be at any career stage, but **emerging or early-career journalists** will be prioritized. Funding is available exclusively to cover eligible expenses for journalists who self-identify as members of one or more of the **CNF priority communities**.

Funded organizations must foster environments that are culturally safe and inclusive, particularly for members of the **CNF priority communities**.

Journalistic content produced through the CNF-LJI stream must be made available to all media organizations and/or the public simultaneously and at no cost (e.g., through a Creative Commons license).

Eligible projects must:

- Provide an annualized salary for a **journalist** for content development of **civic journalism**; and
- Include a professional development component tailored to the journalist's career stage (such as examples below) while encouraging career advancement and honoring the LJI mandate and expectations.

Eligible professional development activities include a wide range of activities and can include the following (but are not limited to):

- Internships, apprenticeships, and paid placements offering hands-on experience in a newsroom and exposure to journalistic ethics and community-focused reporting;
- Mentorship programs, peer learning, and coaching initiatives;
- Training and skill-building opportunities such as workshops, certifications, or targeted learning programs (e.g., trauma-informed reporting);
- Initiatives focused on Indigenous journalism, including Indigenous language preservation, cultural protocols, and decolonized storytelling approaches;
- Knowledge Exchange with Elders/Knowledge Keepers

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.

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

Funding Information

Eligible Expenses

Which expenses are covered by the Changing Narratives Fund-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 CNF-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 CNF-LJI-funded journalists to produce journalistic content
- Equipment remains the property of the media organization
- 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*

3. Professional Development

- Costs associated with professional development opportunities aimed at strengthening journalistic capacity within the targeted diverse communities

Please note that special requests for **increased funding could be considered depending on the need and the availability of funds.*

All other expenses are not eligible under the CNF-LJI stream.

Important Dates and Deadlines

December 3, 2025- Applications Open

December 21, 2025 - Applications Close

December 22, 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/cnf-fdv>

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 gaps in local news
- The applicant must address how participation in the CNF-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:*

- o *digital replica of a regular issue from each of the four quarters in the last 12 months;*
- o *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 as soon as possible.

The CRFC automatically acknowledges receipt, by email, of any funding applications received through the CRFC's online platform.

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

It is not mandatory to submit a Self-Identification form at the application stage.
However, in order to be approved for funding under the CNF-LJI stream, CNF-LJI journalists must have completed a Self-Identification form with responses relevant to the CNF priority communities.

Purpose and Use

The form serves three functions:

1. Statistical reporting on the achievement of program priorities
2. Access to additional funding opportunities based on the identity of the journalist
3. A mechanism to demonstrate that the applicant meets the required 30% representation of CNF priority communities on the board of directors or leadership positions

The responses in the Self-Identification form are used to determine eligibility for support under the CNF-LJI program. For each question, there is an option to select 'Prefer not to answer.' However, to be considered for funding under the Changing Narratives Fund, respondents must respond to relevant self-identification question(s).

The data is shared with the Department of Canadian Heritage and will be completely anonymized. Information submitted on 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): 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 the **CNF priority communities**) 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 have one week to submit to the Programs Team.

Stage 2: Project Evaluation

The Independent Selection Committee evaluates all eligible applications using the 100-point scoring system published in the **Project Evaluation Criteria** 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 CNF-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 to identify funding priorities rooted in reconciliation, equity, and inclusion.

The **Strategic Bonus** of up to 10 points (**see Annex 1**) is applied based on the Strategic Priority they meet (e.g., **CNF priority organization**, news desert, etc). 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 Selection Committee.

Notification of Results

The CRFC 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 CRFC via the procedure outlined in the Administrator's **Appeal Policy** available on the Administrator's webpage.

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

CNF Confirmation

In order to confirm funding through the CNF-LJI stream following a formal Offer of Contribution, the Administrator will require that successful applicants submit the following documents via the application portal:

- Self-Identification form completed by the CNF-LJI journalist
- Professional Development proposal form

Recipient obligations

Each recipient must attest that employment created through the CNF-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-CNF 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 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

The recipient stations must acknowledge the support and funding of the Local Journalism Initiative as 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 CNF-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>
- Consortium: <https://ijl-lji.olconsortiumlo.ca/>

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

Strategic Bonus Scoring

Indigenous Media / CNF priority organization	10 points
News Desert OR Rural/Remote Area of News Poverty (serving an underrepresented group)	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 [NOTE - DEFINITIONS NOT INCLUDED IN LJI GUIDELINES ARE PURPLE]

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 CRFC to a recipient organization.

CNF priority community/ies: Indigenous, Black, Racialized, Ethno-religious minority, 2SLGBTQIA+, Persons with disabilities

CNF priority organization: For the purpose of the CNF-LJI stream, a **CNF priority organization**, is one that meets the following criteria:

- At least 30% of its board members or leadership positions are held by individuals from the CNF priority communities; and/or
- The organization has a mandate to primarily serve at least one of the CNF priority communities

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 living 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.

Emerging/early-career journalist: A journalist with less than 4 years of professional journalistic experience.

Employer: Employer means the media organization receiving funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) through the CRFC 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.

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.

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: 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>

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.

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 races, 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 being a CNF priority organization or serving News Deserts or Indigenous communities.

Underrepresented groups: Underrepresented groups, for the purposes of the CNF, refer to communities that have historically faced barriers to full participation and equitable representation in Canadian media: Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), , Black, racialized, ethno-religious minority, people with disabilities and 2SLGBTQI+ 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 they 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.