

Changing Narratives Fund - Local Journalism Initiative Stream (CNF) 2025-2027

Stage 2: Assessment and Selection Process

While the first stage of the CNF-LJI stream application focused on the media organization's eligibility and alignment with the goals of the LJI, the second stage focuses on the proposed CNF journalist and the proposed Professional Development Plan (PDP) to support the journalist in a manner that aligns with their goals of the program and the journalists' career trajectory.

Assessment and Selection Process

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

- **Programs Team** (CMC / CRFC): Responsible for the administrative management of the process, including implementing the Prioritization Framework and implementing and communicating the final funding decisions.
- **Independent Selection Committee:** A group of external experts with lived experience as one or several of the underrepresented groups targeted by the Changing Narratives Fund (Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, ethno-religious minorities, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+) as well as experience in one or several of the media sectors supported by the CNF-LJI stream.

Prioritization Framework

A tiered prioritization approach is implemented to ensure the funds achieve the stated goals of the program. Applications are categorized and prioritized by the Programs Team as follows:

Priority 1: CNF Priority Organizations Organizations that are owned, led by, and serve CNF priority communities.

Priority 2: Early-Career Journalists The fund aims to support the next generation of storytellers. Priority is given to journalists in the **Entry/Aspiring** (0–1 years) and **Emerging/Early Career** (1–3 years) stages.

Priority 3: Equitable Distribution: Aiming for a balance of journalists from the various CNF priority communities.

Applications will then be reviewed in this priority by the **Independent Selection Committee**.

The Independent Selection Committee will review the PDPs based on the following:

- **Rationale:** How well the plan addresses specific skill gaps or career goals for the journalist.
- **Impact & Outcomes:** The potential for this plan to enhance the journalist's career
- **Implementation:** The clarity of the implementation plan and the organization's commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment.

Funding Allocation

At the end of the evaluation process, the CMC will announce the results of the process based on the Independent Selection Committee's recommendations. Given that the demand for CNF funding exceeds the available budget, not all recommended applications will be able to be funded.

The CMC will allocate funding according to the Prioritization Framework until the funding envelope is exhausted. If more funds are made available, the CMC will continue to allocate funding based on the Prioritization Framework. This may include contacting recommended applicants who were previously not allocated funds when the initial announcement was issued.

Please note that the Independent Selection Committee may recommend funding only a portion of the requested amount for journalist salary, equipment, and professional development expenses.

The CMC will coordinate with the two other mandated LJI organizations to maximise the impacts of the CNF-LJI stream through funding available through the Local Journalism Initiative where applicable.