



Corporation
for Public
Broadcasting

Request for Proposals (RFP) Editorial Integrity & Leadership Initiative 2.0

FILING DEADLINE: April 29, 2022

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) seeks an entity to design and implement a professional development fellowship initiative for current and emerging editorial leaders in public media (the “Initiative”). The Initiative will engage 50 fellows (“Fellows”) in small cohorts, over a timeframe of 2 years, with a customized curriculum of onsite and virtual training and activities, supported by ongoing mentoring and coaching, to improve the knowledge and expertise of public media editors.

In the middle of a global pandemic, and with our democracy facing deep divisions, public media newsrooms are a critical source of fact-based information in their communities, helping audiences distinguish facts from misinformation, respond to severe public emergencies and contextualize complex issues impacting their neighborhoods and lives. Public media journalists are engaging audiences in discussions, grounded in civility, about our nation’s path forward and the greatest challenges we face as a society. Even as public media continues to be a trusted source of information, American’s overall trust in media hovers at historic lows, according to public polling. Meanwhile, the rapid news cycle and increasing pressure to develop more public media presence across more platforms are pushing newsrooms to produce content at unprecedented levels. The Initiative will play an important role in ensuring that public media newsrooms are equipped to produce the relevant, contextualized, and innovative journalism that underpins an engaged, informed civil society.

As public media stations grow their journalism capacity to address the civic information gap left behind by the declining newspaper industry, public media news leaders must be able to uphold journalism’s highest editorial standards. Editors impact every part of the newsroom operation – from editorial decision-making to workplace culture, budget oversight to digital innovation, community engagement to partnership development-- their ethical judgement matters. The Initiative will provide training in all these areas and will also create relationships among the Fellows, with the objective of advancing editorial collaboration and strengthening the public media local-national network.

The goals (“Goals”) of the Initiative are:

- To build the leadership skills of accomplished journalists from diverse backgrounds who are promoted or seek promotion into editorial management positions;
- To equip newsroom leaders with the tools they need to make ethical decisions in high stress, high stakes environments;

- To support institutional evolution and accelerate change in public media newsrooms to better meet the information needs of communities;
- To create mutually supportive cohorts for public media editorial leaders; and,
- To establish ongoing training, coaching, and support.

II. ABOUT CPB

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (“CPB”) is a private, not-for-profit, non-governmental corporation authorized by Congress in 1967 through amendments to the Communications Act of 1934. CPB is exempt from taxes under Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. CPB promotes non-commercial public telecommunications services (television, radio, online, and digital) for the American people. CPB also provides financial support and a variety of services to more than 1,400 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. Such support helps guarantee universal access to public broadcasting’s educational services and programming, and ensures that stations can exchange program materials through a national system of interconnection.

CPB supports public media journalism to ensure that the American public has access to high-quality local, regional and national reporting — the basis of an engaged, civil society. Public media represents a major source of fact-based news, meeting the information needs of communities across the country. CPB funding helps public media provide content that is fair, accurate, balanced, objective, transparent and created in a manner consistent with stations’ and producers’ editorial independence. CPB also helps public media producers develop content and engage in practices that reflect the diversity of the populations they serve.

CPB advances public media’s national journalism efforts by funding producers such as NPR, *FRONTLINE*, *PBS NewsHour*, PRX and APM. Through years of strategic investments, CPB has cultivated a network of local and regional public media news organizations that, in partnership with national producers, strengthens public media’s role as a trusted news source. Leveraging public media stations’ local ownership as a foundation for nationwide collaboration, CPB has invested more than \$42 million since 2009 to launch 41 local, regional and single-topic collaborations as well as joint regional newsroom operations. These partnerships have connected 150 public media stations in 42 states and the District of Columbia, providing the basis for a vibrant multimedia network of local newsrooms with national reach.

In 2017, CPB conducted an assessment of editorial leadership capacity in public media and identified a need for editors with a broader range of skills. Subsequently, through an RFP process, CPB selected the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism at Arizona State University to run the Editorial Integrity and Leadership Initiative, which trained 100 public media news leaders over two years. CPB has also funded other efforts to strengthen editing capacity in public media, including the Public Media Journalists Association’s Editor Corps, which provides editing assistance to newsrooms.

For more information, see www.cpb.org.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

Proposals for this RFP should address the following scope of work. CPB will work with the successful Applicant (“Applicant”) to create a final design and implementation plan for the Initiative.

1. Initiative Design

- a. **Training** – Develop a training curriculum (the “Training”) that identifies and addresses the greatest challenges facing public media newsrooms today. The curriculum must address, but should not be limited to, the following topics:
- editorial integrity and best practices, especially ethical decision making as it applies to:
 - the role of social media and emerging platforms,
 - accountability journalism and data reporting,
 - editorial firewalls and conflicts of interest,
 - newsroom management,
 - DEI and hiring and retaining diverse team members,
 - creating a culture of respect and collaboration,
 - working with off-site team members,
 - change leadership, and communication skills;
 - audience-first engagement, including:
 - understanding and using metrics,
 - community-centered strategic frameworks and partnerships;
 - project management, including developing and managing budgets.

The Training curriculum must:

- include a proposed panel of advisors who will inform the program’s design and execution.
 - outline how much time will be spent on each topic and which topics will be addressed through virtual meetings and which ones will be discussed in person, depending on public health guidance regarding convenings.
 - describe when and for how long Fellows will have access to ongoing mentoring and coaching.
 - include what reading or study materials will be shared with the Fellows.
- b. **Coaches and Mentors** – Identify coaches and mentors who will lead and/or participate in the Training and/or will work individually and with small groups of Fellows on an ongoing basis.

- c. **Operations of the Program** – Identify the ideal number of cohorts and cohort size to train 50 Fellows during the Initiative, over a 2-year timeline. Identify the location(s) for one (1) in-person training per cohort, if public health guidance permits; the presentation mode for the virtual sessions; and the method of ongoing mentoring and coaching.
- d. **Assessment** – Develop a survey (“Survey”) that will be given to each Fellow at the beginning of the Training and again at the end of the Training to determine whether the Fellow has gained editorial leadership expertise and skills. Define specific goals and outcomes for the Training and the Fellows for use in the Survey, to help trainers assess the effectiveness of the program and adjust the curriculum as needed.

2. Fellow Application and Selection Process – Design and develop the application and selection process for the Fellows, including a list of criteria for selection. The selection process must include CPB, the coaches and/or mentors involved in the Training, and editorial leaders from public media. The target audience for the Fellows is: (1) mid-level journalists who want to transition into editorial leadership; (2) station-based news directors and editors who are seeking to increase their skill sets; and, (3) editorial leaders for programs or collaborations who are seeking to increase their skill sets. It is expected that there will be candidates who self-apply and those who are nominated by their managers/supervisors. CPB will have final approval of which candidates are selected as Fellows.

3. Evaluation – The Applicant for this RFP will identify an independent third-party evaluator (“Evaluator”) for the Initiative, subject to CPB’s approval. The Evaluator will use qualitative and quantitative measures to assess the Initiative’s success (the “Final Evaluation”).

The Final Evaluation must include, but not be limited to:

- a. Analysis of responses to the Surveys given to the Fellows to assess the quality of the Training.
- b. Interviews with at least 50% of the Fellows to assess the value and relevance of the Initiative in their editorial work, the expertise of the coaches and mentors, and recommendations for improving the Initiative.
- c. Interviews with the coaches and mentors to assess the overall execution of the Initiative and recommendations for improvements.

The Final Evaluation should take 6-8 weeks to conduct, summarizing the results, and any recommendations made in a report to CPB and the selected Applicant. The Evaluator may need to present the findings to CPB, upon request.

IV. PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

The Applicant must provide separate Technical and Cost Proposals to CPB.

- 1. The Technical Proposal must include:

- a. A statement of the Applicant’s approach describing the proposed actions the Applicant will take to deliver on the Goals of this Initiative, how the Applicant will execute the Scope of Work (including the Training curriculum), a timeline for the Scope of Work, and Initiative deliverables;

SAMPLE TIMELINE (For illustrative purposes only)

Months 1-6: Initiative ramp-up; Fellow applications and selection

Months 7-12: Training of cohort; Fellow applications and selection

Months 13-18: Training of cohort; Fellow applications and selection

Months 19-24: Training of cohort; Final Evaluation

- b. Qualifications narrative describing the Applicant’s assigned staff’s relevant expertise, experience, and abilities which would enable them to perform and complete the tasks in the Scope of Work. Relevant experience includes, but is not limited to, a track record of working in the media industry and supporting media organizations; diversity, equity, and inclusion coaching expertise; knowledge of public media journalism and newsroom collaborations; and experience fostering journalism collaborations.
 - c. Not more than three (3) examples of the Applicant’s assigned staff’s experience within the past five years of creating and implementing an editorial leadership program similar to the Initiative. The examples must include a detailed description of the objectives, a detailed description of the outcomes, time requirements, cost, and assigned staff for each example.
2. Applicant’s Cost Proposal must include the following. Please ensure that the Cost Proposal is provided as a separate document as explained in Section VI below.
 - a. A breakdown of the hours and rates for each assigned staff for up to the twenty-four (24) months for the Initiative.
 - b. A breakdown of the hours and rates for the Evaluation;
 - c. The cost of any resources for the Training and ongoing coaching
 - d. The cost of reasonable travel and accommodation for the Fellows, coaches and mentors for the on-site Training. Each cohort should meet for an in-person gathering if public health guidance permit, and the remaining trainings should be conducted virtually.

V. SELECTION CRITERIA

Responses to this Request for Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria with the associated weight.

1. Demonstrated ability of Applicant’s assigned staff to perform the tasks described in the Scope of Work (50%), including, but not limited to:
 - a. Editorial leadership development expertise and capacity to execute the Initiative;
 - b. Experience working in the media industry and supporting media organizations;

- c. Experience in diversity, equity, and inclusion training;
 - d. Knowledge of public media journalism and newsroom collaborations; and
 - e. Experience fostering journalism collaborations.
2. The quality of the work examples (30%).
 3. Cost Proposal – the reasonableness of Applicant’s cost (20%).

VI. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Applicants must submit technical and cost applications through CPB’s electronic grants management system.

To gain access to the electronic grants management system, please send an email request to Erin Day at eday@cpb.org no later than Monday, April 4, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. ET. CPB will provide access to eligible applicants within two business days. Include “Editorial Integrity & Leadership Initiative” in the subject line. In your request, please provide your name, title, phone number, organization name, address and organization web site.

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Ms. Day at the email address above. The questions (without attribution) and CPB’s responses will be posted on CPB’s website. Please include “Editorial Integrity & Leadership Initiative” in the subject line of all emails. **The deadline for submitting questions is Monday, April 4, 2022 at 5 p.m. ET.**

CPB will conduct an Applicant webinar (“Webinar”) on Tuesday, April 19, 2022 to answer questions submitted to CPB. Potential Applicants must register for the Webinar in advance by emailing Ms. Day at eday@cpb.org by Monday, April 11, 2022 at 5 p.m. ET.

Proposals for this RFP are due no later than Friday, April 29, 2022 at 5 p.m. ET. CPB will not consider proposals submitted after this time.

Technical Proposals may be in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Cost Proposals must be in Excel format.

CPB may request the Applicants with the top scores to meet with senior management at CPB’s offices in Washington, D.C. If so, CPB will notify the selected Applicants of the time and date.

TIMETABLE

Below is the anticipated timetable.

ACTIVITY	DATE
Deadline to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request access to CPB’s electronic grants management system • Submit questions 	April 4, 2022
Register for Webinar	April 11, 2022

Webinar	April 19, 2022
Proposal Submissions Due	April 29, 2022
Proposal Review and Selection	May 2 -June 30, 2022
Contract Drafting and Execution	September 1, 2022

VII. CPB TERMS

This RFP does not constitute an agreement by CPB to extend funding to any party. CPB may, in its sole discretion, elect not to pursue this project. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP shall be valid for at least 90 days following the closing date.

CPB is not responsible for loss or damage to material that Applicant provides to CPB in conjunction with this RFP. Upon submission, said information shall become CPB's property (not including any intellectual property rights contained in such submission), and CPB is not required to return the same. Applicant is responsible for any violation of copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret, or other rights related to such material. Additional terms follow.

1. **Multiple Applications.** Neither multiple nor alternate applications will be accepted.
2. **Confidential Information.** Applicant should clearly identify any portion of its proposal that it considers confidential, proprietary commercial information or trade secrets.
3. **Subcontractors.** Applicant must identify all subcontractors and advisors and include a description of their roles.
4. **Exceptions.** Applicants selected for funding are deemed to have accepted the terms in this RFP. Any exceptions to these terms must be clearly identified in their proposals. CPB, at its sole discretion, may reject proposals that include exceptions.
5. **CPB Information.** In reviewing Applicant's proposal, if CPB's shares materials, data, other information and analyses (collectively, "Information") with Applicant, Applicant shall be deemed to agree to protect, preserve and maintain all such Information on a strictly confidential basis, and to promptly return to CPB, upon its request, all tangible copies of such Information in Applicant's possession.
6. **Proposals.** By submitting a proposal, Applicant grants to CPB the right to duplicate, use, disclose, and distribute any of the materials submitted for purposes of evaluation, review and research. In addition, Applicant guarantees that it has full and complete rights to all information and materials included in its proposal and guarantees that such materials are not defamatory and do not infringe upon or violate the privacy rights, copyrights, or other proprietary rights of any third party.

VIII. CONDITIONS OF AGREEMENT

CPB is not responsible for any costs incurred by Applicant in preparing and submitting its proposal in response to this RFP, or in performing any other activities relative to this solicitation. If a proposal is selected for funding, Applicant must sign a binding agreement that meets with CPB's approval (Agreement). Until the Agreement is executed by both parties, no express or implied commitment has been made to provide funding. Applicant is not authorized to commence any work until the Agreement is fully executed, nor will CPB compensate it for the same.

Applicant must guarantee that, among other things, any work it undertakes is not defamatory and will not violate or infringe upon the privacy rights, copyrights or other proprietary rights of any third party. Applicant must also agree to indemnify CPB against any loss resulting from breach of any of the representations and warranties in the Agreement.

The Agreement will contain additional requirements, including but not limited to the following:

1. **Applicant's Financial Position.** Applicant must demonstrate that it has adequate financial support to complete the work and to deliver reports and/or other intellectual property set forth in the Agreement.
2. **Record Keeping.** Except for the work that Applicant completes pursuant to a fixed price fee structure, Applicant must provide CPB with documentation that evidences the actual costs of the project (including timesheets or other relatively contemporaneous record-keeping documents), and supporting documentation that demonstrates that all costs were reasonable, necessary, and incurred for the project.

Applicant must maintain, for three years following the final payment for the project, all records related to the project, which shall be accessible to CPB and to the U.S. Comptroller General or other representatives of each for examination and audit purposes. Applicant will additionally ensure that any subcontractors or consultants it engaged for the project also maintain such records for the same period and under the same terms.

3. **U.S. Comptroller Audits.** Applicant must provide CPB with a copy of any U.S. Comptroller General audit report issued in connection with the project.
4. **Equal Employment Laws.** Applicant must comply with all applicable equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and policies.
5. **Governing Law.** The Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia without regard to its conflict of law provisions.
6. **Restrictions.** Applicant is strictly prohibited from using any funds provided by CPB:
 - a. for any activity designed to influence legislation or appropriations pending before the United States Congress or any state legislature; or

- b. to conduct any reception or provide any other entertainment for any officer or employee of the federal government or any state or local government.
7. **CPB's Appropriation.** CPB's primary source of funding is appropriations made by the U.S. Congress. Therefore, if CPB's appropriation is reduced and that reduction materially affects CPB's ability to meet its obligations under the Agreement, then CPB and Applicant, at CPB's discretion, may agree to enter good faith negotiations to modify the Agreement.
8. **Research and Materials.** All research and materials created, developed, compiled or produced pursuant to or as a result of this project (including but not limited to all reports) will be considered ordered and commissioned by CPB as works made for hire under the copyright laws, and made in the course of services rendered. If, for any reason, the proposed research and materials to be provided are not considered works made for hire under the copyright laws, then Applicant will be required to assign all right, title and interest in and to such research and materials to CPB. Applicant further agrees that neither it, nor any of its subcontractors, will have any copyrights or other intellectual property rights whatsoever in any research and/or materials created, developed, compiled or produced by them or by any subcontractor, or by any third party participating in the preparation of research or materials for this project.

IX. EXPENSE GUIDELINES

Travel expenses incurred by non-CPB staff (including consultants) need to be itemized in the Non-Employee Expense Form. Each expense of \$25.00 or more must be supported by an original receipt. Expenses requiring CPB approval must evidence such approval. Reimbursement of travel expenses is subject to the following limitations:

1. **Transportation:** Only coach or economy class airfare, rail fare or bus fare will be reimbursed towards travel expenses. Travelers must make every effort to plan travel and book transportation sufficiently in advance so as to realize cost savings, and are required to accept the lowest fare available for the required itinerary. Final fare coach may be used only in unusual and/or special circumstances and, in each such instance, a detailed explanation shall be provided, and reimbursement shall be contingent upon approval by CPB.

Private automobile use will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS rate of 56 cents per mile for 2022, but not in excess of the lowest available airfare. Taxicab fare will be reimbursed to the extent reasonable and necessary. Rental car expense will be reimbursed only when the daily taxi fare would exceed the per-day car rental rate, or when no other convenient and less expensive form of ground transportation is available. Travelers may rent intermediate-size vehicles.

2. **Lodging:** CPB will only reimburse for reasonable, standard rate, single room accommodations and appropriate incidental charges. Incidental expenses incurred for comfort, grooming or personal enjoyment, such as airline and room movies, haircuts, shaving equipment, shoe shines, etc., are not eligible for reimbursement.

3. **Meals:** CPB will reimburse for meals up to a total of \$65.00 per day for domestic travel, provided that meals are not otherwise furnished or included in connection with an activity.