



MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Kansas City PBS among six winners of a grant from Center for Cooperative Media

Kansas City, Mo. August 18, 2017: Investigate West, Kansas City PBS, NJ Pen, Quartz, Texas Tribune and USA Today Network selected for collaborative reporting project grants

When the Center for Cooperative Media first [put out the call](#) to fund collaborative reporting projects in May, they anticipated a couple dozen submissions. So they were thrilled to [receive more than 70 proposals](#) from news organizations of all shapes and sizes across the country, all pitching meaningful and important stories.

“Collaboration is at the heart of public media and we are honored to be a part of such an innovative group,” says Kliff Kuehl, President and CEO of [Kansas City PBS](#), [Flatland and The Bridge 90.9](#). “Flatland tells local stories that makes an impact and dives into issues that better informs and engages our audience. I look forward to seeing the excellent reporting that will result from this work.”

The six grantees represent a wide array of news organizations from all corners of the U.S., and their projects span topics ranging from guns to youth health to climate change and wind turbines. In alphabetical order, the grantees are:

InvestigateWest: [InvestigateWest](#) and partners the [Pamplin Media Group](#) and [Agora Journalism Center](#) are at work on a project affecting youth health in Oregon. The partners will explore gender, racial and other disparities, and assemble a unique database of regional and statewide metrics for public use. Content will be designed for traditional media audiences and for youth audiences on Snapchat and Instagram. The partners also plan to convene a discussion series related to the project.

Kansas City PBS: This project involves an in-depth investigation lead by [Kansas City PBS](#) through its digital magazine [Flatland](#), using data collected and organized by the [Midwest Center for Investigative Reporting](#), following the money trail of wind turbine companies across rural Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Illinois, and how tax deals impact public school funding. Together they will collaborate on turning that data — ownership, tax schedules, payments in lieu of taxes — into interactive, searchable visualizations that enhance and further user experience and understanding.

NJ Pen: [NJ Pen](#) will partner with [SNJ Today](#), [Courage to Connect NJ](#) and Dave Maynard, a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, to identify the challenges behind municipal mergers—combining towns into a single governmental entity—and to get at the roots of the ideas behind “home rule” politics.

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Quartz: [Quartz](#) will partner with the Monitor, a daily publication in McAllen, Texas, to collaborate on a project that will investigate and report on what happens when border dynamics intersect with climate change response and preparation in the lower Rio Grande Valley. The reporting will center on McAllen (in Hidalgo County) and its sister city across the Rio Grande, Reynosa, Mexico, but will also expand to other cities and towns in the region—on both sides of the border—to explore the real-world impacts of climate change on one of the United States’ fastest-warming regions, from drought-driven water shortages and heat waves to threats of intense storm events and rising prevalence of animal-borne infectious diseases.

Texas Tribune: [The Texas Tribune](#), in partnership with [The Trace](#), is exploring whether states with increasingly permissive gun laws are getting licensed with adequate — and legally mandated — handgun training.

USA Today Network/The Arizona Republic: [The Wall by The Arizona Republic](#) and USA TODAY Network will examine the audience engagement power of combining an important national story with new technology, documenting all phases of the proposed border wall between the United States and Mexico. The project will use virtual reality overlaid with relevant data and include aerial video, as well as a series of documentary shorts. The USA TODAY Network also is partnering with [Spaceship Media](#) to engage new audiences, with the goal of educating people on all sides of the debate.

The judges panel included [Heather Bryant](#), recent a [John S. Knight Fellow](#) who studied collaborative journalism at Stanford University; [Jon Funabiki](#), professor of journalism at San Francisco State University and executive director of Renaissance Journalism; [Scott Klein](#), deputy managing editor at [ProPublica](#); [Ju-Don Marshall Roberts](#), chief content officer at [WFAE](#); and [Jan Schaffer](#), executive director of [J-Lab](#).

These grants are made possible by the generous support of [Rita Allen Foundation](#) and [Democracy Fund](#). Both of those organizations have been fantastic partners to the Center as we have sought to build a program centered around collaborative journalism.

We’ll update you as the six grantees begin to publish and broadcast their work, and next year we’ll put together detailed case studies on each project so other news organizations can learn from these important collaborations.

And later this fall, the Center will release a full white paper titled “Comparing Models of Collaborative Journalism,” an in-depth study on various forms of journalistic partnerships news organizations have formed with each other and how they work. That white paper will be accompanied by a set of best practices guides. If you wish to be notified, sign up for the [Center for Cooperative Media’s monthly newsletter here](#).

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About Democracy Fund

[The Democracy Fund](#) is a bipartisan foundation established by eBay founder and philanthropist Pierre Omidyar to help ensure that our political system can withstand new challenges and deliver on its promise to the American people. Since 2011, Democracy Fund has invested more than \$60 million in support of effective governance, modern elections, and a vibrant public square.

About the Rita Allen Foundation

The [Rita Allen Foundation](#) invests in transformative ideas in their earliest stages to leverage their growth and promote breakthrough solutions to significant problems. It enables early-career biomedical scholars to do pioneering research, seeds innovative approaches to fostering informed civic engagement, and develops knowledge and networks to build the effectiveness of the philanthropic sector. Throughout its work, the Foundation embraces collaboration, creativity, learning and leadership.

About the Center for Cooperative Media

The Center is a grant-funded program of the School of Communication and Media at [Montclair State University](#). The Center is supported with funding from the [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#), the [Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation](#) and [Democracy Fund](#). Its mission is to grow and strengthen local journalism, and in doing so serve New Jersey residents. For more information, visit CenterforCooperativeMedia.org.

About KCPT

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