

The Investigative News Network

Kevin Davis

CEO, Investigative News Network

Kevin.Davis@InvestigativeNewsNetwork.org

@KLJDavis



What is INN?

A growing consortium of 60 nonprofit, non-partisan news organizations producing investigative journalism in the public interest.

Who INN serves

INN's mission is to help nonprofit news organizations produce and distribute stories with the highest impact possible; to achieve cost efficiencies through the pooling of resources and services, and to develop new revenue streams that will help the member organizations become sustainable businesses.

To be a member of INN, an organization must be a 501 (c)-3 nonprofit, have a fiscal agent, or be in the process of applying for 501 (c) 3 status. Its members also must be transparent about their funding and produce non-partisan investigative and public service reporting.

The INN Member Organizations

Each member organization has its own specific journalistic and market focus; ranging from locally, regionally, nationally, internationally and in some cases vertically (i.e. product safety & education) focused reporting.

As per INN's membership standards, every member must be transparent in their funding and nonpartisan in their approach.

Funding for our members comes through three sources:

- Foundations
- Philanthropists & Consumers
- Earned revenue (e.g. syndication)



MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

The Investigative News Network (INN) is devoted to providing investigative and public service journalism in a new media environment. A consortium of more than 50 nonprofit news organizations, INN members' reporting ranges from local to national to international issues. The Network's mission is to develop and sustain through its members the highest quality watchdog journalism to benefit a free society.



1. 100Reporters
2. Alicia Patterson Foundation
3. Aspen Journalism
4. Austin Bulldog
5. Broward Bulldog
6. Canadian Centre for Investigative Reporting*
7. California Watch (Center for Investigative Reporting)
8. Catalyst Chicago
9. Center for Public Integrity
10. Centro de Periodismo Investigativo*
11. ChicagoTalks
12. City Limits (New York)
13. Common Language Project
14. Connecticut Health Investigative Team
15. Education News Colorado
16. FairWarning
17. Florida Center for Investigative Reporting
18. G. W. Williams Center for Independent Journalism
19. Health News Florida
20. Initiative for Investigative Reporting at Northeastern University
21. InvestigateNY
22. InvestigateWest
23. Investigative News Network
24. Investigative Reporting Workshop at American University

25. Iowa Center for Public Affairs Journalism
26. Maine Center for Public Interest Reporting
27. Media Crime and Justice, The Crime Report
28. Michigan News Center
29. Midwest Center for Investigative Journalism
30. MinnPost.com
31. National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting
32. National Institute on Money in State Politics
33. National Public Radio
34. New America Media
35. New England Center for Investigative Reporting
36. New Haven Independent
37. Newsdesk.org
38. Oakland Local
39. Oklahoma Watch
40. Open Secrets
41. Philadelphia Public School Notebook
42. ProPublica
43. Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
44. PublicSource
45. Rocky Mountain Investigative News Network
46. Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism
47. SF Public Press
48. Spot.U.S.
49. St Louis Beacon
50. Texas Observer
51. The Lens
52. Toni Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism
53. TucsonSentinel.com
54. VTDigger
55. Voice of San Diego
56. Investigative NewsSource
57. WBEZ Chicago
58. Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism
59. WyoFile
60. Youth Today

*Not mapped



What is working

- In total, INN member organizations are producing upwards of 100 pieces of public interest and investigative journalism per day.
- INN member organizations have been recognized with Pulitzer Prizes, Emmys, Peabody awards, DuPont awards and Investigative Reporters and Editors awards.
- INN member stories have had impact by causing laws to be reformed, corrupt officials to be exposed, public programs to be vastly improved, and by alerting the public to environmental perils, financial scams and faulty products.
- INN members have collaborated – both with other nonprofit as well as with for-profit media partners – to create public service content on both the national AND local level.
- INN members are innovative in diversifying their funding sources while at the same time remaining committed to their mandate to educating and informing the public.

What are the challenges

- The vast majority of INN member organizations remain predominantly dependent on foundation funding that is limited in scope and time.
- The earned revenues to subsidize the cost of this very expensive form of journalism is around 8% of budget and is projected to rise to between 13 – 20% of budget within the next 4 – 5 years.
- Commercial media partners who wish to collaborate with our nonprofits are often unable or unwilling to pay substantively towards the cost of the reporting.
- 501(c)3 rules and regulations are being interpreted by the IRS in a way that contradicts with the goal of revenue diversification and sustainability encouraged by the foundations that currently support our nonprofit members.
- The increasing and ongoing delays in the IRS review process for new 501(c)3 member applicants are suppressing new start-up journalism nonprofits and endangering our movement.

What has to happen to gain more traction

- IRS 501(c)3 rules and procedures need to be clarified and simplified to allow for education of the public through nonprofit journalistic newsrooms while maintaining the long-held prohibition on political tampering.
- More government data must be made available more quickly and with greater transparency.
- There needs to be an increase in media literacy at all levels of education, which better reflects the explosion in media outlets, while maintaining an understanding of the value in both professional, non-traditional and citizen journalism.
- Philanthropists and the general public, not just foundations, should be encouraged - through all means possible - to support nonprofit and community journalism outlets.
- The Government should consider spending advertising dollars on these education goals, encouraging citizens to participate in the process and contribute in order to keep the fourth estate vital and effective.