INN is a network of more than 150 newsrooms — nonprofit, nonpartisan and dedicated to public service.

Together, we are strengthening the sources of trusted information for thousands of communities.
INN by the numbers in 2017

151 U.S.-based news organizations

Nonprofit, nonpartisan, dedicated to public service

INN trained 993 participants from nonprofit news organizations
541 took part in INN programs
452 joined “INN Friends Present” partner programs
73 learned social media tactics

Nonprofit news leaders received 91 hours of individual business coaching
Sessions on Startups helped 33 news entrepreneurs
59 organizations conferred with INN about ethics and standards

INN Labs

Provided 1,873 hours of tech consulting to nonprofit newsrooms
Advanced publishing industry initiatives with 1,417 hours of software development
Generated $258,555 in savings for nonprofit newsrooms through donated services

Powered 53 U.S. news sites
Provided Largo WordPress news theme run by 197 sites worldwide
Logged more than 4 million sessions and 6 million page views per month on Largo sites

Cover:
Scalawag magazine Editor Danielle Purifoy captured this image of community members gathering around Studio South Zero at Mebane First Presbyterian Church in North Carolina. The mobile art studio was created for journalists to collect stories and make artwork illustrating the preservation of historic black sites in the South, for the project In Conditions of Fresh Water.

This photo also illustrates the creativity we see from so many nonprofit newsrooms as they find new ways to invite communities into the work of journalism and new ways for people to tell their stories. Learn more at https://www.scalawagmagazine.org/tag/in-conditions-of-fresh-water/.
Dear friends of INN:

We are in a unique media and civic environment — one in which news outlets of all sizes are grappling with fundamental questions of trust, audience engagement and the role of news media in building community and fostering civic participation.

In this environment, nonprofit, nonpartisan newsrooms stand out as a great success story. Since INN’s founding in 2009 by 27 investigative newsrooms, the network has grown to more than 150 nonprofit news media organizations, all dedicated to public-service reporting on behalf of their communities and all committed to high standards of transparency, journalism ethics and quality reporting.

Their numbers continue to grow as journalists and community supporters alike find that nonprofit newsrooms are an effective way of providing quality coverage and giving more people a voice in public life.

INN is proud to support and help build our members’ collective strength as an innovation network, sharing best practices and successful new strategies, providing services that help them provide more news coverage. The Institute for Nonprofit News is the only organization in the U.S. specifically focused on building the emerging nonprofit news sector and its unique role and commitment to public service news reporting.

Here at INN, we see the power of the nonprofit news network to help engineer a new media ecosystem, one that is inclusive, engaging and provides millions of people with trusted information.

We are deeply appreciative of the philanthropists, supporters and partners who help advance the work of nonprofit news organizations and of INN. Together with you, we are proud to be building a new and inclusive kind of American news media.

Laura Frank
INN Board Chair
VP Journalism,
Rocky Mountain PBS

Sue Cross
Executive Director & CEO
Institute for Nonprofit News
INN builds the field of public service journalism by bringing independent newsrooms the strengths of a network and the leverage of shared services. Four program tracks help media find, invent and implement new revenue models to support great journalism and accelerate growth of public service news reporting so it reaches and benefits more people.

- Network-building and shared services
- INN Labs: Open-source publishing tools
- Training and business capacity-building
- Amplify: Collaborating to build reach and readership

Network-building

INNOVATION NETWORK
Sharing what works is crucial in an environment where new models to support news are continually invented, tried and tested. INN speeds adoption of innovative approaches by publishing case studies, organizing presentations and facilitating peer groups. INN staff also spend 40+ hours a month individually connecting members with resources and references.

INCUBATOR
It is important to continue fostering new publications — the experimentation inherent in these ventures is critical to the future of journalism. INN helps communities and journalists plan and launch viable, successful newsrooms, often in “news deserts.” INN Startup Sessions provided business and strategy coaching for more than 30 founders in 2017, and INN provides fiscal sponsorship that can improve early growth rates.

SHARED SERVICES
Negotiated group savings and vetted service providers bring economies of scale to independent media, from access to media insurance to donor research and charity registration.

JOURNALISM STANDARDS
INN’s sample policies for editorial independence and donor transparency are used by more than 100 news organizations.

Capacity-building

Entrepreneurial journalists are reinventing the U.S. news media. INN provides a rich mix of training and professional consulting to help them.

BUSINESS COACHING AND TRAINING
Participation in business training for journalists doubled in 2017 with the addition of an in-house startup and growth coach. The capacity-building program mixes monthly online video training, “pop up” sessions on hot topics and regular free Office Hours advising. Two convenings provide hands-on training and peer support. INN Days are held in conjunction with the Investigative Reporters & Editors conference each June and serve more than 90 news leaders. A fall Business Intensive launched in 2017, drawing 60 news leaders to sessions on audience development and sponsorship.

NEWSMATCH
For a second year, INN helped support this matching campaign launched by Knight Foundation and now backed by the Democracy Fund, MacArthur Foundation and many other funders. This $3 million matching campaign helps publishers develop reader revenue and other individual donors. INN worked with sponsors and News Revenue Hub to help more than 100 nonprofit newsrooms prepare for the campaign and build community support of high-quality nonprofit journalism.

LEADERSHIP
INN launched two in-depth coaching and mentoring programs in 2017. The Emerging Leaders Council strengthens and supports 10 rising managers. “LEAP” — for Lead, Execute, Accelerate, Pivot — helps leaders of highly successful news organizations pursue major strategic initiatives.
"We are lean and mean with a focus on editorial operations. INN allows us to succeed on the business side as well … Our first step isn’t to call an attorney, or hire an HR consultant or recruiter, or do industry research. We call INN."

CALmatters began operations in January 2015. One of the first places we visited was the Institute for Nonprofit News (INN) and it has been an invaluable resource ever since. INN’s knowledge of the field, the investment it has made in providing infrastructure and capacity building, and its broad national network have made it a crucial partner for CALmatters as we’ve grown into the largest editorial bureau covering California state politics.

From its vantage point, INN has seen a myriad of models and strategies. We leverage that perspective and have turned to INN for feedback on strategies ranging from distribution to partnering to professional development.

It also serves as a terrific networking resource and repository of best practices: for example, when we decided to redesign our website, they provided counsel on the best technology platforms. We’ve used their statement on editorial independence and their guidelines on donor disclosure since the very beginning. The industry standard it sets is invaluable in explaining and defending our policy.

As a startup organization, we are lean and mean with a focus on editorial operations. INN allows us to succeed on the business side as well by making policy, standards and general industry expertise available. Our first step isn’t to call an attorney, or hire an HR consultant or recruiter, or do industry research. We call INN. Thank you.

—SIMONE COXE
BOARD CHAIR AND CO-FOUNDER, CALmatters

Simone Coxe
“INN gave us a home and a family of member newsrooms eager to continue helping our growing team scale our newsroom.”

Without INN as our newsroom’s fiscal sponsor, launching The War Horse would not have been possible. INN’s backing extended credibility and tax incentives to our donors, sponsors and foundations when we existed only as an idea.

Most important of all, INN gave us a home and a family of member newsrooms eager to continue helping our growing team scale our newsroom responsibly and with sustainability in mind. Because The War Horse is fiscally sponsored by INN we’re able to focus on what matters most — our stories.

— THOMAS BRENNAN
FOUNDER, THE WAR HORSE

Thomas Brennan. Photo by Anna Hiatt/The War Horse

INN Labs

The INN Labs “news nerds” specialize in building open-source tools and news products for independent publishers — tools that can be used freely across the WordPress content management system that powers 70 percent of publishing sites.

This universal design work improves the scope and quality of news products and saves publishers thousands of dollars in custom development that can be reinvested in news coverage. Their work on industry-wide solutions also is the bridge from innovation to impact for many journalism projects and prototypes. In 2017 those included building audio tools for NPR affiliates, a database for Poynter Institute’s International Fact-Checking Network, working with The Trust Project on features to enhance newsroom transparency and reader trust and the Knight Lab on storytelling tools.

LARGO & THE POLYJUICE PROJECT

INN Labs created and maintains Largo, a news theme for WordPress in use by 197 sites. Building on Largo, the INN Labs Polyjuice Project is leveraging new WordPress capabilities to make it easier, faster and less expensive for news sites to update their designs without extensive software development or platform migrations. The team also worked with more than 15 news organizations in 2017.
The resources offered by INN have helped our small investigative newsroom punch well above our weight. Thanks to INN’s open-source web design for news organizations, we have a website that showcases our content and engages and impresses our readers.

But here’s the example that really tells the story: When we decided to launch an ambitious police database project, we knew we didn’t have the capacity to do it alone. So we chose INN to design the database. The INN Labs technology team members were more than contractors; they were real thought partners in the process. Without INN, we couldn’t have produced an award-winning project. That says it all.

— SUSAN SMITH RICHARDSON
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER
THE CHICAGO REPORTER

Amplify

Journalists from 21 Midwest newsrooms are testing how a news collaboration and distribution hub can help grassroots newsrooms share news and leverage today’s complex digital distribution channels so their reporting reaches more people.

Amplify fosters local/national news collaborations to bring local and regional news of national interest to a broader audience, and to strengthen national newsrooms’ sources of on-the-ground reporting from under-covered regions.

The pilot project also helps newsrooms increase the impact of their journalism through audience development techniques including newsletters and email outreach, social media and search.
Nonprofit news is growing across the U.S., and INN with it, from 27 newsrooms in 2009 to 151 in 2017.
We take advantage of their offerings — from a terrific newsletter to website redesign to webinars on fundraising and engagement strategy — and have extensively leveraged INN’s expertise, services and network.

INN made the redesign of our website possible. Converting to Largo enabled us to activate pop-up capabilities to drive up our newsletter subscriptions, custom design editorial projects and gain a fully responsive design. Visitors’ time on our site has increased.

Our organization has benefited from one-on-one coaching on how to talk to local funders and board members about the importance of editorial independence. In addition, PublicSource has frequently taken part in INN training sessions on ways to build financial support for and public engagement with public service news reporting.

I am delighted that our managing editor, Halle Stockton, was selected to be a member of INN’s Emerging Leaders cohort. Through this fantastic network, she has formed valuable relationships, learned skills and brought new ideas to PublicSource. We’ve already implemented some of them.

PublicSource looks forward to being part of the INN network going forward, learning from other organizations in this ecosystem and hopefully serving as a resource and model for other newsrooms.

—MILA SANINA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PUBLICSOURCE
The INN community

Journalism Partners & Supporters

Building new models of journalism is the work of many organizations. INN acknowledges with deep gratitude the many people and organizations who work with INN to help build the future of nonprofit newsrooms — contributing funding and ideas, inspiration and insights, and collaborating on training and projects to advance the field.

Individual supporters include:

- Charles Anesi
- Trevor Aaronson
- Neal Bansal
- Richard Barber
- Robertson Barrett
- Steve Beatty
- Judith Burleigh
- Kate Butler
- Laura Calaway
- Reg Chua
- Patrick Clancy
- Lauren Cole
- David Coursin
- Judy Christie
- Michael Cross-Barnet
- Jeanette DAmour
- Susan Davis
- Molly de Aguiar
- Rena Dubin
- Jeff Emerson
- Katherine Fleeman
- Michael Fleeman
- Rich Foley
- Laura Frank
- Bridget Gallagher
- Anne Galloway
- Brent Gardner-Smith
- Giovanni Gentile
- Elinor Gollay
- Andy Hall
- Jay Hambridge & Melissa Driscoll
- Tanja Hester
- Anne Hollander
- Mary Honer
- Brian Hopman
- Brant Houston
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- Bruce Putterman
- Ruffin Prevost
- Dianne Que
- Ebony Reed
- Terence Rokop
- Jeff Rowe
- Norberto Santana
- Fran Scarlett
- Peter Schulert
- Neal Shapiro
- Karin Winner
- Kam Wong

Partners who worked with INN to benefit nonprofit newsrooms include:

- American Press Institute
- Audience Engine
- Center for Cooperative Media, Montclair State University
- Center for Media Engagement, University of Texas
- Columbia College Chicago
- Corporation for Public Broadcasting
- Cronkite School, Arizona State University
- Dot Connector Studio
- Facebook
- First Amendment Coalition
- Gather, Agora Journalism Center, University of Oregon
- Google
- Investigative Reporters & Editors
- Knight Lab and Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University
- LION Publishers
- Media Law Resource Center
- MediaShift
- National Network of Fiscal Sponsors
- News Revenue Hub
- NPR Digital Services
- OpenNews
- Public Narrative
- Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press
- Reynolds Journalism Institute, University of Missouri
- Society for News Design
- Solutions Journalism Network
- Temple University
- The Membership
- Puzzlle Project, NYU
- The Poynter Institute
- The Trust Project
- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- WordPress
2017 Financials

INN’s net assets grew from $732,153 at the start of 2016 to $1.3 million by the end of 2017. This enabled INN to build a six-month reserve and grow its operating budget to $1.35 million in 2017. Combined, these factors give INN a healthy financial base and the ability to support a growing membership with a broader range and depth of programs. Totals exclude pass-through grants and fiscally sponsored projects, which are broken out below.

INN is funded primarily by foundation grants, leveraged to provide network-wide services and training. Earned revenue covered 30% of operating costs in 2016 and more than 40% in 2017. The 2017 percentage was unusually high because of a single large project and completion of a two-year plan to build operating reserves. Earned revenue includes membership dues but comes primarily from fees for services.

Fiscally Sponsored Projects
INN has helped launch 25 news organizations by providing fiscal sponsorship, a program under which INN serves as their 501(c)3 umbrella organization and handles their finances. Funds shown below are accounted separately and not mixed with INN's operating funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsored Project Revenue</th>
<th>$4,065,932</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored Project Expenses</td>
<td>$3,043,014</td>
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<tr>
<td>NET all fiscally sponsored projects</td>
<td>$1,022,918</td>
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Full financials, tax filings, annual reports and audits can be found online at [https://inn.org/about/financials/](https://inn.org/about/financials/). The financial results depicted here are derived from INN's audited Dec. 31, 2016 full financial statements, which contain an unqualified audit opinion, and 2017 unaudited year-end results. In mid-2016, INN received IRS approval to change from a July 1 to calendar fiscal year. INN’s FY2015 annual report covered activities through the first half of 2016. Full calendar 2016 financials are online.