

# Fall 2026 Collaborative Reporting Open Call

This question list is offered to help you plan your answers only. Do not submit your answers in PDF or other emailed format. To apply, fill out the application form posted on [maineindependentnewscollaborative.org](http://maineindependentnewscollaborative.org)

If you have questions about your application, please contact [jeaston@bangordailynews.com](mailto:jeaston@bangordailynews.com).

The Maine Independent News Collaborative invites member newsrooms to propose collaborative reporting projects addressing issues that matter to Maine communities while building deeper connections with community experts working on the issues being covered.

Pitches will be accepted for **projects that explore cross-cutting issues that impact multiple communities in Maine**. Pitches could include, for example: rural issues, health, conservation, environment, Maine's changing economy, issues affecting immigrants, etc.

Up to three projects will be selected, with a maximum award of \$18,000. Budgets should reflect no more than \$8,000 allocated to the lead partner and no more than \$5,000 allocated to any non-lead partner.

Proposals will be evaluated by an external panel of at least three colleagues from journalism collaboratives outside of Maine who are invited by the Steering Committee.

## ELIGIBILITY

- Applicants must be **current members** of the Maine Independent News Collaborative
- Each project must involve **at least two MINC newsrooms**.
- Each project requires that one newsroom is identified as the **lead newsroom**, as determined by the applicants. The lead newsroom would be responsible for committing time for editing the project and keeping the project on track.
- Applications should be submitted by the lead newsroom.

## APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- Each project must include an **editorial project manager**, to be based in the lead newsroom. The person in this role is responsible for:
  - Making sure the project proceeds according to the plan;
  - Reporting on the progress and completion of the grant, including communicating with MINC if the budget or the project plan changes significantly;
  - Editorial leadership of the project;
  - Editing all stories in the project in all participating newsrooms; and
  - Coordinating publication.
- Applications must specify the project and division of reporting and editing labor across the newsrooms, projected publication schedule, and a detailed budget.
- Each application must acknowledge acceptance of responsibility for all fact checking.
- MINC encourages proposals for projects that involve partnership with a non-journalism community organization, such as nonprofits or schools, to deliver on a community-facing element of the project.
  - A non-journalism community partner could potentially be built into the budget as a subcontractor responsible for a project deliverable.

**Applications are due October 27.** We aim to announce decisions by the first week of December.

The name, email, and photo associated with your Google account will be recorded when you upload files and submit this form

\* Indicates required question

Email\*

What is the name of your news organization?\*

Your name\*

Phone number\*

Title\*

### Lead newsroom responsibilities

If your answer is "no" to any of the questions in this section, please do not proceed with completing this application. Instead, contact [jeaston@bangordailynews.com](mailto:jeaston@bangordailynews.com) to discuss.

**As a representative of the lead newsroom for the proposed project, I agree that my newsroom is responsible for providing reporting on use of funds at six months after receiving funding and/or 90 days after project completion, as requested.\***

*The editorial project manager in each collaboration's lead newsroom will provide an interim progress report and a final report on the use of funds. These reports will include progress against the measurements defined in the application.*

Yes

No

**As a representative of the lead newsroom for the proposed project, I**

**acknowledge that my news organization accepts responsibility for all fact checking for the proposed collaborative reporting project.\***

Yes

No

## About your project

**Name of your project\***

**Which MINC news organization is the lead newsroom for your project?\***

**List all additional MINC newsrooms included in your application. If your project includes a non-journalism community partner, list them here as well.\***

**Description of your project\***

*What is your collaborative reporting project exploring a cross-cutting issue that impacts multiple communities in Maine? How does the project involve expertise from the communities served in the project? What will be the roles of each participating newsroom and any community partner? How do you know this project is of interest to your audiences? Who will this project serve? Why is this project important? (5,000 characters max)*

**Amount of funding requested\***

**Budget -** Upload 1 supported file. Max 10 MB.\*

Upload a detailed budget for your project. [You may use this sample budget format or a different format.](#) In your budget, provide detail on how the funds will be spent,

*and identify if there is additional support for your project. Maximum request is \$18,000. Budgets should reflect no more than \$8,000 allocated to the lead partner and no more than \$5,000 allocated to any non-lead partner.*

**Eligible costs:** *Staff or contractor time for reporting and editing, convening/engagement work, mileage, photography*

**Ineligible Costs:** *Benefits, software, hardware, advertising/marketing*

### **Project timeline and deliverables\***

*What is the timeline for your project, and what is your expected publication schedule? Projects must be completed within one year. (5,000 characters max)*

### **Expected outcomes/impact\***

*Not every project has measurable impact, but it is harder to find impact if you don't envision what it might be. Do you, for example, envision that your project will spur citizens to action, change a law, or inform policy? Will it inspire community members, or cause a business or organization to change course? Will it build public understanding and engagement on a complex problem? Tell us what you imagine might happen. (5,000 characters max)*

**Is there anything else you would like to share?**