

**Transparency and Integrity Fund**  
**Docket II Recommended Grantee Blurbs**  
**Docket II: June 28, 2010 (blurbs circulated May 17, 2010)**

**Access to Information**

**Two recommendations totaling \$750,000**

**Media Democracy Fund (fiscal sponsor: Proteus Fund)**

\$500,000 over 2 years, general support (renewal)

The Media Democracy Fund (MDF) promotes a fair and open communications environment that empowers all people and enhances democratic values, fosters freedom of expression, and increases access to information and ideas. Since its launch in 2006, MDF has distributed \$3.7 million in grants to support grassroots and national advocacy groups that engage in organizing, litigation, and regulatory reform. MDF grantmaking is focused on engaging new constituencies in technology and communications policy debates, such as youth, Native Americans, rural populations, immigrants, and communities of color. Eleven foundations and individual donors participate in this pooled fund. Public interest technology and communications policy goals addressed through the Fund's grantmaking include: digital inclusion and open internet policy, balanced intellectual property rules, and privacy protections. Field building activities addressed through grant making and technical assistance include: leadership development, training, and retention; coalition building and increasing field diversity; and increasing collaboration among national, regional, and local grassroots and policy efforts.

**Center for Media Justice**

\$250,000 over 2 years, general support (renewal)

The Center for Media Justice (CMJ) was created in 2001 in response to biased media coverage of youth and communities of color in California. Based in Oakland, California, CMJ's media justice work is focused on four broad goals: 1) expand the capacity, scope and impact of regional organizing for media policy change; 2) build the leadership and skills of social justice organizers committed to media accountability; 3) develop model media policies for racial and economic justice; and 4) build and strengthen connections among grassroots media justice groups, national media policy groups, and social change organizations. CMJ recognizes that transforming media content and policy depends on a coordinated and strengthened grassroots movement working in tandem with national policy groups.

CMJ is a key organization in the national media policy reform movement and serves a critical role in connecting local grassroots media justice groups, national media policy groups and multi-issue social justice groups organizing on other issues, such as immigrants' rights, healthcare, civic engagement, and economic justice. CMJ is also building the leadership of people of color, women and youth, three constituencies largely absent from the pool of national media policy reform leadership.

**Journalism for an Open Society**  
**Five recommendations totaling \$825,000**

**ProPublica**

\$ 200,000 over 2 years, project support (new)

ProPublica is an independent, non-profit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in the public interest. Since its founding in 2008, ProPublica has published 250 long-form stories with 50 different publishing partners, including public radio's This American Life and Marketplace, *Newsweek*, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Politico*, the *Fresno Bee* and the *Memphis Commercial-Appeal*. In New Orleans, reporter AC Thompson's stories on police violence in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, published in partnership with the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* and public television's *Frontline*, helped spur investigations that led to federal grand jury charges.

This grant would support ProPublica's distributed reporting unit. This unit is a critical—and highly innovative—aspect of ProPublica's pioneering work to increase public engagement with the news. Distributed reporting relies on web-based collaboration with people and institutions outside of one's own. The technique can be used to produce a story, analyze data, elicit information from the public, identify sources, or conduct research. Distributed reporting enables ProPublica to tell stories beyond the scope of an individual reporter; to build a stronger relationship with the public, and to help them watchdog locally. Increasingly, ProPublica is supporting and organizing local and state-level reporters so that important issues are sufficiently covered. Since last May, nearly 800 struggling homeowners from all over the country have shared their stories with ProPublica about their efforts to get a loan modification through the federal program.

**Voice of San Diego**

\$ 200,000 over 2 years, project support (new)

The Voice of San Diego (the Voice) is recognized as a national leader in independent local news and investigative reporting on local and state politics, education, environment, housing, and the economy. This grant would enable the Voice to create a new Engagement Editor position. This editor will serve as a guide to San Diego news and public affairs and use a variety of techniques and tools, online and in person, to encourage people to become actively engaged in civic life. The Voice aims to increase broad public participation in the San Diego region, and believes that in addition to having access to independent and reliable news and information, communities need sufficient context to make sense of that information and a guide to help them understand how they can become active participants in community affairs. If successful, this public engagement experiment will help serve as a model for other news organizations around the country.

**NewsTrust**

\$125,000 over 9 months, project support (new)

NewsTrust is a nonpartisan social news network committed to news literacy and civic engagement. NewsTrust was developed to address the growing problems of information overload, misinformation, and mistrust on the Internet, caused by the rise of opinion news and non-fact checked journalism, as well as media consolidation and newsroom cutbacks. NewsTrust online review tools enable the public to evaluate accuracy, fairness, context

and other core journalistic principles—and help people become more discriminating news consumers in the process. NewsTrust, which served over 1.5 million visitors last year, has attracted a growing community of journalists, educators and citizens who share a passion for quality news and information. Media and academic partners include *The Washington Post*, *PBS NewsHour*, *Huffington Post*, PolitiFact, Council on Foreign Relations, Stanford University, Stony Brook and the University of Nevada.

This grant would support the creation of local NewsTrust projects in up to three pilot cities: Milwaukee, New Orleans, and Baltimore. NewsTrust will generate strong community engagement with local high schools and universities, libraries, public media, ethnic media, and local papers.

### **New America Foundation**

\$ 100,000 over one year, project support (new)

The New America Foundation (New America) is a nonpartisan public policy institute that invests in new thinkers and new ideas to address the next generation of challenges facing the United States. It is located in Washington D.C. and also has a significant presence in California. With an emphasis on big ideas, impartial analysis, and pragmatic solutions, New America invests in outstanding individuals whose ability to communicate to wide and influential audiences can change the country's policy discourse in critical areas, bringing promising new ideas and debates to the fore.

This grant would support a strategic planning process to define a pragmatic, politically viable campaign in support of reinvigorated public media in the U.S. This process will include research and analysis toward policies that would generate new revenue for public media; foster better governance and protect public media from undue political and commercial influence; diversify public media's audience, content, and formats; and redefine public media to include an expanded range of noncommercial media creators. The recommendations and analysis from the planning work would be presented to a group of funders and practitioners to consider whether an ambitious campaign for public media funding and innovation should be launched.

### **Columbia Journalism Review**

\$ 200,000 over 2 years, project support (renewal, tie-off)

Both online and in print, the Columbia Journalism Review (CJR), encourages and stimulates excellence in journalism in the service of a free society. CJR serves as a press watchdog in all its forms, from newspapers to magazines to radio, television, and the Web. CJR examines day-to-day press performance as well as the forces that affect that performance. This grant would support CJR's Future of News project, which will report on and analyze the successes and failures of business models, public policy, and ways of collecting and distributing news and information. The overall goal of the project is to report on and analyze deeply the challenges and opportunities facing journalism in the U.S. OSI has provided major, general support for the Columbia Journalism Review since 2006. This grant will be a final grant to CJR.

**Fair & Equal Access to the Ballot**  
**Two recommendations totaling \$425,000**

**Campaign Legal Center**

\$100,000 over one year, general support (JEHT Fund)

The Campaign Legal Center (CLC) works on campaign finance and election systems reform, political communication and government ethics. Among its other activities, CLC helps represent the public interest before the Federal Elections Commission. Its current legal docket focuses on defending Congress' ability to regulate money in politics, state-level campaign finance systems and disclosure and transparency as methods of combating corruption. It is also working on efforts to bring greater transparency to the redistricting process. CLC was a significant JEHT grantee that has been developing additional funding sources over the past year and this would represent the final grant to CLC via OSI's JEHT Fund.

**Committee for Economic Development**

\$325,000 over 18 months (project support)

This grant would support a collaboration between the Committee for Economic Development (CED) and the Center for Political Accountability (CPA). These groups plan to conduct a coordinated campaign to change corporate community attitudes and behaviors about political giving, and related public policies and opinions in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United. That decision recognized the right of corporations to use unlimited funds at their disposal in support of or opposition to candidates for elective office. The decision could significantly exacerbate the already pernicious role of money in politics. Two ways to curb this spike in giving are: 1) to convince corporations to limit spending voluntarily and 2) to improve disclosure of political spending. This project would utilize both approaches. CED has a long and successful history of organizing the business community on the issue of campaign reform. CPA has a proven track record of persuading corporations to adopt voluntary disclosure of political expenditures, including donations to trade associations such as the Chamber of Commerce. Together, the groups will combine strengths to offer carrot and stick options to corporations engaged in or considering campaign spending in 2010 and beyond.