

Wyoming Local News Fund

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Wyoming Local News Fund releases Ecosystem Report

Statewide media scan is the first of its kind for the Equality State

The Wyoming Local News Fund released the Wyoming Local News and Information Ecosystem Report today. This examination of our statewide media ecosystem, including new opportunities, provides a crucial roadmap for understanding our media landscape and addressing the news and information needs of Wyoming residents.

The research confirms what many journalists and residents alike know — that Wyoming is experiencing a contraction of local news, and it's difficult to keep local outlets from shuttering. Many papers that were once locally owned are now assets of out-of-state companies and many organizations have shrunk to shells of what they once were, struggling to report on the same coverage areas — be that the vital business of the state capitol or rural communities across our state. Many journalists who establish their careers in Wyoming say they can't afford to stay or that there are limited opportunities for career growth. This constant churn has created an environment where residents report that if local news coverage is available at all, it is often shallow and inconsistent.

"It's not a revelation that the Wyoming landscape has been drying," said Melissa Cassutt, founder and director of the Wyoming Local News Fund. "What may be less obvious are the opportunities we have before us that many other rural states have already lost. We have local media in every county. We have new digital outlets coming online. We have a budding local Spanish-language television station. And most importantly, we have the opportunity to support, strengthen and revolutionize this media, while also imagining and establishing new outlets that continue to serve the needs and wants of our residents."

The Wyoming Local News Fund launched a year ago to bring together funders, journalists and community members who want to find new ways to help local news thrive in our communities.

The Wyoming Local News Fund is partnering with Press Forward Wyoming, a growing coalition of local funders, to increase support for trustworthy local news and information.

“Our first priority was funding this media ecosystem study, the first of its kind in Wyoming, which serves as a guiding roadmap for future programs and investment,” Cassutt said.

There is currently no nationally representative, regularly repeated survey of community information needs, access, and trust in news for the U.S., and this report comes close to setting a standard. The report, conducted by Impact Architects, assembled data from interviews, focus groups and a statewide survey on access to news, sources news and trust in media. Access a full digital version of the Wyoming Local News & Information Ecosystem Report [here](#).

The Wyoming Local News and Information Ecosystem Report will be the focus of a conversation during the panel discussion “Wyoming’s Shifting Media Landscape” at 1 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 13 at the Governor’s Business Forum. The panel, moderated by Bob Beck, former news director of Wyoming Public Media, includes former NBC News correspondent Pete Williams, founder and managing partner of Aberdare Ventures Paul Klingenstein and Press Forward director Dale Anglin.

Wyoming media will also be discussed at “Cowboy State Daily’s View,” the panel immediately following at 2:10 p.m.

For press credentialing to the Governor’s Business Forum, contact Shalom Brickey at shalomb@wyoba.com. For any credentialing questions at or during the forum, contact Chris Mickey at chris@wyoba.com. Archived recordings will be also available following the forum; contact the Wyoming Business Alliance for more information.

About the **Wyoming Local News Fund**

The Wyoming Local News Fund envisions a future where all Wyoming residents have access to the local news and information they need to thrive. To reach this aim, the Fund supports trustworthy, equitable and solutions-focused projects and organizations that contribute to a vibrant media ecosystem. The Wyoming Local News Fund, in partnership with the Wyoming Community Foundation and Press Forward Wyoming, funded the state’s first media ecosystem study. Melissa Cassutt leads the Wyoming Local News Fund, which is a fiscally sponsored project of the Wyoming Community Foundation.

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