



# REPORT FOR AMERICA

Local Journalism, Public Service

# The collapse of local news is a national crisis.

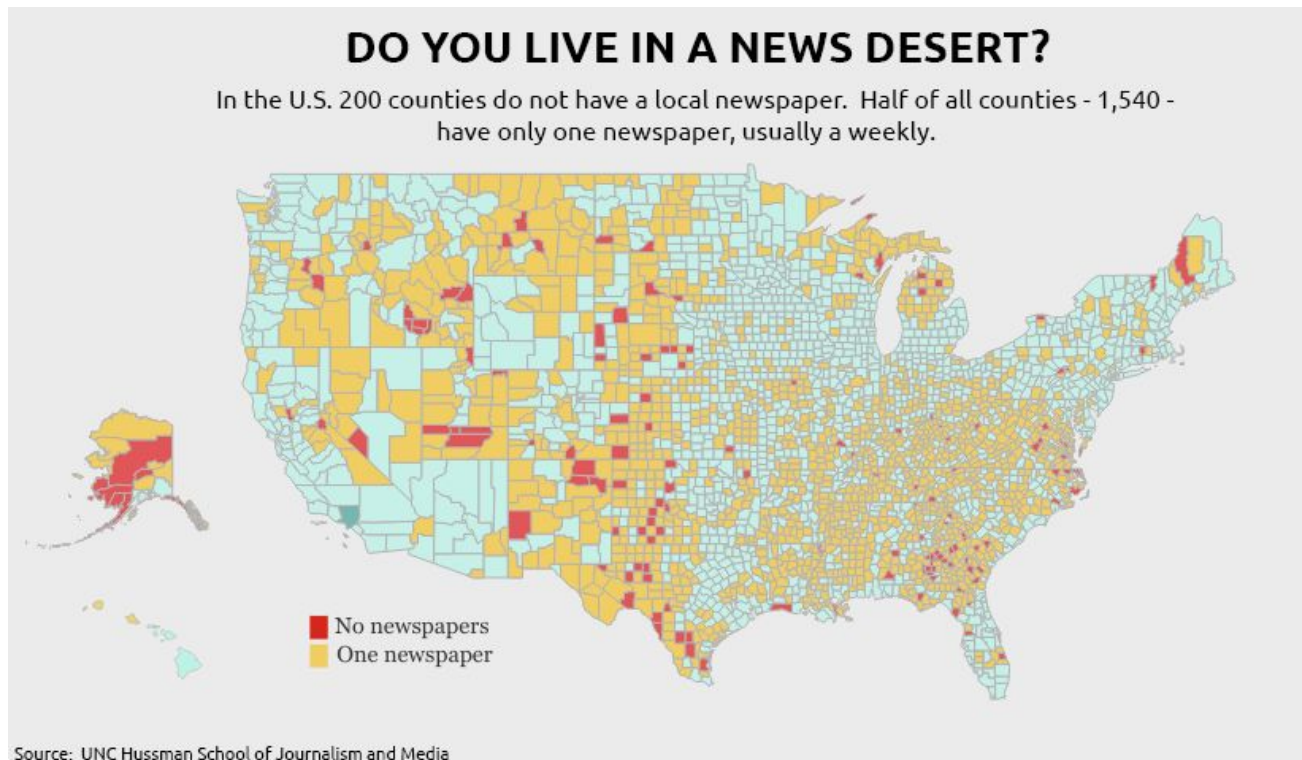
# News Deserts are Increasing

## 2.5

number of newsrooms  
shuttered, per week, on  
average, in 2023

## 1,800+

communities in the US no  
longer have a dedicated  
local news source



# Dramatic Drop In The Number Of Local Newspapers

Since 2005, the U.S. has lost about a **third of its newspapers**. Now there are about 6,000 newspapers left in the U.S., and of those, only about 1,200 dailies.\*

Academic studies show that collapse of local news has led to **lower voter turnout and bond ratings, more corruption, waste, air pollution** and corporate crime

## Loss of U.S. Newspapers, 2005 vs. 2023



Created with Datawrapper

*\*Data from Medill's Local News Initiative.*

**Fewer reporters means  
crucial issues and  
communities are  
under-covered.**

## **Not covered:**

- Bad Drinking Water
- Inadequate Healthcare
- Injustice In Courts
- Corruption At City Hall
- Failing Schools
- Solutions That Work

**The absence of local reporting has deep impact.**

## The result:

- More corruption
- Less competitive elections
- Weaker municipal oversight
- A decline in civic engagement
- A rise in injustice

**Without local news, community members increasingly resort to social media, leaving them vulnerable to misinformation and disinformation.**

**Report for America is a national service program that places talented journalists—corps members—into local newsrooms to report on under-covered issues and communities.**



# HOW IT WORKS



# AN INNOVATIVE 3:1 MATCHING MODEL

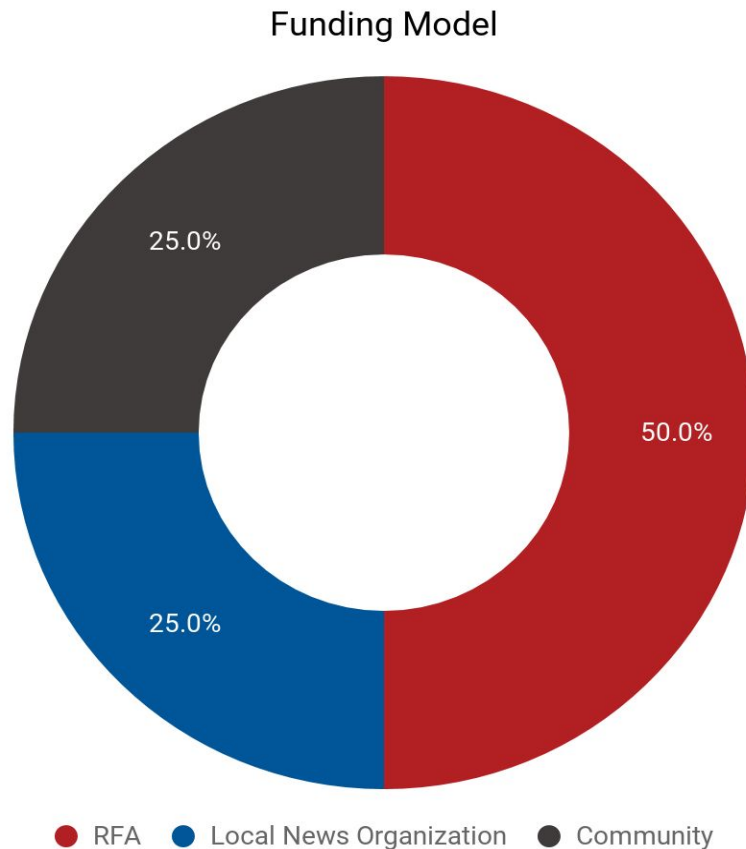
## Funding model for first year corps members:

**50% salary:** Report for America & its national philanthropic partners

**25% salary:** From the newsroom

**25% salary:** From local funders\*

*\*We offer our local partners training, toolkits, and coaches to raise local philanthropic support*



# A MULTI-YEAR FUNDING COMMITMENT

**Year 1:** Report for America pays **half** of first year corps members' salary. The other **half** is matched by the host newsroom and the local community.

**Year 2:** Report for America pays **33%** of the salary for the corps member.

**Year 3 (optional):** Report for America pays **20%** of the salary for the corps member.



# CAPTURING THE PUBLIC IMAGINATION

## *Report for America Supports Journalism Where Cutbacks Hit Hard*

Opinions

The crisis in local journalism has  
become a crisis of democracy

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**Advance the Common Good, Big Donors,  
by Saving Journalism**

The New York Times

The Washington Post

THE CHRONICLE OF  
PHILANTHROPY



# Report for America Newsrooms

**Since 2017, Report for America has placed over 600 journalists in more than 300 local newsrooms.**

In rural and urban areas across 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and Guam

Serving a mix of under-reported issues and under-covered communities (some are considered "news deserts")



# 2024-2025 Newsrooms

*News organizations include radio; TV; daily, weekly/bi-weekly and monthly newspapers; news services; digital*

**~150** host news organizations

**~200** corps member positions

**7%** rural newsrooms

**63%** non-profit news organizations

**13%** Black or Latino-owned newsrooms

# 2024-2025 Beats

Education  
Environment  
Diversity (including BIPOC,  
ethnic communities,  
immigration, and race)  
Religion  
Gender  
Seniors and Aging  
Sports  
Health  
Climate Change  
Criminal Justice  
Photography  
... and more



# Awards and Impact

**Report for America corps members are producing award-winning journalism in newsrooms across the country. These are just a few examples of awards received.**

Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting

Livingston Award

Top Ten Military Veterans in Journalism

National Press Foundation Poverty and Inequality Award

National Award for Education Reporting

National & Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards (multiple)



## PABLO UNZUETA

at EL TECOLOTE/CATCHLIGHT

### Beat: Photojournalism with focus on Latino communities

"As our newsroom's first full-time photographer, Pablo has elevated the reach and ambition of our work. His thoughtful and empathetic photographs resonate deeply with the Latinx communities we serve, and have been critical to helping our bilingual coverage stand out across print and digital platforms. We are incredibly grateful." Editor-in-Chief, El Tecolote





**TIANA WOODARD**  
at THE BOSTON GLOBE

## **Beat: Boston's Black neighborhoods**

Tiana's reporting focuses on coverage of majority Black and POC neighborhoods in and around Boston and the impact of COVID 19, the movement for social and racial justice and the economic downturn, with special attention paid to the culture, triumphs, challenges and perspectives of the people who live there.



## JACOB STEIMER

at MLK50: JUSTICE THROUGH JOURNALISM

### **Beat: Poverty, power and public policy in Memphis, TN**

Jacob's reporting focuses on the intersection of poverty, power and public policy in Memphis and Shelby County. This includes writing stories on the pandemic and its impact on disenfranchised residents and essential workers, and monitoring elected bodies on measures that affect low-wage residents.

# Who Can Apply?

# WE'RE LOOKING FOR...



Any news organization (non-profit or commercial) committed to providing objective, civically important local journalism, including:

- public radio stations
- newspapers
- digital narrative sites
- commercial TV stations
- community media centers

# REPORT FOR AMERICA NEWSROOM SELECTION CRITERIA

## WHAT WE LOOK FOR

- Is there an **important news coverage need** in the community not currently covered?
- Is the newsroom an established organization **for a minimum of one year** (leadership, editors, mentoring capacity), sustainable but not in a position to hire additional reporters to cover critical news topics for their community?
- **What beat will you create** to deploy RFA corps members to help fill your news gap?
- Are there **under-covered topics, communities or geographical areas**?
- Do you provide good mentoring and editing support?
- Can you outline your **workflow protocol and policies**?
- Can you **provide the local match** (the part of the corps member's salary that Report for America does not pay?)

NOTE: Corps member positions are not fellowships or internships. They are full time positions with a two-year commitment and an option to re-up for a third year.

# What Are The Benefits?



# REPORT FOR AMERICA NEWSROOM BENEFITS

- Passionate reporters covering designated essential beats
- Unlock a **third revenue stream of philanthropy** with the help of our dedicated local sustainability and development team
- Expand your newsroom coverage: we pay 50% of the corps member's salary the first year; and 33% the second year
- Access to a network of over 200 like-minded host newsrooms
- We ultimately want you to expand and grow your newsroom through our partnership

# What's the Application Timeline?

# 2025 NEWSROOM APPLICATION TIMELINE

## ○ Newsroom application opens

July 8, 2024

## ○ Final application deadline

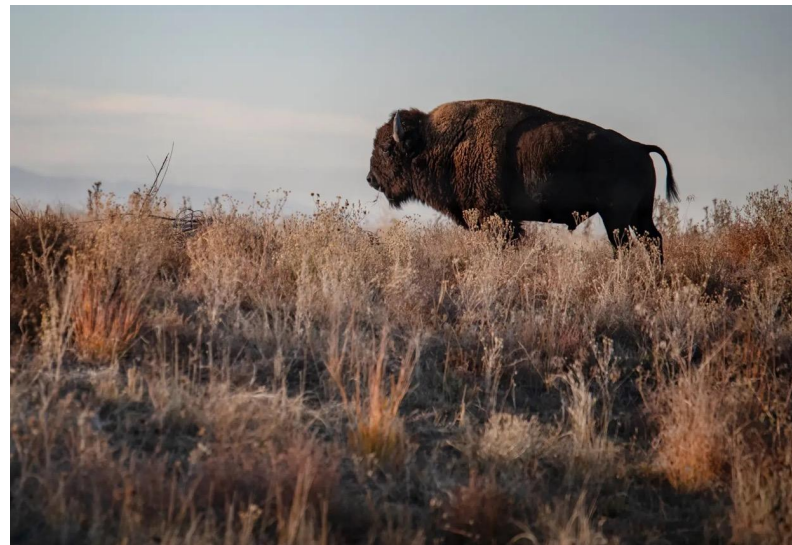
September 13, 2024

## ○ Newsroom partners announced

Mid-December 2024

## ○ Corps member year begins

July 2025



OLIVIA SUN  
THE COLORADO SUN

# Questions?

Scan the QR code below or visit  
[www.reportforamerica.org/news-rooms](http://www.reportforamerica.org/news-rooms).

# Sign Up for Updates





# REPORT FOR AMERICA

STAY IN THE LOOP.

Questions? Email us: [recruitment@reportforamerica.org](mailto:recruitment@reportforamerica.org)

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THE **groundtruth**  
PROJECT