Independence Public Media Foundation Announces $2 Million in Grants to Media Making Organizations

PHILADELPHIA, June 2, 2021 – The Independence Public Media Foundation (IPMF) announces another major investment in Philadelphia’s media making community. Thirteen grants totaling $2 million were awarded to a range of film, journalism, storytelling, and youth media organizations and projects.

In this first round of grants for 2021, IPMF provided continued support to a group of existing grantees that lift up storytelling and creative expression as pathways for communities building power. The grants in this cycle provide critical ongoing support for media-making organizations and storytelling projects that have been excluded from access to resources that amplify the voices of the communities they serve.

“We are thrilled to offer our continued support to organizations that foster communication and storytelling among diverse communities across Philadelphia,” said Nuala Cabral, IPMF program officer.

Read Nuala’s essay on what the IPMF board and staff prioritized during this grants review process.

The Philadelphia Latino Film Festival, which is celebrating its ten-year anniversary, received $250,000 to support its operational structure and media-making that advances cultural equity for Latinx, Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrant and LGBTQIA+ communities. Asian Arts Initiative was awarded $75,000 to increase accessibility to, and support community engagement with, their Digital Broadcast Studio, a project that aims to increase opportunities for media-making and collaboration among communities of color.

With this round of grants, IPMF explored ways to support the growth of its grantees in a manner that allows each organization to grow at its own pace. The foundation also prioritized multi-year general operating support to provide maximum flexibility to these organizations, many of which are Black or brown led, women led, and/or have budgets under $1 million.

Independence Public Media is currently accepting proposals through June 11 for the Community Media Fund and Digital Equity Fund open call. The foundation’s next round of grants will be announced in August.
A full list of the grants in this round is below:

**Asian Arts Initiative**
$75,000

This one-year grant will support community engagement and storytelling with and accessibility to AAI’s Digital Broadcast Studio.

**Website:** asianartsinitiative.org

**Big Picture Alliance**
$200,000

This two-year grant will support the expansion of BPA’s school, summer, and workforce digital filmmaking programs including the launch of “Media Futures,” a paid professional development & leadership program for BIPOC youth seeking careers in film and media.

**Website:** bigpicturealliance.org

**cinéSPEAK**
$56,000

This one-year grant will expand cinéSPEAK’s team, develop and implement public programming, and broaden the organization’s audience and readership.

**Website:** cinespeak.org

**Digital Literacy Alliance**
$50,000

This one-year grant will support an assessment of 2,500 residents to understand the number of households currently without internet or relying on unstable, low bandwidth options, as a way to benchmark the city's progress towards closing the digital divide.

**Website:** Digital Literacy Alliance
**First Person Arts**  
$225,000

This two-year grant will support the expansion of First Person Art's team in order to increase fundraising and sustainability efforts, social justice work, and better leverage their archive.

**Website:** [firstpersonarts.org](http://firstpersonarts.org)

**Just Media**  
$56,000

This one-year grant will support the Philly Movement Media Fellowship program for young, primarily Black and brown writers and communicators.

**Website:** [justmediaproject.org](http://justmediaproject.org)

**Kensington Voice**  
$220,000

This two-year grant will propel the expansion of a variety of community and business development initiatives toward thriving, community-centered news and information in Kensington that will begin this year and extend through 2026.

**Website:** [kensingtonvoice.com](http://kensingtonvoice.com)

**Lil Filmmakers**  
$216,000

This two-year general operating support grant will provide equitable access to technology for virtual students and economic stability for the organization's staff.

**Website:** [lilfilmmakersinc.com](http://lilfilmmakersinc.com)
**LoveNow Media**

$168,000

This two-year general operating grant will go toward producing and distributing empathy-centered stories that prioritize BIPOC communities, cultural practices, and values.

Website: lovenowmedia.com

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**Philadelphia Latino Film Festival (PHL AFF)**

$280,000

This two-year general operating grant will assist PHLAFF in making key strategic investments in growing its year-round organizational and staff capacity, expanding programming, and stabilizing operational infrastructures for sustainable long-term growth.

Website: phlaff.org

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**Sisters in Film and Television (SIFT) Media**

$215,000

This two-year general operating support grant will assist with scaling up SIFT Media’s efforts to amplify, advocate, and nurture the work of both their members and women of color filmmakers in the region.

Website: siftmedia215.org

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**The Village of Arts and Humanities**

$170,000

This two-year grant will provide program support for the Village’s media and justice-based initiatives for teens and young adults to be housed in their new Civic Power Media Studio in North Philly.

Website: villagearts.org
WHYY
$150,000

This two-year grant will provide continued programmatic support for initiatives that center source diversity and recruitment, community curation, trust-building, collaboration, digital integration, access, and civic dialogue.

Website: whyy.org

About Independence Public Media Foundation
The Independence Public Media Foundation funds and supports creative, community-centered media and media making across Greater Philadelphia. The foundation’s goals reflect an expansive definition of media, including journalism, digital literacy, and creative expression, as a pathway for building power with communities. Through grant-making and other programs, IPMF supports building and strengthening networks of people who are creating and sharing information, ideas, and stories for change and justice.

For more information, contact Enni Aigbomian, enni@independencemedia.org

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