

## **BACKGROUND**

In June 2017, the board of directors of Independence Public Media (IPM) announced that the organization would transition from operation of WYBE Channel 35 in the Philadelphia market to a philanthropic foundation. This change resulted from the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Broadcast Incentive Auction through which IPM received a one-time payment of \$131.5 million in exchange for relinquishing its broadcast license. The Independence Public Media Foundation (IPMF) will officially launch and begin its grant making programs during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.

Since then the board has transferred broadcast programs, where possible, to other entities; donated physical assets to area educational institutions and nonprofits; shut down broadcast operations; and planned for the launch of the Independence Public Media Foundation (IPMF). To support this work, the board engaged outside consultants to conduct interviews and desk research and to guide the development of the new foundation's strategic framework.

IPMF's key opportunity is to use its dollars, leadership, and influence to support development of an authentic and diverse local media ecosystem that fosters connections and builds understanding. With IPMF's grant making budget of \$5 - \$6 million annually, the board's overarching concern is to use its dollars on focused strategies, and whenever possible to partner with others who can help to accelerate progress.

In background interviews, people repeatedly shared a sense of what WYBE contributed to the region, when at its best. The station provided an alternative vision for public media. It came to life as part of a broader alternative media movement that included many players nationally. WYBE also provided a curated perspective. It had an artistic, creative orientation. WYBE supported experimentation in the medium then called "television" and in its expressive capability. WYBE welcomed and represented low-income people, women, and people of color as staff, curators, and audiences, and their stories formed the core of WYBE's content.

Among those interviewed, the expectation for IPMF is that it will carry on in these traditions of seeking out and supporting new voices, engaging with under-represented audiences and communities, exploring new uses and forms of media, and supporting new work in experimental forms.

The following mission, vision, guiding principles, and initial strategies are under discussion by the IPMF board of directors and form the current working draft of initial plans.

## **Mission**

The Independence Public Media Foundation funds and supports media and related programs that strengthen and connect diverse voices and foster greater understanding across communities in Greater Philadelphia

## **Vision**

Citizens of Greater Philadelphia are able to create and share information, ideas, and stories that foster shared understanding and mutual respect, an engaged and informed citizenry, and dynamic, thriving communities.

## **Guiding Principles**

*Diverse:* IPMF believes that communities are stronger when they embrace and seek to understand diverse people, voices, and viewpoints. We model our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our board and staff and in the work we do.

*Welcoming:* IPMF practices hospitality and a welcoming stance toward people and ideas.

*Transparent:* IPMF supports projects and organizations that shed light and yield answers, especially in communities long hidden and seldom heard. We share our processes, decisions, and learning publically.

*Responsive:* IPMF actively listens, and strives to be nimble and responsive to community needs and opportunities as they arise.

*Collaborative:* Collaboration with strong partners can yield rich, meaningful work with a greater impact than if we were to act alone. IPMF actively seeks opportunities to join with other organizations with similar missions to accelerate progress, benefit from others' expertise, and amplify our work.

*Self-reflective:* IPMF knows that missteps will be made, but when they are, we want to learn from them. We believe in evaluating our grant making strategies to ensure they have achieved the desired impact and when we are wrong or misguided, to make needed changes.

*Place-based:* In its approach to fulfilling its mission in the Greater Philadelphia region, IPMF takes a "local first" approach that honors the experience of local people, partners, and collaborators, and recognizes that by fostering connections locally the foundation can help strengthen the region's social sector.

## Goals (current draft version)

### ***1. Neighborhood, community, ethnic, and grassroots media organizations and outlets have the tools and capabilities needed to connect with their communities and each other.***

*Anticipated three-year results:* Develop deeper understanding of the ecosystem, its gaps and opportunities; publish research results; convene actors in the ecosystem to foster relationships and to identify specific targets of opportunity; design, develop, and implement targeted grant making programs with partners that can help foster a diverse, capable, innovative, and durable ecosystem.

### ***2. Residents young and old have abundant opportunities to master digital media skills as both consumers and producers.***

*Anticipated three-year results:* Organizations working in digital literacy have funds to expand their work; IPMF learns from new relationships and grant outcomes.

### ***3. Greater Philadelphia media organizations that are organized with the intention to serve a large, broad public reflect the diverse demographics of the region in their governance, employee base, content creation, and audience reach.***

*Anticipated three-year results:* Institutions quantify the ways they are strengthening their practices and reach around diversity, equity and inclusion. IPMF funding allows institutions to innovate in order to accelerate their progress. Public reporting on this strategy holds organizations accountable.

### ***4. The Philadelphia region is recognized as a hotbed for creative media makers.***

*Anticipated three-year results:* Specific grant making program(s) developed and implemented to benefit individual makers and the organizations they rely on for support for production, travel and research, distribution, or audience engagement. Early grants awarded alone or in partnership with intermediaries or other grant makers.