

## California Local News Fellowship:

### Learning Memo

December 2024

#### Executive Summary

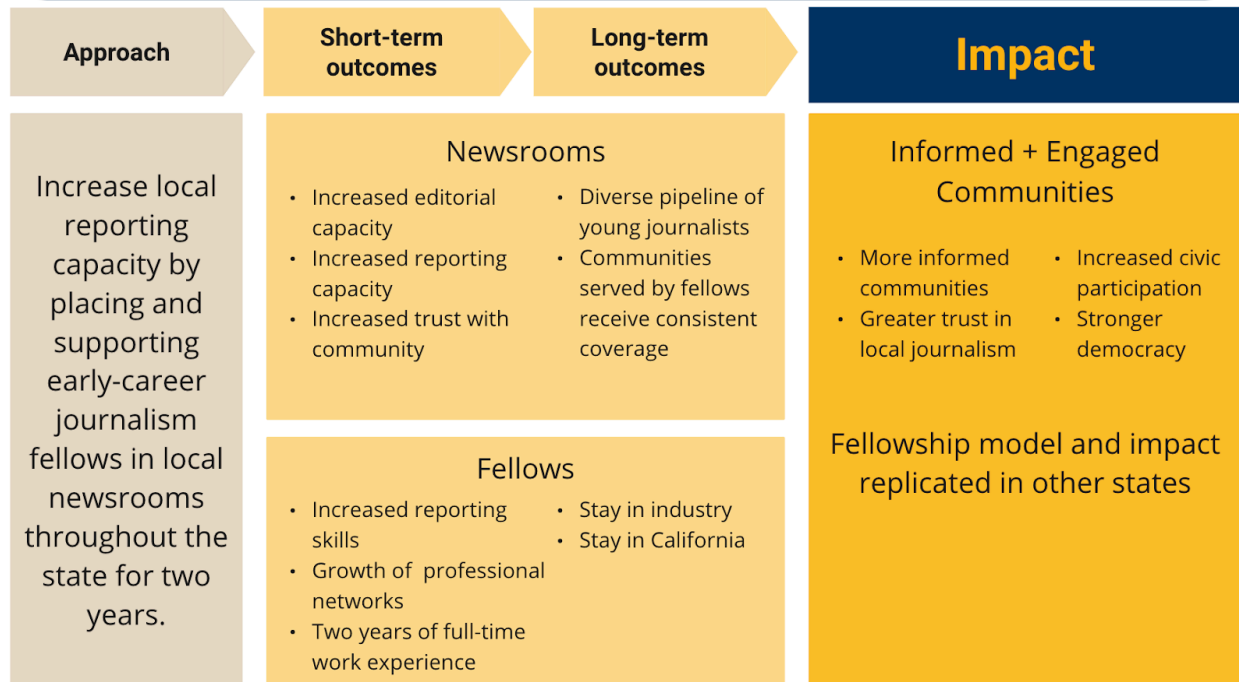
In December 2023 Impact Architects (IA) developed surveys to be distributed to California Local News Fellowship fellows and host newsrooms. The purpose was to gain a baseline understanding of the goals and expectations for both populations, with an emphasis on the desired short-term outcomes and long-term impact of the fellowship on fellows and their career trajectories, newsroom sustainability, and broader community impact. The questions were developed in consultation with the California Local News Fellowship program team and designed to reflect the priorities identified in the program's theory of change. IA developed and distributed a second round of surveys to the initial California Local News Fellowship cohort in October and November 2024. At the same time, the second cohort of fellows and newsrooms received the baselining survey. We received full responses from the fellows from both cohorts and responses from most newsrooms for both cohorts.

Overall, Cohort 1 fellows and newsrooms are reaching their desired short term outcomes. The one-year check-in surveys for the fellows and newsrooms indicate that the vast majority of fellows and newsrooms are satisfied with the fellowship and have found specific value in it. Fellows indicate that they are acquiring skills, knowledge, experience, and networks as a result of the fellowship. Newsrooms said the primary value is an increased ability to reach new communities and build connections, particularly communities previously unreachable by the host newsroom or other media. Nevertheless, there have been challenging situations, and both fellows and newsrooms provided feedback for the California Local News Fellowship to consider in future applicant screening and matching.

The baseline survey responses from Cohort 2 strongly resembled those from Cohort 1 for both fellows and newsrooms. Fellows, in general, are motivated by financial security as much as professional growth, but they also express a strong desire to build connections and trust with California communities. Newsrooms indicate that they want to expand their coverage and provide deeper coverage of existing beats, particularly in reaching historically underserved communities or meeting a known community need.

# California Local News Fellowship: Theory of Change

Five-year, \$25 million commitment from the State of California to fund up to 120 reporting fellows to work for two years in local newsrooms throughout the state, with a focus on underserved communities.



## Progress toward short-term outcomes

### Fellows

All 37 active fellows responded to the survey. Almost half, **48.7%**, said that the fellowship has been "extremely valuable" for their professional growth, while another **38.7%** said that it has been "very valuable." The remaining five fellows, constituting **13.5%** of the cohort, said that it has been only "somewhat valuable." While the level of perceived value varied, every member of the cohort has received at least some value from the experience.

There is a similar spread regarding fellows' satisfaction with their newsrooms, although the responses suggest that some fellows have found the fellowship valuable in spite of not being satisfied with their newsrooms. Almost half, **47.2%**, said they are "very satisfied" with their placement, and **30.6%** selected the second most positive, "satisfied." Another **16.7%** said they were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied," while **5.6%**, representing two fellows, said they were either "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied." The respondent who said they were "very dissatisfied" also said they found the fellowship "extremely valuable" for their professional development, while half of the six respondents who said they were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" also said that the experience has been either "extremely" or "very valuable."

### Outcome 1: Increased reporting skills for fellows

A fundamental measure of success for fellows is the increase of skills as a journalist. This allows fellows to have a strong portfolio of work, learn new forms of media production, and in general understand the experience of working in a newsroom. The vast majority of the early career fellows report that they have learned and implemented new skills. Overall, the sense from the fellows is that they are getting skills and experience of "real world" work, with the significant addition of longevity and security.

- 89.5% of fellows either "strongly agree" (66.7%) or "agree" (22.8%) that the fellowship has helped them grow as a journalist.
- Themes from open-ended questions related to increased journalistic skills include:
  - Diverse portfolio of work
  - Understanding newsroom operations
  - Topical and community knowledge
  - Value of trainings for journalistic skills

If the California Local News Fellowship is going to achieve its long term outcome of a strong pipeline of journalists focused on understanding and meeting community information needs, it is imperative that the fellows enter the job market with a strong portfolio. Several fellows identified this as a major value of the fellowship thus far. One fellow said the fellowship has provided, "the opportunity to grow my portfolio in a small newsroom, allowing me to focus on local issues that affect marginalized communities." Another said that the variety of work they have produced is

among the most valuable aspects of the fellowship, saying, "I produce videos, newsletters, and take photos for all my stories – not something I did before [the] fellowship."

More broadly, several fellows mentioned learning skills in new forms of media, particularly audio. One fellow placed at a public radio station mentioned that they anticipated their position would be mostly writing for the station's website, but they have gained a great deal of experience producing journalism for radio. Another said that, "The most valuable component of the fellowship is being able to be very involved in my newsroom, as well as using public radio as a new medium to advance my individual reporting." Others mentioned improvement in their writing, with one saying, "It has absolutely improved my writing and general skills. I feel faster and more comfortable as a reporter and writer."

Understanding newsroom operations was another major theme that fellows reported as growth areas. Several fellows used a variation of "real world experience" to describe the value of the fellowship and specific ways in which it has advanced their professional skills. One fellow wrote, "I think it's very difficult for young and early career journalists to get their foot in the door of this industry, so getting a two-year guarantee that allows me to develop my skills has been very beneficial." Another said, "I think the most valuable thing I've learned is how working in a daily newsroom actually works." Sometimes the same experience is both valuable and challenging. One fellow said: "The most obvious [value] is that now I know what it's like to be a daily journalist. I'm tired all the time. I question if I want to be a reporter, and when I tell myself I want to keep reporting, it helps me hone in on what kinds of reporting I might want to do."

Fellows also said that they have developed topical expertise and feel integrated into the communities where they're working. One fellow said, "I've learned a ton about how local city and county politics work. To be honest, I barely knew anything before this job." Beyond politics, the fellow also identified broader skills that they have been able to learn and put to use, saying "I still struggle to grasp everything but I've made many improvements. I have also learned little tips and tricks along the way. For instance, how to write better leads for radio and how to approach finding the actual importance in a story." Regarding community integration, one fellow wrote, "I really have to get into the community, ask the uncomfortable questions and write in a way that conveys the most important message." Another fellow connected community interaction with building trust: "I have learned and keep learning how to 'build trust' because I am almost always coming from the outside into a community."

Fellows frequently cited training from the California Local News Fellowship team as contributing to the growth of their journalism skills. One said, "I've attended almost every UC Fellowship training session, which has provided a lot of personal support and guidance on how to accomplish both daily reporting and develop multimedia investigations. This training has, in turn, benefited the newsroom as a whole." These sessions appear to have value beyond the individual fellow, and in addition to contributing to skill-building, are also an area in which fellows can build their networks.

## **Outcome 2: Growth of professional networks for fellows**

Growing professional networks is a significant outcome for fellows that will directly contribute to post-fellowship employment, whether at their current organization or somewhere else. Fellows overwhelmingly state that the fellowship has contributed to the growth of their networks, both as a result of the fellowship's cohort model as well as from their newsroom and communities.

- 91.5% of fellows either "strongly agree" or "agree" that the fellowship has contributed to the growth of their professional networks.
- Themes from open-ended questions related to the growth of professional networks include:
  - Connection with other fellows
  - Professional contacts beyond the fellowship

One fellow said, "Being part of a network of early career journalists and having access to a wealth of webinars" was a valuable aspect of the fellowship, as well as "being placed in neighborhoods and towns that are in need of community-based coverage." Another specifically highlighted "Meeting weekly with the cohort and team and the resources [provided], like AP style." When commenting on the value of the cohort connections, one fellow described their colleagues as "very knowledgeable, collaborative, and [people who] do great work." More specifically, one fellow wrote that the fellowship has "helped me immensely to hear what other fellows are going through at their newsrooms and what they do to combat the issues."

Fellows mentioned growth of their professional network beyond the cohort even more frequently, and they tended to do so in terms of future opportunities. One fellow wrote, "I have always wanted to work as a full-time environmental journalist. This fellowship has given me the opportunity to do so. This has not only helped me establish myself in this area, but to also grow my professional connections as well as my logistical experience." Fellows reported that they value contact with experienced journalists who they can learn from, as well as the opportunities the program has given them, to become part of the industry. One fellow said, "My professional journalist network has grown A LOT. I spend each day with reporters of varying experience levels and have become a part of the Fresno area's journalism community." Another wrote, "I was able to connect with new reporters across the Bay Area and got to work for a highly regarded and respected newsroom."

## **Outcome 3: Retention**

It's crucial that fellows complete the full two years of the program in order to build their experience and networks sufficiently enough to secure a comparable or more advanced position in journalism post-fellowship. As of January 2025, all but one fellow continue to participate and produce original local journalism for California communities. The program also hypothesizes that two years should be enough time for organizations to find ways to bring on the fellows on a full-time basis, if desired. Program retention should contribute to long-term retention of future

alumni to continue working as journalists in California. While it is yet to be determined the percentage of fellows who either complete their full term or find full-time employment in journalism before it ends, there is evidence from fellows about retention activities that are keeping them in their role and setting them up for future success. Namely, they feel secure in their current roles and express a high likelihood that they will continue working as journalists, mostly but not exclusively in California.

- 83.3% of fellows either "strongly agree" or "agree" that the fellowship has contributed to their short-term financial stability.
- 80% of fellows either "strongly agree" or "agree" that the fellowship has made them more likely to remain a journalist.
- 66.7% of fellows either "strongly agree" or "agree" that they are more likely to continue working in California as a result of the fellowship.
- Themes from open-ended questions related their likelihood to remain in the program and continue working as journalists include:
  - Two years of security
  - Growing confidence in themselves as journalists

Fellows will be more likely to remain in their roles and work as journalists after the conclusion of their terms if they are put in a position to succeed and know they can do the work. Several fellows mentioned confidence as a major value of the fellowship experience thus far, which should contribute to retention. One fellow said that the fellowship "has provided me with the confidence that I can be a successful full-time reporter." Another said that, as a result of the fellowship, "my confidence and passion for this career path has blossomed."

Financial security is a major motivating factor that attracts applicants to the program, which is unsurprising given the state of the journalism industry. Fellows frequently identified security and stability as valuable aspects of the fellowship, and it is reasonable to conclude that these factors are contributing to retention. Several fellows singled out the length of the term, with one saying that the fellowship allows them to focus on producing local journalism "without living in existential fear about being laid off/not making any money. That in itself is huge given the sorry state of the journalism industry in general." Similarly, another fellow highlighted the full-time nature of the program, which allows the fellow to focus exclusively on their job. "The most valuable component of the fellowship," one respondent wrote, "has been giving me the ability to focus solely on journalism and hone my craft, instead of needing to always draw my attention elsewhere just to get by."

One fellow summed up all three short-term outcomes – professional development, network building, and retention:

*The fellowship has been a huge learning experience. The most valuable component has been getting to work continuously with the same colleagues and editors for two years as an early career journalist. So many starter positions for young professionals last for just one year or less. The California Local News Fellowship's two year-term has given me more time to develop professional skills and relationships at a lasting and sustainable pace.*

## Newsrooms

A total of 26 newsrooms responded to the survey request, representing 78.8% of active newsrooms from the first cohort. The vast majority of responding newsrooms have found value in the fellowship and have been satisfied with the fellows' contributions. When asked how valuable the fellow has been for helping the organization fulfill its mission, **84.6%** of respondents said that the fellow has been "very valuable." Three newsrooms said they have been "somewhat valuable." **One respondent** said the experience has been "not so valuable."

While most respondents responded positively when asked how satisfied they have been with the fellows' contributions to the newsrooms, the responses were measured. A majority, **57.7%**, said that they were "very satisfied" with their fellow's contributions, while another **23.1%** said they were "satisfied." The remaining 20% of newsrooms either said they were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" (11.5%) or "dissatisfied" (7.7%, or two newsrooms). The slight discrepancy between overall value of the fellow's presence and the satisfaction with their contributions suggests there is a desire on the part of newsrooms for higher quality, a higher quantity of output, and/or greater preparation and training for the full time job. Specific feedback about preparation is in the feedback and considerations section below, but in addition to that one newsroom representative said that while they are happy with the quality of work from their fellow, "We have heard that [our fellow] is an exception and not the rule when it comes to the skill level of the fellows."

### **Outcome 1: Increased editorial capacity in newsrooms**

Increasing editorial capacity refers to an organization's ability to grow, increase coverage, and strengthen its role as a community-service organization. Measures of newsroom progress include building stronger relationships with communities and producing more public service journalism,

- 92.3% of newsroom respondents report that the relationship between their organization and the communities it serves is stronger.
- 77% of newsroom respondents report that public service journalism is a more important component of their organization's work as a result of the fellow.
- Themes from open-ended questions related to increased editorial capacity include:
  - Reaching more communities and with greater depth to increase trust;
  - Flexibility to experiment with platforms, media, and engagement strategies; and

- Greater capacity for organizational leaders to focus on operations and financial stability.

Engaging with communities and building relationships with communities provides newsrooms the foundation to grow their audience and provide high-impact journalism. Many newsrooms identified increased community relationship building as the most valuable element of the fellowship and cited it as a specific way in which the fellows have shaped their organization. One newsroom wrote: "The fellow has been present at various meetings and community events that our organization did not previously cover, demonstrating our commitment to reporting about segments of our community that were historically overlooked."

Another respondent identified the fellow's value in expanding reporting capacity while also noting that they hoped the output would have been greater: "[The fellow] has not been afraid to go all around [our community], meeting people and tackling tough stories, including some from underserved communities. While I wish [the fellow had] done more in her first year, the quality of what she has done has been undeniable." This response highlights the slight caveat to the overwhelming positivity of the experience from newsrooms. The caveat can be viewed as a future opportunity. In this instance, it could mean being clearer about realistic expectations for output that the newsrooms and fellows can agree to.

Other newsrooms identify the ways in which the fellows have enabled them to go deeper into experimenting with new platforms for their reporting. One newsroom said that the fellow has allowed the organization to report more deeply on housing and homelessness and "to try new forms of storytelling." Another said that the fellowship has "allowed us some room to experiment with an unfamiliar beat that is historically underserved." And, finally, one wrote that the fellowship has allowed for increased data reporting and data visualization.

All of these themes support organizational sustainability, by increasing journalistic impact. One newsroom, however, specifically tied the fellow to financial health. "Because of the fellow," the organization wrote, "our CEO is able to step away from producing journalism and focus on fundraising."

## **Outcome 2: Increased reporting capacity in newsrooms**

Reporting capacity is closely related to editorial capacity but is more directly about greater output, particularly in underserved areas. The vast majority of newsrooms indicated that the fellowship has allowed their newsroom to provide more news access to historically underserved communities.

- 80.8% of newsroom respondents report that historically underserved communities have more access to local news.
- Themes from open-ended questions related to increased reporting capacity include:



- Increased and consistent content production at small newsrooms; and
- Increased and consistent content production for underserved communities.

Most fundamentally, fellows are contributing to an increase in the production of journalism, which for small organizations and underserved communities makes a meaningful difference. One newsroom wrote, "Every piece [the fellow has] done is one that we could not have otherwise done. That's a huge boon to our readers and our community as a whole." Another wrote that "with a very small staff, our organization benefits tremendously from having an additional reporter. Many stories that would have gone unreported, in some cases even unnoticed, now get coverage." Other newsrooms note that their fellow constitutes the organization's entire full-time reporting staff, which means steady and consistent journalism. "A full-time reporter can build relationships and pitch stories in a way that a freelancer cannot," one organization said.

IA recently conducted a case study focused on San Diego, which is home to three Local News Fellows, who together are generating greater reporting capacity by increasing content production for underserved communities. One fellow focuses on the South Bay and Imperial County (outside of the San Diego metro area but within the San Diego region, and an area that lacks local news), one on Imperial County, and one focuses on Black and African American communities in San Diego. The full case study elaborates on the information needs of these communities and how the fellows are working to meet those needs. Open-ended responses from other newsrooms suggest that what is unfolding in San Diego is happening in other places and organizations.

One newsroom in the San Francisco East Bay wrote that their fellow "has helped us expand our coverage area," including Richmond, El Sobrante, and Pinole, and that by doing so, the fellow has "made us stronger by giving us someone we can rely on on a consistent basis." Another wrote that their fellow's story choice and follow-ups "always have the downtrodden and/or the formerly underserved community of Madera in mind." A third wrote that "some segments and geographic areas of our community now recognize that there is someone at the organization who is there to cover their issues."

These three responses point to a crucial element of coverage by the fellows: It's reliable and consistent. It's not that these communities have been completely ignored by existing media, but rather that coverage has suffered from the decline of local news over the past 20 years and that the resulting coverage has been spotty and often extractive. The additional reporting capacity that California Local News Fellows have provided in the program's first year-plus of existence is resulting in more consistent coverage for these communities.

### **Outcome 3: Increased trust between newsrooms and community**

Increased trust is the product of the effective deployment of increased editorial and reporting capacity, and it results from being present in communities to earn trust and provide valuable

journalism. The baseline survey indicated that newsrooms believed trust was already high with communities. Nevertheless, they indicate that trust has increased since the start of the fellow's term, and their open-ended responses echo this result.

- 84.6% of newsroom respondents report greater trust with communities.
- 73.1% of respondents report that civic engagement in the fellow's assigned community or communities has grown.
- Themes from open-ended questions related to increased trust between newsrooms and communities include:
  - Community listening
  - Encouraging engagement

Organizations (and fellows) understand that trust is built by being present and listening, even when the act of doing so doesn't directly lead to a piece of journalism. One organization identifies their fellow's "extensive community listening efforts in Imperial County" as one reason why the fellow "has met and exceeded expectations in building relationships with communities." More generally, another organization wrote that "people in the community have gotten to know [our fellow] and will ask if she will be covering a particular story," which is a clear example of a reporter having earned the trust of community members.

One newsroom identified increased civic engagement in the community as a specific way the fellow has shaped the newsroom. The organization wrote that the fellow's "coverage of local elected denials of housing projects has spurred more civic engagement and gotten more people aware of the ways in which NIMBYs stop housing from getting built. California's housing accountability unit has gotten more engaged, we hear, as a result of our reporting." The tangible impact and potential solutions of such actions also rely on trust between communities and reporters, as well as communities and local news organizations. And in this case, the trust derives from expanded editorial and reporting capacity made possible by the California Local News Fellowship.

## Feedback and Considerations

After one year, the California Local News Fellow is meeting its short-term outcomes with regard to its newsrooms and fellows. Both, however, have feedback for improving the program in the future.

### Fellows

The 2023 fellows had two primary pieces of feedback that could be immediately relevant for the assessment of the upcoming round of newsroom applicants, which we shared in a [preliminary analysis](#): Newsroom vetting concerns about the next steps after the fellowship. Additional themes pertained to compensation and a desire for more contact with other fellows.

Several fellows indicated that they believe in-person contact with other fellows would be professionally valuable, as well as valuable for the program. In particular, one fellow noted that while they feel immersed in their newsroom, which is a positive, it doesn't leave time to get to know other fellows and strengthen their network with the built-in group of early career journalists. They wrote: "I think it has been difficult for me to stay involved with my cohort on the fellowship side of things as I've become 100% immersed in my specific newsroom. I think if there could be something mandated for fellows on the fellowship side, like mandatory fellowship meetings worked out with each newsroom, that would ensure fellows stay in touch with the actual fellowship." Another said, "I wish the fellowship had brought individual fellows together more. I think the experience would benefit from a tighter sense of connection and unity across newsrooms. Bringing us all together physically for another group event, for example, I think would have helped achieve that."

In terms of frequency, one fellow suggested annual meetups, while another recommended they take place quarterly. One opportunity for the California Local News Fellowship to consider is doing one annual in-person convening with fellows for professional development and networking, and supporting more frequent regional or local meet-ups that don't require as much hands-on effort from the fellowship team.

Regarding compensation, most of the fellows who identified it as a way to improve are based in either Los Angeles or the Bay Area, more expensive parts of the state. Still, considering inflation, cost of living, and required travel could help make fellows more comfortable during their terms.

## **Newsrooms**

Newsroom feedback pertained to operations, support, and preparation. In terms of operations, several newsrooms indicated that they would like the fellows to be more integrated into the newsrooms' own internal systems for matters such as hours tracking, day off requests, and allotment of vacation time. This would make logistics easier, and it could also help with cultural integration by treating the fellows as employees, even if the term is limited. One newsroom wrote:

*I'm not sure if there is a better way to integrate the infrastructure of the fellow's job--days off, vacation, hours, etc.--into the newsroom. It's the first year so we're still figuring out, and it can be bumpy. A new reporter coming into the newsroom and taking vacation days that some reporters have worked decades to have dibs on is understandably controversial; so far we have managed this by saying the fellow is subject to different rules as part of a different organization. But that isn't great for fully integrating the fellow into the newsroom. This is an area we'll need to work on.*

In the same vein, one newsroom said that communication between the Fellowship team and news organizations could be better when situations like the one described above arise. In fact, more support from the fellowship team was another common theme, and in this one too where the fellow sits in the organization came up. One newsroom said, "More interaction and input from the program managers at Berkeley. I understand the unique nature of this program (the fellows are unionized Berkeley employees, but they're working in our newsrooms), but this, to my knowledge, is the first request from evaluation or feedback we've received. Communication is good!" Another newsroom expressed the desire for more conversations with the programming team to share feedback more regularly. IA and the California Local News Fellowship team could consider additional evaluation activities prior to the next round of surveys and case studies to include more active feedback.

The final theme pertains to the preparation of fellows and expectation setting in terms of output and time required to train. This challenge is to be expected, as the fellowship is for early career journalists, and the purpose of the fellowship is to provide much needed reporting capacity, often at organizations that themselves are already stretched thin and might not have the ability to provide the training the fellow needs. Respondents wrote:

- I have raised concerns about preparation of the fellow in terms of news writing, AP style, and developing compelling story ideas. Possible solutions could include modifying the applicant vetting process, including a multi-week training seminar for fellows before assigning them to newsrooms, and/or ongoing tutoring and training during the fellowship.
- Ensure that the news fellows are experienced enough to contribute to the newsroom without a big lift from editors.
- I think possibly pairing the fellows with an experienced reporter on their beat - or giving them the opportunity to meet with more experienced reporters to learn how they develop sourcing and story ideas - could be valuable.
- Our fellows have contributed in every way - reporting , language, data, newsroom environment. Yes, it is their first job and they needed training and more reporting experience, but they've jumped in with both feet and we've benefited tremendously.

Notably, as the preliminary analysis showed, fellows also said that an area of improvement could be vetting newsrooms. Ultimately, the Fellowship team should consider reviewing the matching process to ensure that reporters most likely to thrive without a great deal of support are assigned to newsrooms with less capacity to provide hands-on training, whereas those who might need more early training are assigned to those with the capacity. This could of course be a challenge, as there are myriad other considerations when matching newsrooms and fellows. Nevertheless, it would be worthwhile to review and learn from where the matching process did not produce the desired outcome – where the capacity to train did not align with the ability to work independently – and consider whether or not there were patterns present that can help avoid similar outcomes in the future.

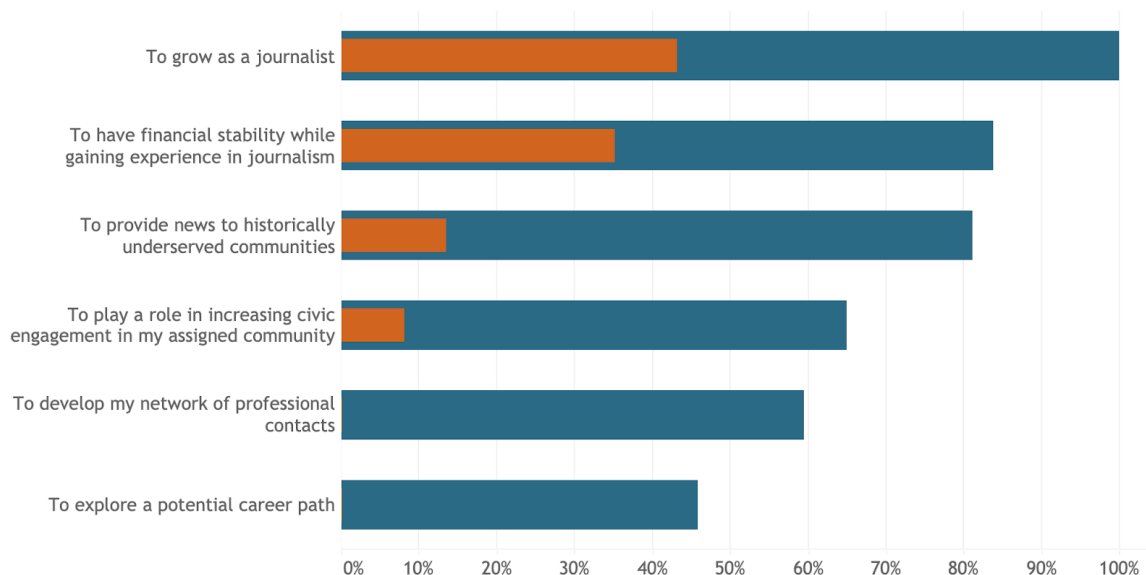
## Cohort 2 Baseline Summary

The baseline information from Cohort 1 resembles Cohort 2. The topline takeaways are below.

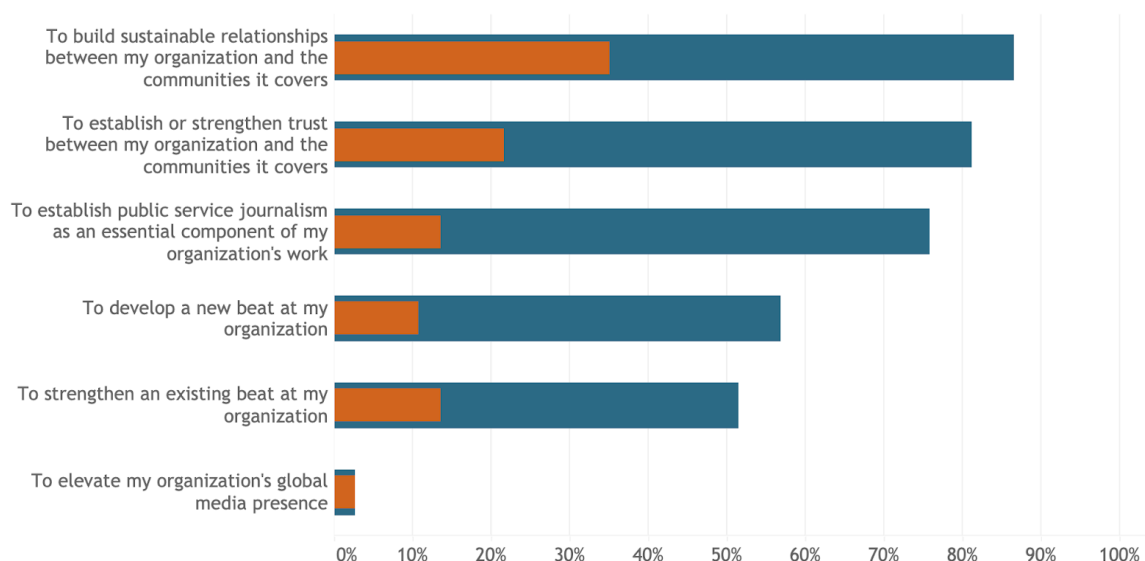
### Fellows

- Professional growth, financial stability, and providing news and information to underserved communities were the major motivations
  - Every fellow cited growth as a journalist as motivation for applying for the fellowship
  - The primary motivation was to grow as a journalist, followed by financial stability
- Fellows appear committed to community service journalism, as building sustainable relationships, strengthening trust, and establishing public service journalism were the three most frequently cited hoped for contributions
  - Building sustainable relationships was the most often cited primary contribution
- Fellows were split into about thirds in terms of familiarity with their communities, with 32.4% "very familiar, 35.1% "not at all familiar," and the remaining either "somewhat" or "not so familiar"
- Over half were either "somewhat" or "very familiar" with the communities in the place
- About half are general assignment reporters, 32% beat reporters
- Most of the beat reporters had at least some input on their beat
- In an open-ended question about what would constitute a successful fellowship, many elaborated the themes of professional growth, community impact, and community connection. The post-fellowship measure for success will be the fellows having a strong foothold in journalism and opportunities to remain in the field with financial security.

What fellows' **motivations** were to apply for the fellowship and what their **primary motivation** was



What fellows **hope to contribute** to their organization and communities and what they **most hope** to contribute



## Newsrooms

The vast majority of fellows have a specific beat (77.4%).

Many newsrooms assigned their fellows to a beat in order to provide more in-depth coverage or fill a gap in reporting.

- Other reasons included the fellow's interests or how the beat helped the organization fulfill its editorial strategy or mission.

Regarding goals for organizational growth during the fellowship period, many newsrooms pointed to how the fellowship will allow them to expand coverage in some way, while a number also highlighted the benefits of increased capacity.

Nearly all newsrooms rated the level of trust in their organization with the communities they serve as a 7 or higher, and no outlet ranked itself below a 5.

When asked about civic engagement, more than half of the 29 newsrooms who responded said the communities they serve are “highly engaged” (51.7%), while 37.9% said “somewhat engaged,” and 10.3% said “not so engaged.”

Many newsrooms said they hoped to increase reach with communities of color or communities neighboring their typical coverage area.

Newsrooms most frequently cited on-the-ground change and subscriptions and/or membership as ways they measure success and community impact.

### Newsrooms measure success in a variety of ways, but on the ground change is most common

