

**COLORADO
MEDIA
PROJECT****Director**

Hybrid / Denver Metro Area, Colorado

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Now more than ever, Colorado communities need innovative, cross-sector solutions to a number of interrelated challenges facing our state and our democracy: A deluge of digital disinformation, polarization of our civic dialogue, and widespread mistrust caused by a lack of common ground. Revitalization of independent local journalism that serves the public good, uplifts and connects our communities, and ensures public transparency and accountability is a mission that serves all Coloradans.

Since the summer of 2018, Colorado Media Project (CMP) has served as a center of gravity for engaging a broad-based coalition of civic leaders, [students](#), [academics](#), [philanthropists](#), [journalists](#), [business leaders](#), [technologists](#), [national thought leaders](#), and [local residents](#) in urgently addressing the negative [impacts on Colorado](#) and its [residents](#) that occur when reliable, independent local news disappears. As a nonpartisan philanthropic initiative, CMP works to advance the innovations that make Colorado's local news ecosystem more sustainable, collaborative, trusted, equitable and accountable to the public it serves. Within this dynamic ecosystem, CMP serves as a **catalyst, funder, and advocate**.

In this pivotal time for the future of local civic news, CMP seeks candidates and nominations for its next Director. The Director will play a crucial role in advancing CMP's mission to support sustainable, equitable, and community-centered journalism in Colorado. Reporting to CMP's [Executive Committee](#), this leadership position requires a dynamic and strategic individual with a passion for public service and accessible civic information, exceptional relationship-building skills, and deep expertise in fundraising, strategic communications, coalition building, and organizational management.

COLORADO MEDIA PROJECT OVERVIEW

[Originally launched](#) by JB Holston as a project of the University of Denver with support from the [Gates Family Foundation](#), CMP has operated since January 2020 as a fiscally sponsored project of Rose Community Foundation, with other [local and national foundations](#) more than tripling Gates' original investment in tackling these issues. CMP maintains a commitment to open-source learning and a spirit of optimism during a challenging time for local news and our democracy in general. Advised by a strong group of [local](#) leaders and [national](#) experts since 2019, CMP has been [recognized](#) nationally and even internationally as an example of providing place-based solutions to the information crisis facing local communities. In February 2024, Colorado became one of now 26 local chapters in [Press Forward](#), a nationwide campaign to strengthen our communities and democracy by revitalizing local news and information.

CMP is guided by the vision for a future where all Coloradans have access to high-quality local news and information that they trust and use to learn about important issues facing their families, local communities, and the state; to engage with their neighbors and community; and to participate in democracy.

To achieve this, CMP serves as a backbone and brings together multiple funders – local and national foundations, public funders and impact investors – to learn from local news innovators across Colorado and the U.S., to strategize together via a peer-funder network, and to leverage resources via pooled funds and co-funding to address big issues that extend beyond any single newsroom, organization, topic, sector or community. Within a dynamic ecosystem, CMP serves as a:

- **FUNDER:** We pool funds and offer strategic grants to spur innovation and impact, equity, inclusion, and resilience in Colorado’s local news and information ecosystem.
- **CATALYST:** We support and facilitate catalytic, cross-sector conversations and connections that surface new and sustainable approaches to address gaps in Colorado’s local news and information ecosystem, combat mis/disinformation, and deepen civic participation.
- **ADVOCATE:** We commission research, share learning, and leverage our collective influence to bring more knowledge, allies and resources and better public policies and professional practices into the movement to strengthen and reimagine local news and build a healthier, more solutions-focused public square.

CMP leverages funding and resources to support Colorado communities as they build healthier local news and information ecosystems by impacting three priority areas:

- **Trusted Local News and Information:** Greater access to high-quality, fact-based, nonpartisan local news and information on a range of important issues, providing Coloradans with critical information they want, trust, and need to engage in their communities, civic life, and democracy.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Greater equity and inclusion in how various players in Colorado’s local news and information ecosystem engage with and serve communities of color, linguistically diverse communities, rural communities, and other historically marginalized communities.
- **Sustainability and Efficiency:** Stronger investment in independent, nonpartisan sources of local news and information by philanthropy, public funding sources, and news consumers – and more solutions that support efficient and sustainable community journalism, public data and information at the local level.

Since 2018 CMP has raised more than \$6 million for local news and made more than 280 grants to newsrooms, ecosystem capacity builders, and projects across Colorado — and helped to rally millions more in grants and impact investments directly to our partners.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director serves as a conductor, working in concert with funders, ecosystem leaders, community advisors, and best-in-class contractors to achieve shared buy-in to CMP’s vision and goals, and work with the ecosystem of grantees and partners to own and drive the work. In addition to directing CMP’s role as a backbone organization, the Director will deploy strategic grantmaking as a tool to inspire and drive toward CMP’s vision.

The Director will hold the following responsibilities:

Strategy and Vision

- Along with CMP's Executive Committee and advisors from the field, set the direction for CMP's work as a funder, catalyst and advocate; continually refine CMP's theory of action and strategy behind its grantmaking and initiated work.
- Identify new partnerships and opportunities to strengthen the local news ecosystem, analyze their feasibility, shape specific engagements, present recommendations internally, and negotiate grant agreements and contracts.
- Determine the optimal structures and tables to operationalize CMP's strategy, both internally and externally in the field.

Fundraising and Partnership Development

- Partner closely with CMP's Executive Committee and funder table to proactively grow the field of philanthropy for local news in Colorado through funder education, stewardship, and support.
- Develop and implement comprehensive strategies to secure financial support for CMP, its pooled funds and grantmaking priorities from foundations, major donors, and public funding sources.
- Cultivate and maintain strong relationships with existing and prospective funders.

Grantmaking and Grants Management

- Guide CMP's grantee selection process to ensure it advances CMP's vision and desired impact.
- Steward grant reporting, lifting up key insights and data from the portfolio's work to strengthen future grantmaking and ecosystem strengthening.
- Drive ongoing refinement of the CMP's grantmaking process to ensure it reflects trust-based and equitable philanthropic practice.
- Act as a partner and champion for CMP grantees.

External Communications and Coalition Building

- Serve as a primary spokesperson for CMP, promoting the project's goals and impact to various stakeholders, including peer funders, policymakers, journalism partners, community leaders, and the public.
- Foster partnerships and build coalitions with local media organizations, community groups, and other relevant entities to advance the mission of CMP.
- Develop and execute strategic communication plans to enhance the visibility of CMP, its grantees and local journalism as a public good.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

While no one candidate will embody all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

- Seasoned strategist with track record implementing to deliver measurable results and impact, while demonstrating flexibility to pursue opportunities that emerge.
- Savvy fundraiser and philanthropic operator who can identify and prioritize potential funding partners that align with CMP's mission. Demonstrated success in securing major gifts and grants.

- Creative systems-thinker who can connect the dots across emerging issues and identify opportunities for impact.
- Network weaver, who understands how to “close triangles” and has built coalitions across diverse actors within an ecosystem.
- Demonstrated ability to build trust and lead with relationship-building to drive collective action toward shared goals; understands how effective backbone organizations operate.
- Disciplined in the use of data and evidence to support continuous learning and improvement as well as decision-making.
- Demonstrated commitment to advancing inclusion and equity in local journalism and the conditions that support civic engagement for all communities.
- Demonstrated capability in leading people to effectively achieve clear, yet complex goals and objectives.
- Exemplary written and verbal communication skills; ability to articulate a compelling vision to diverse audiences.
- Skilled facilitator who can steward divergent perspectives to shared understanding and agreement toward next steps.
- Strong organizational and project management skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities and deadlines.
- Strong understanding of financial management, including the ability to develop and manage budgets, and conduct administrative oversight.
- A minimum of ten years of organizational leadership experience in nonprofits, philanthropy, public policy and/or media and journalism.
- Bachelor’s degree in journalism, strategic communications, public relations, nonprofit management, or a related field.
- Deep knowledge of Colorado and strong relationships with local actors (public and private sector leaders, community leaders, and funders) who share CMP’s commitment to ensuring all Coloradans have what they need to engage in their communities, civic life, and democracy.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The hiring salary range for this position is \$145,000 - 160,000 annually.

CMP is fiscally sponsored by Rose Community Foundation, which offers a competitive benefits package including employer-supported health, dental, vision and life insurance; short- and long-term disability coverage, a 403(b)-retirement plan (including an annual employer contribution after one year of employment), flexible spending account, employee assistance program (EAP), generous paid time off including holidays, and professional development experiences.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Location

This position requires residency within the Denver metro area, where many of CMP’s core partners are based. The Director will have access to an office at Rocky Mountain PBS, should they choose to use it.

Travel

Access to a vehicle is required and the Director will travel throughout the state to support relationship-building with key partners. This role will require occasional out-of-state travel for key meetings and events.

TO APPLY

More information about the **Colorado Media Project** may be found at: coloradomediaproject.com

This search is being led by [Emily Wexler](#) and [Rachel Burgoyne](#) of [NPAG](#). Due to the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Candidates may submit their cover letter, outlining their interest and qualifications, along with their resume via NPAG's [website](#).

Rose Community Foundation believes in the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion. The Foundation is committed to equal employment opportunities and prohibits the unlawful discrimination against applicants or employees based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.