



# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN JOURNALISM GRANT PROPOSAL



Everitt, Cynthia

OUR NATIONAL CONVERSATION

# PROJECT DESIGN

## The proposal

- Clearly detail program design, activities and experiences. Include your timeline.
- Explain how students will learn by doing in your program.
- What is innovative or creative about your plan?
- Describe your team's capacity to execute the plan.
- How will you share best practices and learnings from the program?

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[Our National Conversation](#) (ONC) is building a College Newspaper Network of young journalists to reduce partisanship and promote practical solutions to America's biggest challenges. We recruit student journalists each semester to work with us, and they run our organization. Our internships are nontraditional because they complete their work on their schedule each week. They work with the mentorship of our experienced professionals to create the content put out on our website and social media channels to engage their Generation Z peers in conversation.

Our interns work across diverse teams, which allows them to be exposed to different perspectives, develop their interpersonal skills and gives them an elevated learning opportunity. ONC interns connect daily via Slack, weekly with departments and every other week with the entire organization via Zoom. This cross-functional experience exposes them to different perspectives and practices within media and journalism.

In our program, interns create content such as proposals, opinion pieces, explainer infographics, podcasts and host speaker series events. Some examples of their work are our podcasts "The Weekly Roundup" and "Allow Us to Explain" and the social media reel "Explain That to Me Again." They also write articles and make short documentaries for our "Ignite ONC" initiative, highlighting community leaders under 30 making a difference in their local communities and globally. Last semester, they published a book, "Let's Fix America," and their second book is underway.

ONC is unique in its balanced approach to news media content. We prefer collaboration over conflict, and diversity plays a large part. Also, our media content is entirely youth-created. We allow our student interns to unleash their creativity in an encouraging environment to help foster their growth and expand their network.

We already have an established student intern network that operates remotely to create media content for the ONC website and related platforms. Over 800 student interns and volunteers from 275 universities have participated.

ONC seeks diverse talent through various recruitment channels targeting underrepresented groups. We partner with minority-focused job boards, community organizations, university diversity career fairs and the Handshake platform so students can see internship opportunities at ONC.

The College Newspaper Network is an opportunity to expand our young journalist network further, allowing aspiring journalists to broaden their network of professional peers and add portfolios of work to their resumes. This program at ONC is an excellent way for students to gain valuable journalism experience and connect with a diverse group of interns interested in opening up a dialogue to help Americans connect.

Throughout the semester, we have regular knowledge-sharing sessions where our interns and mentors share insights, strategies and best practices related to their respective areas of expertise. This fosters a culture of learning and collaboration in which valuable insights are passed on to current and future interns at ONC.

Lastly, each semester, our interns complete an Onboarding & Census form to track diversity metrics, monitor our progress in meeting our goals and improve our efforts. ONC is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion across all facets of our organization.

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## PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

- Who will your project serve and why? Be specific.
- Explain how the project will serve students from under-represented backgrounds.
- How will your proposal meet one or more of the stated grant purposes?

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At ONC, we are committed to diversity of thought, and to achieve this, we must have diversity in our intern population. Participation in the College Journalist Network is open to everyone. However, ONC is committed to making its diverse volunteer network look like the true face of Gen Z in the United States.

Out of 92 volunteers for the spring semester of 2024, we have the following breakdown of underrepresented races and ethnicities:

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Asian                           | 35.9% |
| Black/African American          | 15.2% |
| Hispanic/Latino                 | 8.7%  |
| Native American/American Indian | 2.2%  |
| Middle Eastern                  | 2.2%  |

ONC is already making strides to diversify our intern population, but we want to maintain this momentum and improve upon it. Our HR team will identify gaps in racial and ethnic groups to target in our recruiting channels. Offering a stipend to these groups will make it more valuable and attractive for them to commit to giving their time to our organization. It will also help us overcome socioeconomic barriers for students who would otherwise be unable to commit their time without financial benefit.

The ONC Newspaper Network will advance diversity, equity and inclusion in student journalism education by seeking out underrepresented groups and allowing them to participate in our program and learn through hands-on experience. Our program is youth-driven, and participants can create their opportunities within the organization. We also foster connections between students of different backgrounds by focusing on diversity of thought and population in our organization and letting our students work together to run our various departments.

## GOALS AND MEASURES

- Provide short-term and long-term goals, including specific measures and a timeline for achieving the goals. At least some of these goals should be specific to the use of the grant funds, not just general program goals.
  - How will you track progress toward your goals?
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Our short-term goals are to attract a pool of student journalists who will help us maintain and improve the diversity of our current pool and to offer them a stipend to help with the financial burdens that students face. Our long-term goals are to provide more student interns a stipend to work with our organization and further support our participants through training opportunities to prepare them to take on real-world issues in their future professional careers.

In the fall and spring semesters of 2024 and 2025, we will partner with HR to identify 20 volunteer student journalists from underrepresented groups and provide them each with a stipend to participate.

We will also identify a journalism mentor to work with those 20 participants to provide guidance, advice, feedback and support during their participation. A stipend for the mentor will make it a more attractive opportunity and maintain consistency for the participants.

Finally, we will use grant funds to market the College Newspaper Network opportunity to underrepresented aspiring student journalists through our recruitment channels and social media advertising.

We ask all volunteers to complete our Onboarding & Census form to track diversity metrics and ensure we meet our goals.

# PROGRAM BUDGET

- Provide a budget for the project, listing all revenue sources and expenses.
- The budget must clearly state how the grant will be used. Do not simply include it as a revenue source in a larger budget.

| <b>Project Budget for ONC College Newspaper Network</b>   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Scripps Howard Fund Grant Ask: \$24,000</b>  |                    |
| <b>Revenue</b>  |                    |
| Request from Scripps Howard Fund  | \$24,000.00        |
| Request from other foundations  | \$20,000.00        |
| <b>Expenses</b>   |                    |
| <b>Direct Expenses paid for by Scripps Howard Fund</b>  |                    |
| Student Journalist Stipends<br><i>(8 hrs per week x 16 week semester x \$15 per hour x 10 students)</i> | \$19,200.00        |
| Journalist Mentor Stipend<br><i>(6 hrs per week x 16 week semester x \$50 per hour x 1 mentor)</i>      | \$4,800.00         |
| <b>Total Direct Expenses paid for by Scripps Howard Fund</b>  | <b>\$24,000.00</b> |
| <b>Direct Expenses paid for by other revenue</b>  |                    |
| Student Journalist Stipends<br><i>(8 hrs per week x 16 week semester x \$15 per hour x 10 students)</i> | \$19,200.00        |
| <b>Total Direct Expenses paid for by other revenue</b>  | <b>\$19,200.00</b> |
| <b>Indirect Expenses paid for by other revenue</b>  |                    |
| <b>Marketing</b>  |                    |
| Social Media<br><i>(16 posts x \$50 per post x 1 semester)</i>  | \$800.00           |
| <b>Total Indirect Expenses paid for by other revenue</b>  | <b>\$800.00</b>    |
| <b>Total Project Expenses</b>   | <b>\$44,000.00</b> |