



PUBLIC MEDIA BRIDGE FUND

A Public Media Company Initiative

Collaborative Operating Models Open Call

April 14, 2026

Welcome & Logistics

- All microphones are muted.
- Please use the chat or Q&A function to share your thoughts and questions.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on our website at www.publicmediabridgefund.org.

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Bridge Fund Strategy
- Sustainability Program Overview
- Open Call: Collaborative Operating Models
- Q&A

Bridge Fund Team



Erik Langner
Executive Director



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Program Officer



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The Public Media Bridge Fund is a pooled philanthropic fund designed to **secure local public media service** and help guide organizations through a crisis moment to a more **sustainable and impactful future.**

Framework

Stabilize

Prevent collapse and
create a window of
opportunity for
change

Sustain

Activate collaborations,
restructuring, and
network effects to
maximize efficiencies

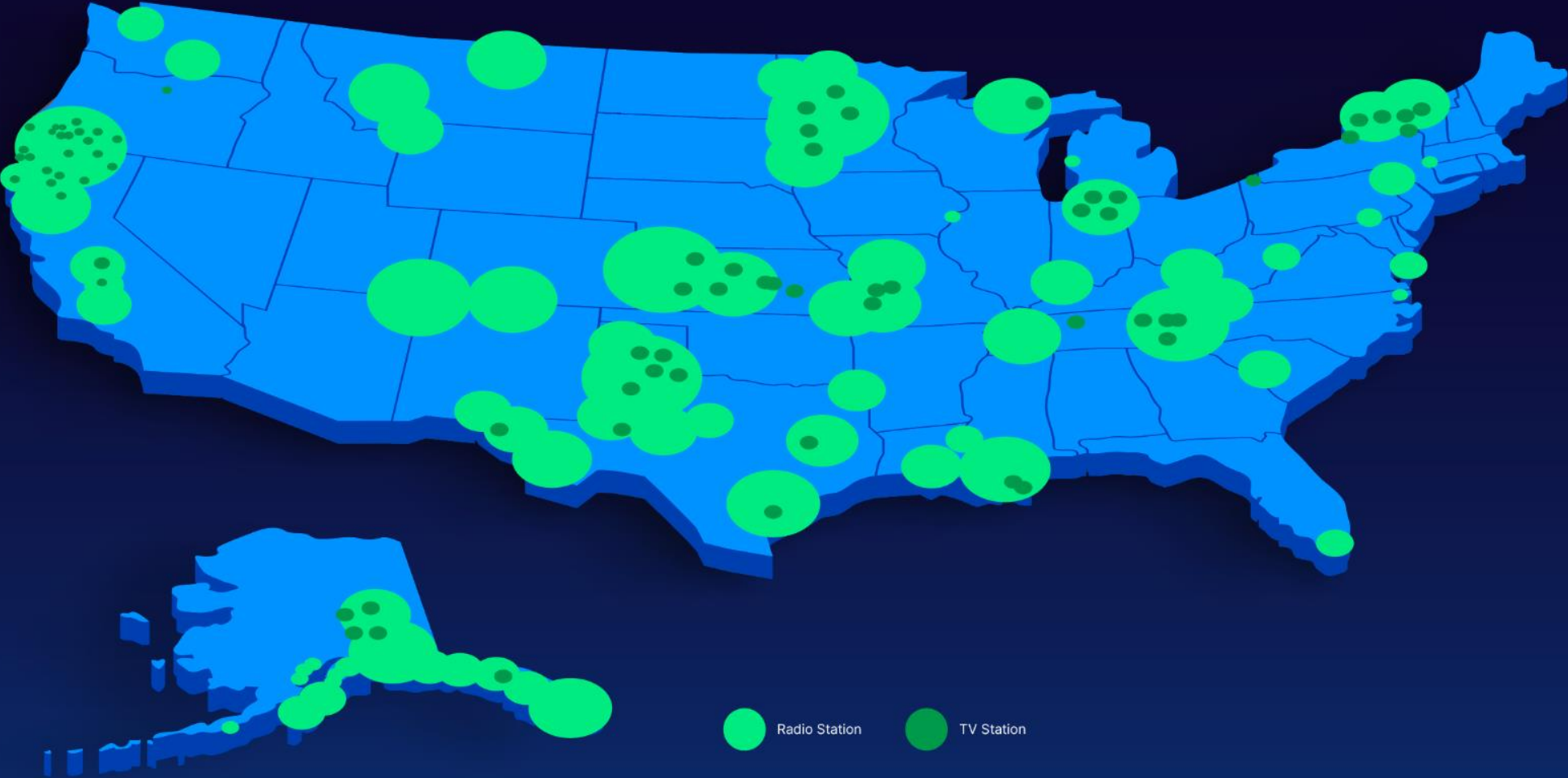
Adapt

Prepare local public
media to thrive in a
radically transformed
media landscape

Activity in First 8 Months

- **Built a coalition of 1,000+ funders** who have pooled \$73 million
- **Distributed \$26 million to 74 at-risk organizations** operating 186 stations and serving 30+ million people
- In partnership with others, **temporarily prevented mass closures**
- **Assembled team of expert coaches** providing all Stabilization grantees with hands-on sustainability guidance
- **Opened a second, ongoing cycle** for emergency grant-making
- **Launched a third grant cycle** to galvanize collaborations in spring 2026

Committed \$26M in Stabilization Grants



7

Grantee Organizations

44 Radio & 30 TV

186

Radio & TV Stations

30M

People Reached

Our Grantees serve
29 U.S. States & Territories

Sustainability Program

The Bridge Fund's **Sustainability Program** focuses on supporting local, regional, and national projects that **enhance operational efficiency and innovation**, while ensuring that uniquely local services remain strong.

Guiding Principles

Be bold, but grounded

Focus on structural change

Local service is primary

Learning is a deliverable

Open Call: Collaborative Operating Models

Program Overview

New operating and collaborative structures that:

- Strengthen the long-term sustainability of public media organizations while advancing essential local mission.
- Involve two or more organizations, at least one of which must be a CPB-qualified public media entity.
- Are ready for implementation with committed partners.
- Demonstrate a need for Bridge Fund support.

Funded projects should aim to:

- Create measurable operational efficiencies, cost savings, and/or revenue growth.
- Reduce structural duplication while remaining deeply rooted in local service.
- Establish replicable and/or scalable models that could be adapted across the public media system.
- Demonstrate strong governance alignment and organizational readiness among committed partners.
- Move organizations beyond short-term stabilization toward long-term sustainability.

Examples of such projects

** also open to other approaches that may not be on this list.*



Statewide /
regional
networks

Shared
back-office
services

Hub-and-
spoke
models

Broadcast
lease
agreements

Mergers
and
acquisitions

NOT Seeking Proposals for:

- Partnerships limited in scope or duration
- Content-only and event-based collaborations
- Existing collaborations seeking ongoing operating support
- Research, exploratory projects, or studies meant to define a potential collaboration

Types of Support

1

Grants

2

Advisory
Services

3

Low-Interest
Loans

*The terms and type of investments will be tailored to each project's needs, but the **grant component will likely not exceed \$500,000 per project.***

Application Process

- Open, rolling program
- LOI → Full Application
- Funding decisions made on an ongoing basis pending available funds
- ***Please coordinate with project partners to ensure that only one LOI per project is submitted.***

Review Criteria

- Strategic Alignment
- Strength of Concept
- Operational Impact
- Local Service
- Demonstrable Need
- Feasibility and Organizational Readiness
- Innovation / Field-level Value

Q&A

Photo courtesy of PBS Michiana

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Thank You

Appendix

Program Materials for Collaborative Operating Models Open Call

- [Program Guidelines](#)
- [LOI Questions](#)
- [Application Portal](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Contact the Bridge Fund:

- bridgefund@publicmedia.co