

2017 News Match Evaluation FAQ

What is the purpose of the News Match evaluation?

The purpose of the News Match evaluation is to assess the extent to which the goals of the program were met and to find ways in which Knight Foundation and Democracy Fund can improve this program and others in the future to best support nonprofit journalism.

What happens if I don't participate in the post-News Match evaluation?

While your organization is required to submit donation data and receipts to qualify for the matching funds, it is not a requirement to participate in the post-News Match evaluation. However, your participation is strongly recommended so that we can ensure the match is effective and make the case for future News Match programs.

Was last year's News Match evaluated? If so, how were the findings utilized to inform this year's program?

Yes. Knight Foundation partnered with Third Plateau last year to evaluate the News Match. We found that the News Match helped participating organizations bring in new donors, raise money, and increase awareness and support for local journalism. Through the evaluation, participants requested additional fundraising capacity building support, which was reflected in INN's capacity building trainings leading up to the match this year. Organizations also requested more advanced notice and timing that better aligned with their end of year campaigns, which is reflected in this year's event timing.

Who is conducting the evaluation?

The evaluation is being conducted by an external evaluator, Third Plateau. Third Plateau is a strategy consulting firm that partners with nonprofits, foundations, and individuals in the social sector. More information on Third Plateau can be found at www.thirdplateau.com.

What will Third Plateau request of me as part of the evaluation?

- Baseline Data (already collected during the application process)
 - Total # of individual donors in 2016
 - Dollars raised from individual donors in 2016
 - Number of individual donations in 2016
 - Number of years building an individual donor base
 - Percent of budget made up by individual donations
- Post News Match Survey Data
 - Total # of individual donors in 2017
 - Dollars raised from individual donors in 2017
 - Number of individual donations in 2017

- Percent of budget made up by individual donations 2017
- Number of donors during the News Match (October 1 – December 31, 2017)
- Number of donations during the News Match (October 1 – December 31, 2017)
- Total amount raised during the News Match (October 1 – December 31, 2017)
- Number of new donors obtained through the News Match (October 1 – December 31, 2017)
- Number of donations from individual donors made through the News Match (October 1 – December 31, 2017)
- Number of donations from new individual donors made through the News Match (October 1 – December 31, 2017)
- Skill acquisition from INN capacity building trainings
- Most effective tool for bringing in **new donors** during the match (i.e. sending emails to your list, posting on social media, a banner on your website, etc.)
- Most effective tools for bringing in dollars during the match (i.e. sending emails to your list, posting on social media, a banner on your website, etc.)
- Extent to which the News Match brought increased awareness to nonprofit news organizations and their need for support
- Recommendations for further improving the News Match program and its ability to help your organizations cultivate new donors, increase fundraising capacity, and raise awareness of nonprofit journalism and its need for public support – a big piece of what we hope comes out of the evaluation itself.
- Interviews
 - Third Plateau will select 15-20 nonprofit participants and 10-15 participating donors for a 30-minute interview to get a more nuanced view of what it was like to participate in the News Match, key lessons learned, and recommendations for program improvement going forward.

What is the timeline and key dates of the evaluation?

- Baseline data collection: through September 30, 2017
- Post-News Match survey: January 2018
- Deadline to submit match documentation to The Miami Foundation: Jan. 31, 2018
- Nonprofit and donor interviews: January – February 2018
- External report release: May 2018



Will the results of the evaluation be publicized? If so, when?

Yes. We plan on publicizing an external evaluation report in May of 2018.

Will my data be shared publicly?

None of your information from the Post-News Match survey or interviews will be tied to your name or your organization for News Match funders or INN. All public data will be aggregated by Third Plateau to show trends, themes, and recommendations for program improvement.

What counts as an individual donor?

All gifts from small donors, major donors or small family foundations are considered gifts from individual donors

Is the budget information requested for our fiscal year or the calendar year?

The budget information requested is for the calendar year. This will enable the evaluators to compare fundraising statistics year over year and calculate the impact of the News Match on fundraising.

Who do I contact with questions about the evaluation?

For questions about the evaluation, please contact Whitney Caruso at Third Plateau (whitney@thirdplateau.com) or Liz Ruedy at Democracy Fund (lruedy@democracyfund.org)