THE IFCN GLOBAL FACT CHECK FUND GRANT PROGRAM

The International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) at the nonprofit Poynter Institute, a global leader in journalistic excellence, announced a partnership with Google and YouTube on November 29, 2022 to support fact-checking initiatives worldwide and reduce the harm of misinformation.

The Global Fact Check Fund will award grants in an open competition for programs to support third-party organizations in strengthening the capabilities of fact-checking organizations across the world.

The $12 million Global Fact Check Fund will support Verified Signatories of the IFCN Code of Principles fact-checking organizations, as well as proposed partner organizations, over a three-year period. As of April 2023, there are 154 IFCN Verified Signatories from more than 60 countries.

The mission of the Fund is to strengthen and develop the operational, production and engagement capacities of local and regional media organizations to increase the quality, volume, frequency, scale and impact of fact checking abilities and activities. This Fund will support eligible organizations to increase the level of professionalism in fact-checking associated with media outlets, as well as improve target audiences’ ability to critically assess mass media and social media.

Applications are open from Aug. 1, to Sept. 7, 2023, for grants from the Fund’s second phase, called GROW. This phase of GROW will provide grants totaling up to $1 million.

A. THE GLOBAL FACT CHECK FUND GRANT PROGRAM SPECIFICS

Program Description

1. GROW Program Objectives

This program will seek to fund a diverse range of projects reflecting independent news and information media outlets (broadcast, online or print) that are committed to objective and thorough fact-checking.

- Applicants will be seeking funding support for the development of their institutional capacity, competitiveness and sustainability in local and regional spaces. Other considerations include staffing and professional development that invests in human capital, expanding recruitment processes and formal mentoring and coaching programs that help staff members develop their skills, receive feedback and grow professionally. Projects may include expanding or creating programs designed to boost content visibility, increase fact checking media literacy, launching fundraising initiatives, diversifying revenue streams, expanding
2. Program Proposal Expectations:
   - Interested organizations will construct a plan that develops some of the above stated priorities into a comprehensive and coherent development strategy.
   - Successful proposals will contain implementation plans and clear explanations of how the project goals will be achieved.
   - Successful proposals will include an assessment plan.
   - Successful proposals will match the funding request to a specific and coherent development project, rather than listing a series of unrelated expenditures.

3. Data Collection
   - Award recipients will be required to track and report on a list of standard output and outcome indicators, which will be outlined in the award specifics.

B. AWARD INFORMATION
1. Performance Period and Award Amounts
   - Award amounts: Up to $50,000 per award, disbursed in two equal payments.
   - There is no limit to the number of applications an organization may submit across all categories (BUILD, GROW and ENGAGE). However, each successful applicant may not be granted more than one award, per year. For example: Organizations would only be able to accept one award for 2023; one award for 2024 and one award for 2025.
   - A maximum of 28 applications will be funded at $50,000 USD for each awarded application.
   - An application may consist of one IFCN signatory organization; OR a non-signatory organization partnering with, or endorsed by, an IFCN signatory organization.
   - The most that an organization can be awarded over the entire term of the grant is 3 awards - one for each year that the IFCN grant program will be in operation. **There is an exception:** If a previously awarded organization is partnering with another organization in the new GROW application AND is NOT the primary applicant in the application, then, if awarded for the partnership project, the previously awarded organization may also receive grant funding as the secondary partnering organization.
   - An endorsing signatory organization is eligible to apply to the GROW opportunity.
   - Should the GROW category fund not be exhausted through the standard award process, considerations for redistribution of the funds will be made with the guidance of the Steering Committee.
   - Funding instrument type: Grants
   - Program performance period: Proposed programs should be completed in 9-12 months.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching
Cost-sharing or matching is not required. However, it is encouraged that applicants consider leveraging the grant award to provide cost-sharing, directly or indirectly, from additional sources in support of the project.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. The following organizations are eligible to apply:
   - Verified signatories of the IFCN Code of Principles
   - Other fact-checking organizations partnered with, or endorsed by, an IFCN verified signatory. Non-signatory organizations may include regional fact-checking networks, not-for-profit organizations, NGOs, for-profit organizations, research organizations, and academic institutes that are working to advance fact-checking.

2. The Fund cannot support:
   - Organizations with affiliations to elected officials, political parties or religious groups
   - Humanitarian or charitable activities, including direct social services to populations
   - Political or partisan activities
   - Individual trips abroad
   - Health services or materials (excluding staff mental health initiatives)
   - Construction costs
   - Pre-award costs

D. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Organizations will be asked to provide all submission information electronically, including budget and timeline attachments.
   - Application Narrative, may include
     - Executive Summary
     - Statement of Need
     - Organization Capacity to Implement Grant
     - Action Plan
     - Project Timeline in templated MS Excel format
     - Sustainability, or Future Funding Plans
   - Endorsement letter
   - Partnership letter
   - Primary/Partner Organization’s Annual Operating Budget
   - Budget in templated MS Excel format
   - Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (including indicators, baselines, targets).

E. APPLICATION SUMMARY

1. The second application period will open on Aug. 1, 2023
2. Additional information will be shared during a subsequent virtual Question and Answer session. Refer to the grant announcement website for date and registration.
3. There is no limit to the number of applications an organization may submit across all categories (BUILD, GROW and ENGAGE). However, each successful applicant may not be granted more than one award, per year. For example: Organizations would only be able to accept one award for 2023; one award for 2024 and one award for 2025.
4. The decision of awards will be made by a selection committee comprised of professionals in the media space who bring diverse skills, experiences, perspectives and expertise.

5. Issuance of this announcement does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the IFCN Global Fact Check Fund Grant Program, nor does it commit the IFCN Global Fact Check Fund Grant Program to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals.

6. Questions? Please send all questions to info@ifcn.org, using “GROW Grant” in the subject line.