**Please explain how your organization's work aligns with one or more of the Pillars focus areas.\* (1000 ch)**

The Media Consortium is a national network of over 80 independent news organizations, including Democracy Now!, Mother Jones, Colorlines, AlterNet, the Young Turks, In These Times and the Nation. Adopting racial equity as a key strategic principle, our members prioritize Understanding, building bridges with communities they don’t already cover well. We do this Understanding work via a Leadership Initiative. We identify, support and bring together leaders in news media in specific communities, creating a news media “hub.” Then, we link these news media hubs to our members in informal and formal ways. The most formal linkage is via a Reporting Project, in which we ask journalists and community leaders to train reporters at our other outlets in covering stories about their communities.

We have created local news hubs in Chicago and supported news hubs in Boston and Arkansas; we have created Reporting Projects around media policy and new economies. This would be our first project bringing both initiatives together.

**Please briefly define the problem or issue you are working to address.\* (1000 ch)**

New stories about Muslims in America are too often misleading, inaccurate, or most of all, absent. If the only stories told about American Muslims appear in relation to a bombing or political crisis, Americans will think of Muslims only within those negative contexts. To change the frame, we need to work in two directions. First, we need to support Muslim-created news content; it is journalists within the Muslim community that will be best able to tell stories of national interest that underscore the similarities between Muslims and non-Muslims (say around health care) or that actually offer solutions to national problems (say through Muslim lending practices). Second, we need to ensure that such stories spread to the non-Muslim public through a reporting project . We do this by asking Muslim journalists to teach journalists at non-Muslim focused outlets how to discover and cover key stories in the Muslim American community.

**Organizational approach to diversity\* (1000 ch)**

The Media Consortium believes strongly in racial equity and are leaders in racial equity in the news media sector. In 2016 we adopted racial equity as the primary strategic goal for our organization. In practice we have worked to make our organization itself diverse—our two staff are female and one is Haitian American. Our advisory board is composed of eleven people, of whom eight are women and six are people of color. Among our board and staff we also have sexual and religious diversity. Critically, we ensure people of color are in leadership positions.

In 2016 we dedicated a day of our two-day conference to a racial equity training and followed up with members. As a result, many more of our members have changed staffs, procedures and content to be more equitable. The work we propose to be funded by Pillars stems from this equity work and contributes to it.

**Optional Information (2000 ch)**