



2008 Media Consortium Membership Mandate

Draft 4/15/8

In order to be considered for membership, organizations under consideration must be in line with the charitable purpose/mission statement of The Media Consortium. This criteria was crafted with the advice of our lawyers, Silk, Adler and Colvin and includes:

- Amplifying the power of the independent media in order to foster a more informed, just and open society.
- Promoting the gathering and dissemination of news about current affairs in communities underserved by mainstream media.
- Supporting "mission-driven" media outlets whose missions encompass promoting the public interest in political, social and/or cultural diversity.
- Encouraging the participation of underrepresented communities in civic affairs by enhancing their connections with opinion leaders and policy makers.
- Research and development on innovative approaches to media production and distribution.
- Enhancing the practice of journalism in the public interest.
- Organizations that on whom participation would confer a non-incidental private benefit are excluded from membership.

In addition to these basic criteria for membership, we want to also take into consideration issues of ethnic and gender diversity, platform, geographic locations/targeted audiences. Due to staff bandwidth and the continuing strategic development of The Media Consortium, we are going to cap membership at 65 for 2008, with a focus on organizations that:

- Bring a strategic value to the longterm goals of The Media Consortium.
- Play well with others.
- Have the staff capacity and resources to participate in The Media Consortium.
- Hit major diversity goals and continue to help fulfill The MC's mission.

While we continue to build out membership based on our existing criteria and consist of mostly "pure-play" journalism organizations, we also have taken into consideration our ongoing diversity goals and how the changing media and political landscape impacts our ability to fulfill our mission. The Media Consortium (and specifically the membership committee) will continue to strategically expand to include a few targeted groups that are "hybrid" media organizations. Some examples include: advocacy and journalism, individuals, the progressive blogosphere, media distribution organizations and media outlets that have both a cultural and political focus. Every potential new member will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the membership committee.

Other membership committee recommendations for 2008 include:

- Make decisions and a process on how to engage current members who are non-active.
- Create a process that uses the core membership criteria to decide on a case-by-case basis of accepting new members. This process will likely involve a questionnaire (see below) that will help gauge the fit of potential members.
- Revisit and fine tune (if necessary) category definitions for membership, including: full membership, individual membership, member allies and others.

Membership Screening Criteria/Questionnaire:

As part of the ongoing attempt to streamline our joining process, and ensuring that potential members have the capacity to participate and contribute to MC projects and strategic goals, we've come up with a short series of questions to help evaluate. [We may also want to make an internal checklist to ease the voting/ratification process for the Membership Committee.]

THESE QUESTIONS ARE UP FOR DISCUSSION, FINE-TUNING, EDITING, ADDING, DELETING, ETC..

1. Tell us about your organization's mission and vision.
2. How do you see your organization as a fit for The Media Consortium?
3. What is your reasons for joining the consortium?
4. Who is your primary audience? How would you describe your audience
5. What are your primary platforms? (i.e. print, radio, online, tv, books, etc..)
6. What arenas/platforms would your organization like to better "inhabit?"
7. Does your organization offer any areas of expertise that could be helpful to The Media Consortium and its members?
8. How does your organization fit into the progressive media network? (media producer, distributor, monitor, policy-maker)
9. What are your internal resources (staff, time, etc.) to participate/contribute to Consortium discussions and projects?